



BULLER X BLAZES NEW TRAIL FOR EXTREME SKIING IN AUSTRALIA

8 June 2016

At Mt Buller there are exciting plans to unveil an aspect of Melbourne's favourite mountain many have never seen. A mountain that is a familiar alpine playground to many will reveal its darker side with a new thrilling ski event slated for this winter.

Buller X is an extreme and elite level freeski competition planned in the Chutes off Mt Buller's summit during August and September. Entries are now open and close on 30 June.

This is terrain of consequence. Steep. Icy. Rocky. Dangerous for anyone except the most skilled skiers, and a calculated risk even for the best in the country.

The event is the brainchild of Tony "Harro" Harrington who has been behind similar big mountain challenges, like the legendary World Heli Challenge, for decades. "Like any big mountain skier I love the thrill of a challenge, and the chutes of Mt Buller have intrigued me since I first laid eyes on them," says Harrington.

"This is some of the rowdiest terrain I've seen in all my time in through Alaska, New Zealand, North America and Australia. It's humbling and exciting and incredible to think it's just a short walk from a chairlift inside a ski resort boundary. Many people have no idea there are lines so scary and exciting right on their doorstep."

Harrington has spent years planning the idea for an extreme ski event at Mt Buller, "Since Nick Reeves, the mountain manager at Mt Buller, first showed me this area years ago we've been talking about what we could do here." The terrain is double black diamond and seriously technical. "This is not terrain for any skier. Only a small pool of athletes is even in contention for Buller X. This is serious terrain for serious skiers," explains Harrington.

One of the cadre of skiers is invited local and Buller X Athlete Liaison Watkin McLennan who is inspired by Mt Buller's peak and explores its challenges each winter. "Buller X is so cool because people around the world will finally get to see the Chutes in all their gnarly glory. Snow moving, the sounds of skis gripping ice, rock and powder all at the same time."

Buller X is not just blazing a new trail by taking on new terrain; it is forging a fresh new direction in ski events with its unique format.

Entrants are invited to answer an online 'Call Up' and throw their hat in the ring via the event website. They are selected on their skiing credentials and skills by a panel of judges but are also called on to rally support for their entry with votes.

"We want each athlete to bring their crew along for the ride so this is all about getting their friends, family, sponsors and mates to support them and vote to show us they deserve their place in the competition," says event director Tony Harrington.

The event also harnesses new techniques including filming every athletes' run and collaborating with judges around the globe to review each line and carefully score the winners. Each athlete will ski the chutes twice and the winner is chosen for the best combined score.

Buller X will take a leaf from the book of big wave surf events and be held inside a weather window to ensure optimal conditions if and when the event is called on. The event 'contenders' will be announced on 15 July and the waiting period will run from 1 August – 30 September.

"It's all about the mountain, the weather and the athletes being ready at the same time. If everything aligns we run an event that will showcase all three in harmony. If the conditions don't arrive, we wait. That's what pure big mountain skiing is about," Harrington explains.

The call is now out for the best skiers in the country. It will be exciting to see who answers it.

For more information call Harro on 0427 427 761 or email ride@bullerx.com.au

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