

Don River Dash revs up for another year

BY JACK DE LACEY

ARAGING tyrant of water in the wet season, future racing icon in the dry.

The Annual Don River Dash is set to rumble the streets of Bowen, September 10 to September 12, with a total race distance of 320km for each racing class.

The race event has an off-road car (auto) event and a bike (moto) event on the same weekend at different times. Off Road vehicles race in the morning and bikes race in the afternoon.

"It will be bigger this year, we have 100 buggies nominated, mostly from Queensland, as well as 200 bikes," Buggy rider and major sponsor Dale McDonnell

said.

"We also have a new class this year for demonstration, a 7.2 L four-wheel drive buggy, which at the moment all of the pro buggies are two-wheel drive," he said.

Mr McDonnell is racing again this year in class 6 side by side turbo, of which last year the local finished in the top 10.

"We ended up finishing 8th overall, out of 94 participants, and we were 2nd in our class.

With the event gaining more traction each year, the Don River Dash was the talk of the town at this year's iconic Finke Desert race, as riders swap dust for tropical sunshine to participate.

"In the Don we don't have to contend with so much dust... the Don is every bit as gruelling as

Finke, the sand is just so hard on all of the equipment, a lot of DNFs in this race.

"This race will be as big as Finke, everybody that has raced it has said that it is better for the spectators too

For sport lovers and action seekers alike, the Don River Dash contends for the spot of Bowens biggest event of the year.

Spectators can now watch the action firsthand whilst tuning into 91.1FM to listen to the action as well as view stats on SpeedHive.

A full detail and breakdown of the Don River Dash will be available for spectators in the next edition of Whitsunday Regional News.



Dale McDonnell races his side by side turbo at Finke this year. PHOTO Supplied.

Young racer takes on the Dash



17 year old Lenny Snell. PHOTO Supplied.

BY JACK DE LACEY

AT just 17 years old, Bowen local Lenny Snell has found himself on Australia's biggest desert racing stage with his heroes.

Now he faces his latest challenge on home turf, as he takes on competitors around the nation, solo, for the Don River Dash.

Revved up with confidence, there is something about this young man that fuels his love for a twisted wrist on the throttle and the feeling of rubber tires on coarse sand.

"I cannot wait to do it, I have been looking forward to this race ever since I got back from Finke, I am feeling more confident and I've got the equipment and the bike to do it, I am counting down the days," Mr Snell said.

The young racer found himself in the top class at Finke this year, against some of Australia's champion riders.

The experience alone has captivated Mr Snell's passion for the adrenaline pumping event.

"It has really opened my eyes up to what the sport really is, I'm hooked really.

"The first time riding out there all I could think was 'I can't believe I am actually riding at Finke' it was

the sort of stuff I used to watch when I was younger.

"Watching Toby Price and seeing it on the news, and all of a sudden I am riding on the same bikes and the same tracks, I was getting goosebumps, it was insane.

Next week, Lenny is set to take on the gruelling challenge that the Don River provides.

With the home ground advantage, he is confident in his momentum and excitement from Finke to take on some 200 riders believed to participate.

"I just feel so much better than what I was last year, Finke has taught me a lot, the whole run down you go through many different types of terrain, it boosted my confidence and my knowledge on how to ride properly.

"It's surreal, after having Toby Price here last year, the town has made a name for itself, people are even asking about it out at Finke."

Lenny Snell will find himself among riders from local sectors and nationally in what is shaping up to be a spectacle for Bowen Locals and racing fanatics alike.

Confidence and passion in young riders like Mr Snell can only fortify the entertainment set to be shown on the iconic Don River.

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