

DEVONPORT – AUSTRALIA’S RICHEST WHEELRACE

The Devonport Wheelrace which will be run on Wednesday night will be the richest wheelrace in Australia following an overwhelming response from sponsors, including race sponsors Terry and Joan Matthews.

For the first time Devonport will top Victoria’s iconic Austral wheel which was held two weeks ago and Saturday’s Latrobe wheel.

The Devonport event, which has attracted a class field of more than 120 cyclists will now be worth \$13,000 after it was previously announced that the race’s purse would be raised 33% to \$10,000.

For the past five years cyclists have raced for up to \$7,500, but with this 75% increase further prestige will be added to the Devonport carnival, as was done several years ago when prizemoney for the mens and womens 400 metre gifts was substantially raised, with both races being of equal value.

Total prizemoney for the Eli Devonport Carnival is now \$73,000 –a record.

The Devonport Athletic Club is also proud of the fact Mr and Mrs Mathews, formerly through their company Mathews Constructions has sponsored the wheelrace for 17 consecutive years, unlike most clubs which find it necessary to regularly seek new sponsors for their premier cycling event.

The club which this week will be running its 72nd annual Christmas Carnival is delighted that the support of sponsors, in particular Mr and Mrs Matthews has allowed it to lift the wheelrace prizemoney to exceed that of all other similar races in the country.

While \$13,000 may not seem a lot when compared with many other sports it is a significant amount for Australian track cycling, with bigger payouts going to the road racing fraternity.

No doubt previous winners of the Devonport wheel will be envious of the amount this year’s crop of talented cyclists will be vying for.

Recent winners include Stephen Pate (four times), Darren Young (twice), Ben Kersten (twice), Brett Aitken and Matthew Gilmore. Ten of the past 17 winners have been victorious from the scratch mark.

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