

Media release for immediate use
Thursday 10th March 2011

Motatapu predicts it's youngest ever winner of Mountain Bike

Iconic Adventures Director Geoff Matthews, who yesterday cycled the Motatapu course, marking it for this Saturday's Motatapu event, is predicting the youngest ever winner of the Motatapu mountain bike event.

"Without Marcus Roy or Kashi Leuchs it is difficult for me to see anyone emerging from the pack to challenge rising star, Anton Cooper," says Matthews.

Sixteen year old Cooper narrowly lost to Roy in last year's Motatapu and has recently secured himself a spot on the New Zealand team to go to National Mountain Biking Champs later this year.

Roy, who has won the event five of the six years running and holds the course record at 1.57.47 was 20 when he first won in 2005, he is not competing this year.

"The race record is there for the taking, and my money would be on Cooper," says Matthews, who also comments on course conditions.

"It is like a world rally championship track, it has a layer of fine crumbling dust and dirt over a hard pack," says Matthews.

"I predict that the leaders will scatter the loose surface and leave a hard pack for competitors following their wheel tracks. Later once the dry crumbling layer has gone, the hard pack will become slippery for the back of the field as water from the creeks gets added to the mix."

Matthews also says there is a completely new section of track on the Soho descent. "This new section of track is extremely fast; but a word of caution, it is not as hard packed as the rest of the course," he says.

For runners, Matthews says the conditions are perfect.

"Conditions under foot are perfect and the river crossings are lower than I have seen them in the previous six years the event has been running," says Matthews.

Matthews also says the weather should be favourable for the inaugural off-road half ironman length triathlon. While it will be a crisp start for the marathon runners, the sun should be well up for the 9.15am start of the triathlon.

Weather is expected to be typical of the past six years and get hot in the high alpine valleys in the middle of the day. "It will cool down again for the 4pm start of the Christchurch Artists for Christchurch earthquake appeal concert to be held at the finish line," says Matthews. "The public are invited to bring a blanket and enjoy an evenings entertainment."





The free concert featuring Christchurch artists will run through to 8pm, donations can be made on the day or at <http://www.fundraiseonline.co.nz/MotatapuChChAppealConcert>. All donations collected from these fundraising efforts will go to the Red Cross 2011 Earthquake Appeal.

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Photo Caption: Anton Cooper -2010 Motatapu mountain bike, Photo Credit: Andy Peskett
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