



Media Release – “Top Aussies hit Christchurch Streets”

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For immediate release

Further excitement value was added to the Street Mile races at next month’s “The Big Shot” today, with confirmation that four top Australian middle distance stars have been added to the fields.

The biggest name added to the fields is Australian 1500m record holder Ryan Gregson, no stranger to Christchurch after winning his events in 2009 and 2010 at the International Track Meets. Gregson stunned the field and the crowd in 2009 with a blistering last lap to win the 3000m event, in an Australian junior record, and has gone on to be one of Australia’s best ever middle distance athletes. He was an Olympic Games semifinalist in the 1500m in 2012, won Auckland’s Queen St Mile in 3m49 in 2013, and has represented Australia at three IAAF World Championships.

Also in the men’s race, taking on Olympic silver medallist Nick Willis, will be Australian 5000m and 10,000m champion Brett Robinson, who is no slouch at the shorter distances with a best time of 3min38 for the 1500m. Other Kiwis to watch will be local hero and multiple national champion at 800m, Brad Mathas, and sub-4min miler Hayden McLaren, originally from Christchurch but now based in Nelson.

The women’s field also shapes up as a scintillating contest, with local stars Angie Petty and Rosa Flanagan to be challenged by top Australians Melissa Duncan and Genevieve Lacaze. Duncan brings the pedigree of a 4min05 1500m to the field, plus a fine history in NZ after winning the Auckland Track Challenge 1500m in 2015. Lacaze is the Australian steeplechase champion, an Olympian from 2012, and won the London Road Mile in 2014.

In 2010, Gregson set an Australian record of 3min31.06 for the 1500m, which at the time was also broke Willis’ Oceania Area record. The Kiwi miler has subsequently reclaimed the Oceania record, but will be wary of the threat that Gregson poses when they meet in Christchurch.

“I’m excited to be coming to Christchurch for this new event, and think it’s great that the event is attracting such a high quality field” said Willis today. “My undefeated record in road miles is under threat if I don’t bring my A game to this race.”

Entry to the Street Miles, and the general admission area of The Big Shot, will be free to the public, and organisers are expecting a big crowd to turn out on the Monday-ised Waitangi Day holiday on 8-Feb. Tickets are now on sale to the hosted area at The Big Shot, which will be adjacent to the finish line of the Street Miles, as well as to the charity luncheon at the Mashina Lounge on 4-Feb.

The luncheon will feature Kiwi icon Rob Waddell as guest speaker, and a charity auction of some historic sporting memorabilia. Sponsorship packages incorporating both days are also available – all details are on the website thebigshot.co.nz, or by contacting Paul Coughlan at paul@internationaltrackmeet.co.nz

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