

MEDIA RELEASE
30th May 2018**10 DAYS UNTIL RACE WEEKEND '18 KICKS OFF**

The countdown is on until the 2018 Tatts Finke Desert Race, which again features a star-studded competitor line-up at the 43rd running of the event.

2016 Dakar winner and five-time Tatts Finke Desert Race winner, Toby Price, will return to Finke again this year, out to achieve a double finish in this year's event.

Price first attempted both car and bike races at Finke in 2016 and came agonisingly close to claiming the double, winning on his bike but finishing runner-up in the cars.

Sidelined from competing on his bike last year due to injury, Price makes a celebrated return to Finke in 2018 to attempt "The Double" for a second-time and become the first to be crowned King of the Desert on both two wheels and four.

Out to defend the four-wheel title from Price is last year's winning father-son duo Shannon and Ian Rentsch from Victoria, flying the flag again for Jimco Aussie Special in their Nissan 3500cc.

Shannon Rentsch is out to achieve a record of his own and eclipse Australian off-road legend Mark Burrows' record five wins, after equalling this achievement last year.

Supercars rising star Todd Hazelwood will also be at the event to support father Russell as he competes in his first motorcycle outing since 1995, the year Todd was born.

Hazelwood senior will race in the Over 45's class alongside 107 others chasing victory at Australia's Ultimate Desert Race.

This year, fans will be able to watch competitors' progress live as they finish Race Day 1 and start Race Day 2 from the Finke Checkpoint for the first time in the history of the event. The new addition will see live vision from Finke viewed on big screens at the Start/Finish line in Alice Springs, as well as streamed live online for all to see. There has been a considerable investment in trialling this for the 2018 event, with organisers hoping this will add another element to the production and broadcast of the event to the world.

Access to the Start/Finish line in Alice Springs has also been remodelled ahead of this year's event, with separate entry and exit points for vehicles and more spacious pit areas for both bikes and cars, expected to enhance fans' event experience.



2018 will also see the introduction of the **Kay Wharton Fastest Female Category** into the bike race at the event, honouring the former Race Doctor and five-time Finke bike race finisher.

Introduced to acknowledge Wharton and the enormous contribution of women to the Finke Desert Race, the Fastest Female Category will award the top three female finishers across all bike classes this year. The Fastest Female Category will be awarded at the official presentation night following the final day of Race Weekend at the Alice Springs Convention Centre.

The Official Presentation Night - proudly presented by Platinum Sponsor, UBET - will also showcase the highly-anticipated race highlights package and present all competitors who complete the gruelling event, with their prized 'Survivor Spike', which will be streamed live online.

A new, free and public function on the Thursday night of Race Week will also be introduced this year - the inaugural **Finke Street Party & Night Markets**.

The official race week kick-off party will see Australia's most successful freestyle moto x team *Showtime FMX* performing tricks that will thrill event-goers, while offering an array of enticing food options, and stallholders selling indigenous art, craftworks and handmade clothing, with generous support provided by the Alice Springs Town Council.

The Tatts Finke Desert Race will take place 8-11 June 2018.

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