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For immediate release from the Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon, for further information visit www.airnzqueenstownmarathon.co.nz

QUEENSTOWN MARATHON PUTS ITS MARK ON THE WORLD

The Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon is just two years old this November but already it is more than living up to its *international* billing with the event selling out in the full marathon, half marathon and 10km races, thanks in part to the huge overseas interest in the event.

Hosted in the stunning Queenstown Lakes region for the first time last November, the event has quickly established a reputation for its amazing scenery along hard packed trails, with vistas the envy of marathons around the world – something that has clearly struck a chord with overseas participants with an incredible 14% of the 9,000 entries coming from offshore markets.

“Our vision for this event was always for it to be very attractive to inbound visitors, travelers looking for an iconic bucket list type event to act as a catalyst for visiting New Zealand,” said Event CEO Dave Beeche.

“The numbers already back us up in those thoughts, with an incredible 1,300 packing their running shoes and boarding planes from 39 countries around the world to enjoy some of the best that New Zealand has to offer.”

Those 1,300 are coming from a number of different markets too, with Australia (713), China (200) and USA (122) the dominant contributors.

Beeche says everyone will be made to feel very special, but extra effort is going into those who have travelled furthest.

“Everyone who competes in any of our events at the Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon will be made to feel special, throughout the event we aim to over deliver a world class experience.

“We are celebrating the international contingent with a number of activations throughout the weekend, from country flags on race bibs – everyone is more patriotic when away from

home it seems, to country flags in the registration area, right through to shout outs during race commentary and prize giving.”

The increase in interest out of China is of particular interest, with the potential for growth from this market huge. Not only will close to 200 Chinese participants attend, they will be followed by a Chinese television crew as they film an adventure documentary on New Zealand and the events and activities on offer, with the Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon and the central Otago region showcased to a huge audience back in China.

The influx of visitors is a boom too for the local and national economy, with many participants making the most of their trip to New Zealand by adding on extended holidays around the event, with the tourism and hospitality industries set for major economic spin-offs.

Some of the best returns though are simply in the stories, images and memories that will be shared around the world as participants communicate to family and friends through digital channels and then in person once back in their homeland.

“It is hard to put a value on that sort of exposure for the event, for our sponsors, for the region and for the country and what we have to offer to the world,” said Beeche.

“It is the word of mouth, the extremely high and yet hard to measure value of social media and the experiences that will be shared around the world with family and friends that will quickly see this event become an iconic one within the world of marathon running. To a degree that has already occurred with the demand for entries so high after just one year of this event, it is one that truly puts Queenstown and New Zealand on the map for all the right reasons.”

Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon Facts and Figures

- Queenstown International Marathon is a running festival in Queenstown on Saturday 21 November 2015, racing on the Saturday affords the rest of the weekend for a Queenstown Destination experience
- The event will cater for all abilities and ages, with events from the full marathon, half marathon, 10km run and 3km kids’ fun run.
- The Air New Zealand Full Marathon is sold out with 2,000 competitors
- The ASICS Half-Marathon is sold out with 5,400 competitors
- The 10km Run is sold out with 1,500 competitors
- The course is predominantly flat with a few undulations to keep it interesting, taking in hard packed trails for 70% of the running and roads for 30%
- Celebrity participants include
 - Mike McRoberts – TV news anchor/journalist
 - Josh Emmett – Celebrity chef/restaurateur

- Kerre Mclvor – Broadcaster/columnist
- The views will be amongst the most scenic in the world, with vistas to the Crown and Remarkables mountain ranges, a glance down at Lake Hayes and Lake Wakatipu and across to Arrowtown and the Arrow River. The marathon will take participants over the old Shotover Bridge and into Queenstown Gardens on an inspiring journey from Millbrook Resort to the heart of Queenstown, finishing at the Recreation Grounds.
- The official charity is the Queenstown Trails Trust, with proceeds from every entry going directly to assist in the creation of and maintenance of the Queenstown Trail network.
- The event website has all necessary information about course maps, event schedule, entry details etc. www.airnzqueenstownmarathon.co.nz. The official Queenstown Marathon mobile App has all the participant and spectator information for event week.
- Next year's event date is Saturday 19 November 2016. Entries open for the 2016 event on Tuesday 1 December 2015.

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