



MEDIA RELEASE –

FOR THE ATHLETES. INTERNATIONAL TRACK MEET 2022.

28 January 2022

For immediate release

Since 2009, Christchurch has hosted NZ's best Track and Field athletes with the International Track Meet, and it's associated events. 2022 will be no different, although everything will be different.

"Today we are pleased to announce that the 2022 International Track Meet will go ahead at Ngā Puna Wai as scheduled on Saturday the 26th of February" said Meet Director Paul Coughlan.

"This year is 100% for the athletes".

The global athletics landscape changed before Tokyo 2020 with athletes now requiring a mix of both performance and world rankings based on points to qualify for major competitions like Olympics, Commonwealth Games and World Championship events. World Ranking points are earned through targeted sanctioned competitions based on a mix of finishing position and performance with different weightings assigned to the respective sanctioned World Athletics Meets.

Last year the International Track Meet, along with the Sir Graeme Douglas meeting in Auckland, were successful in gaining World Athletics, Continental Tour Bronze status. Currently the highest status in New Zealand.

The World Athletics Continental Tour (WACT) is an exciting series of the best one-day Meets in the world outside of the Diamond League. The WACT comprises over 100 track and field meetings across the six continental geographical areas.

Christchurch, and the International Track Meet had the honour of being the first WACT Meet for 2021 and proved significant for several New Zealand Olympians in qualifying for Tokyo as well as a highly talented pool of athletes who are targeting the upcoming World Championships (Oregon, July) and Commonwealth Games (Birmingham, August) that are scheduled to take place later this year.

With valuable world ranking points available to our best athletes and ensuring we have the ability to safely run the International Track Meet within the regulations for New Zealand's red traffic light setting the decision has been made to back our athletes who sacrifice and work tirelessly for years, for a shot to achieve their international ambitions.

In addition to competition, and points, Twenty-Five Thousand dollars of prize money is at stake for a Bronze Continental Tour Meet, providing a vital income stream for our brightest athletes.

For the first time in the events history, in line with the red traffic light settings for gatherings, spectators will be excluded from being present track side with the meet consistently achieving crowds in excess of 2,500. However, the 2022 event will be livestreamed for free via the International Track Meet website and the Sky Sport Next YouTube Channel so everyone can access the action and athlete interviews.

The ITM will feature eighteen World Athletics Continental Tour Events with NZ's best athletes competing in one of two sessions of less than 100 athletes and coaches. A third bubble of less than 100 volunteers, officials and staff will ensure the organisation of the meet.

The FAST Five, a scratch start, teams-based, 5km road run, finishing on the athletics track at Nga Puna Wai planned as a key fundraiser for International Track Meet and an integral part of the ITM weekend has been postponed and will now look to launch alongside the 2023 International Track Meet.

The International Track and Field Trust, the charitable organisation that delivers International Track Meet has also made the tough decision to forgo our Corporate Luncheon and hosting programme. As a result, the event is projected to make an operating loss in 2022. The Trust has committed to running the 2022 International Track Meet for the athletes.

An opportunity exists to be a co-presenting live stream partner. Charitable donations can be made via International Track Meet website or to International Track and Field Trust.

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Access to our extensive image library is available on request.

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2021 International Track Meet Highlights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWriIYUCWj0>