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It's going to be another cracker...

For those of you who made it to the inaugural Genesis Energy Lake to Lighthouse Challenge last year – then see you back there in November! For those of you who didn't, the good news is – it is on again – get it in the diary and come and join us at this incredible event.

The Genesis Energy Lake to Lighthouse Challenge event is one of the most stunning in the world, starting at Lake Waikaremoana in the Urewera National Park, on the East Coast of the North Island; competitors then traverse approx 185 km of stunning native bush tracks, back country gravel roads, farmland and rivers by foot, mountain bike and kayak, to finish at the coastal town of Wairoa.

The race starts from the village of Tuai on Friday with a 15km mountain bike to Home Bay and a 14km kayak across Lake Waikaremoana to Hopuruahine Landing. Then begins two run legs totaling 45kms around the iconic Lake Waikaremoana track, which is rated as one of the greatest walks in the world. It includes a traverse of the 1180m Panekiri Range which offers panoramic views of the region. There is a short 6km mountain bike back to Tuai village to complete the first day.

Day two includes a 23km mountain bike, a 43km road cycle, a 21km kayak into Wairoa and then a 16km loop run to the historic Wairoa Lighthouse.

As those who attended last year will testify, there are so many unique things about the Genesis Energy Lake to Lighthouse Challenge; the majestic landscape that surrounds the athletes over the two days of competition and use of the Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk Track. Then to top it off what most captured the heart of the athletes and supporters was the amazing

local support and family atmosphere. From the time athletes arrived, to the completion of the prize giving – you could feel the support from the local Waikaremoana and Wairoa communities, the volunteers, organizers and fellow athletes.

The village of Tuai, situated 6km by road from Lake Waikaremoana and home to the Genesis Energy Waikaremoana Power Scheme, is transformed into a race village for Thursday and Friday nights where athletes and supporters are treated to great meals and entertainment by the local community on both evenings.

This all-inclusive nature of the event continued after its completion, with organisers including competitors' feedback and ideas into the planning of this year's event.

"We sent out a survey to all the competitors and the feedback has been really tremendous with indications we may double the number of starters," explains Race Director, Chris Joblin.

"We have listened to what people had to say and we have made some changes to both the course and to the weekend's schedule. The biggest format change is that we will now be holding the awards dinner and event party on the Saturday night in Wairoa, leaving Sunday free for travel.

"To make the event more team friendly we have also revised the day two course - this now starts with a 23km MTB stage – 80% off road through bush, scrub and farm tracks, followed by a 43km road cycle, a shortened 21km paddle on the Wairoa River followed by a 16km run, 50% of this is off-road."

Both of last year's champions Richard and Elina Ussher have confirmed they will be back on the start line to contest the \$50,000 in prize money and spot prizes. They enjoyed the experience last year as much as they did the racing, as Richard explains;

"Crossing the Lake to Lighthouse finish line last year is something I'll never forget, a group of local kids performed a haka for me, which was a pretty cool experience and capped off a race that in many ways will stand out for me for the whole experience rather than the racing. Elina took out the women's race completing a great family double for us and the praise for the L2L team in putting on the inaugural race was universal. It is definitely a tough race as an individual but I think it has a huge scope to grow mainly with the teams, the area is stunning and the whole community supported the race in unbelievable fashion. It really is as much an event as it is a race."

Described by some as the most challenging two-day individual multisport race in the country, the event can also be completed in 2, 3 or 4 person teams.

Principal sponsor Genesis Energy were very pleased with last year's event and are confirmed again for another year, possibly fielding up to 10 teams.

For more information: www.laketolighthouse.co.nz

Day One – Friday 20th November

Stage One: 15km Mountain Bike
 Stage Two: 14km Kayak
 Stage Three: 25km Run
 Stage Four: 20km Run & 6km Mountain Bike

Day Two – Saturday 21st November

Stage Five: 23km Mountain Bike
 Stage Six: 43km Road Cycle
 Stage Seven: 21km Kayak
 Stage Eight: 16km Run
 Prizegiving