



A New Direction for the ASB Christchurch Marathon

The South Island's premier road race is headed in an exciting direction with a new title sponsor - ASB Bank.

The City of Christchurch International Marathon Trust has announced ASB as the new principal sponsor. Entries are open and the "ASB Christchurch Marathon" will also sport a new look and feel for 2017.

Christchurch International Marathon Trust chairman Daniel Reese says the ASB partnership is hugely exciting. "Our partnership with ASB will help raise the event's national awareness and create new promotional avenues that we hope will boost participation, both locally and nationally."

Inspired by the 1974 Commonwealth Games Marathon, the event was established in 1981 and quickly became the South Island's premier running event. The ASB Christchurch Marathon will continue to cater for a wide cross-section of people, which has helped drive its success to date. Alongside the classic 42.2k marathon distance, options include half marathon, 10km and the kids' 'mara'fun'.

The fast, flat Christchurch course is renowned as New Zealand's fastest road race. But race director, Chris Cox, says the success of the event has been that it caters for all ages and abilities.

"We're proud to attract New Zealand's best runners," Cox says. "But people approach running from different fitness backgrounds and have different goals, so we make a point of providing something for everyone."

Cox also points to the new ASB sponsorship as helping the event guarantee its future: "In the last two years the focus has been on bringing the Christchurch Marathon back to its traditional home in the central city," he says. "This has been successful, but it came at a huge cost that makes meaningful and proactive sponsorship absolutely essential."

ASB general manager branch banking Grant Gilbert says the event's history and popularity with the Christchurch community is what attracted ASB to team up with the marathon.

"The ASB Christchurch Marathon has been a special part of this city's social fibre for many years and we're delighted to show our support for the Canterbury community and contribute to one of the pinnacle events in the region's calendar," Mr Gilbert says.

"The ASB Christchurch Marathon is an exciting addition to ASB's Canterbury sponsorship portfolio, sitting alongside the ASB Summer Starter event. ASB has also successfully sponsored the ASB Auckland Marathon since 2014 and now we are very proud to sponsor this iconic Canterbury event," Mr Gilbert says.

The 2017 ASB Christchurch Marathon event will take place on Sunday June 4th. Entries for the full marathon, half marathon, 10km and kids' mara'fun are now open at: www.christchurchmarathon.co.nz.