

MEDIA RELEASE
24 June 2018

AUSTRALIA'S ULTIMATE DESERT RACE PROVES ITS WORTH

Enormous crowds, unusually warm weather and record breaking competitor achievements were the highlights of this year's Tatts Finke Desert Race.

"This year the Finke Desert Race club introduced a new initiative to entice more people to the experience the thrill of motorsport. A Free Style Motocross (FMX) display in the town centre in conjunction with the Alice Springs Town Council's night markets drew an estimated crowd of 5000+ and was a huge success", said club Vice President, Claire Ryan.

"This was an enormous effort by all involved and we've had great feedback from stall holders," said Ms Ryan.

The Scrutineering function the following night at the start finish line attracted the biggest ever crowd the venue has held with upwards of 7000 people visiting throughout the night. A *Welcome to Country* kicked off the evening with a feast of food, entertainment and machinery on display. The 2018 Finke Hero was announced on the night; long term volunteer, Simon Carr, was the recipient.

"The buzz around this year's event was incredible," said Finke Desert Race Club President, Antony Yoffa.

"With the highest ever number of competitors in 43 years (614 bikes, 130 cars), with 87% of them from interstate, it meant a huge visitor boom for Alice Springs."

"7000 interstate visitors spending a \$1000 each would have seen a \$7M injection in the Alice Springs economy."



Other new initiatives this year included a camera crew and satellite link at Finke community to catch the action and interviews to feedback live vision, the trialling of GPS trackers on some competitors to determine the robustness of the system and the production of a new safety video targeting school kids featuring several junior rides (*Which can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/PjUFvDfzyd0>*)



A Finke Safety Message from the 'Sadadeen Quad Squad'

“The inclusion of the *Acciona* sponsored all electric rally vehicle, which managed a nonstop 226km run on Race Day 2, was a highlight for that team and raised lot of interest,” said Mr Yoffa.

“The winners in both sections achieved new heights; former Dakar Champion, Toby Price, won an unprecedented 6th bike title, fending off local rider, David Walsh, whilst the driver navigator team of Shannon and Ian Rentsch also won their 6th title - All who are keen to return in 2019. The inaugural ‘Fastest Female Category’ for bikes, named after former race doctor and 5-time competitor Kay Wharton, was run and won by Ellyse O’Connor of Rockhampton.”

All race results are available at www.finkedesertrace.com.au

The 2019 Tatts Finke Desert Race will be run from the 7-10th June 2019.

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