



AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST DESERT RACE
QUEENS BIRTHDAY WEEKEND 10-13 JUNE 2016

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MEDIA RELEASE

2016 Tatts Finke Desert Race : Preview

Just when you thought the Tatts Finke Desert Race couldn't get any bigger or better after last year's mega 40th anniversary event, along comes Tatts Finke Desert Race 2016 and this one to be held from June 10-13 could be even more memorable.

As Australia's greatest desert race, the "Finke" already has serious national and international credibility.

People talk of the Dakar, Baja, and Finke.

Now that iconic status takes on even deeper meaning in 2016 when the race welcomes back reigning Finke King of the Desert Toby Price with another very special title, namely reigning Dakar champion.

Aboard his KTM, Price dominated the 2016 Dakar Rally, winning Stages 2,5,6,8 and 9, winning overall by about 40 minutes, and becoming the first Australian to ever win any class of the Dakar Rally, as well as the only person to ever win on the second attempt.

Price placed third in his first Dakar foray last year (2015).

Since Dakar this year he has followed his mammoth achievement by becoming the first Australian ever to win the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge, and now the big question is whether or not he can pick up another victory at the 2016 Tatts Finke Desert Race to equal the record five victories of Randall Gregory (91, 92, 93, 94, 95).

So who else can challenge for the 2016 Tatts Finke Desert Race 2-wheel crown?

The answer is quite a few!



FINKE DESERT RACE INC
P (08) 8952 8886
admin@finkedesertrace.com.au

PO BOX 283, ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
F (08) 8955 5456
www.finkedesertrace.com.au



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Former Finke winner Todd Smith from Condobolin in NSW must be in with a chance on his Honda CRF 450 together with his brother Jacob who also this year competed in the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge riding with a broken scapular and ultimately succumbing to mechanical issues.

Three Alice Springs riders Jack Dooley McDonnell (Honda CRF450), David Walsh (KTM 500 EXC) and Caleb Auricht (Honda CRF 450) have the advantage of local knowledge and would dearly love to win their 'home' race.

Legends at the 2016 Tatts Finke Desert Race however, are not confined to two-wheeled competitors with Mark Burrows returning to the event.

The seven time Australian Off Road Champion and five time Finke Desert Race winner has recently been inducted into the Motor Sport Hall of Fame alongside other such motor sport greats as Colin Bond, Ross Dunkerton, Mick Doohan, Wayne Gardner, Peter Brock, Allan Moffat, and Garry Rush, to name but a few.

Burrows with co-driver Colin Hodge will be competing in their MBR Jimco, but face a class field in the Pro Buggy division.

There are previous Finke winners such as Shannon and Ian Rentsch (Jimco Buggy) and Hayden Bentley and Ben Chivell (Racer Engineering Buggy) together with the likes of Travis Robinson (Jimco OBR), Mathew Kittle (Jimco), Chris Coulthard (Jimco), and Jack Rhodes/David Pullino (Jimco).

Other crews competing for outright honours will come from the Extreme 2-wheel drive not exceeding 6000cc class with former winners Greg Gartner (Ford F150), Brad Gallard/Scott Modistach (Geiser Brothers TT), and David Fellows (Jimco TT), together with Billy Geddes (Geiser Brothers TT) in their fearsome Trophy Trucks.

Competition will also be high throughout the smaller classes, and the Production 4 Wheel Drive field will have added interest courtesy of an entry by Mazda with a BT-50 model driven by second generation motoring journalist Toby Hagon lining up against Geoff Pickering's Mitsubishi Pajero.



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The 2016 Tatts Finke Desert Race is held over a 226 kilometre course from the Alice Springs start to the overnight stop at Finke (Apatula) on Day 1 (June 12) with the field racing back to Alice Springs on Day 2 (June 13).

Prologue to establish the start order will be held on an 8 kilometre circuit at the Alice Springs start complex on June 11.

Last year's (2015) Kings of the Desert (outright winners) were:

Bikes: Toby Price (KTM) in a time of 3 hours 52 minutes 54 seconds.

Cars: Shannon and Ian Rentsch (Jimco Nissan) in a time of 3 hours 42 minutes 20 seconds.

Visit the event web site: www.finkedesertrace.com.au

For Further Information contact:

Mike Drewer

Mobile: 0419 273 333

Email: m.drewer@bigpond.com

Penny Gordon

Mobile: 0408 842 363

Email: pgordon@picknowl.com.au



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