



Cactus & Karapoti Strengthen Ties



In a fitting coming together of two rugged brands, New Zealand's longest running mountain bike event - the Karapoti Classic - has signed one of New Zealand's toughest outdoor brands - Cactus Outdoor - for the 2017 "Cactus Karapoti Classic".

Established in 1986, Wellington's Karapoti Classic has been the epicentre of New Zealand mountain biking for more than 30 years. It was the first event to attract 100 riders and the first to attract 1000 riders, which is the Karapoti's self-imposed entry limit. The attraction is a gruelling 50k through Upper Hutt's scenic but savage Akatarawa Ranges and in 2016 the event attracted riders from 10 countries.

Established in Wellington in 1992, Cactus Outdoor was founded as a hard-wearing and locally made outdoor manufacturer. The founders happened to be keen mountain bikers and in 1995 undertook a minor sponsorship with the Karapoti Classic that has lasted to this day.

Based now in Christchurch, in 2011 Cactus opened their first ever retail outlet next to their manufacturing HQ at 90 Fitzgerald Avenue. In 2016 they returned to where it all began to open a Wellington retail outlet in 241 Thorndon Quay.

In 2017 Cactus Outdoor will celebrate its 25th year as the principal sponsor of the "Cactus Karapoti Classic".

"Cactus and Karapoti are a great fit," says Karapoti Classic event manager, Michael Jacques. "Karapoti is renowned as New Zealand's toughest mountain bike event and Cactus is renowned as New Zealand's toughest outdoor brand."

Jacques says Cactus' willingness to step up to the top spot is testament to event's stature and inclusive culture.

"Karapoti is actually the longest-running mountain bike race in the Southern Hemisphere, so there's a lot of history there. There are riders and sponsors and volunteers who have been involved with the event for 10 or 20, even all 32 years. Cactus has been one of our longest-serving minor sponsors for 22 years, so having them step up and assume the principal sponsorship is confirmation of the stature and culture that surrounds this event.

"And we have no reservations endorsing their world-renowned quality," laughs Jacques. "Cactus made us a banner 20 years ago that still looks like new!"

The 32nd "Cactus Karapoti Classic" is now open for entries at www.karapoti.kiwi. Race day is Saturday 18th February and organisers already have more than 100 entries.

"Karapoti's popularity never fails to amaze us," says Jacques. "After 32 years the Cactus Karapoti Classic is still the one race on every mountain biker's wish list."