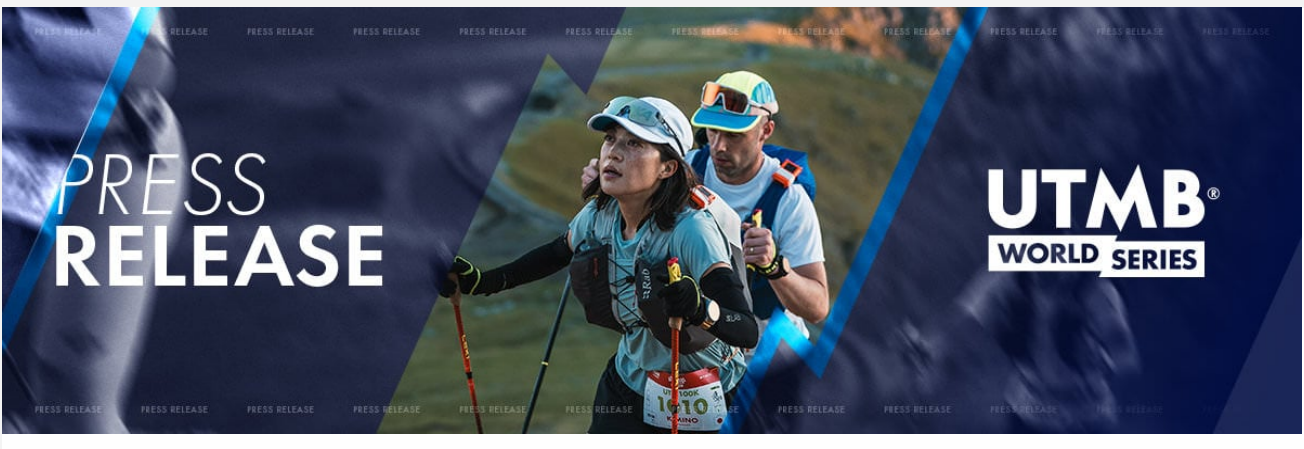




Press Release - Chamonix (France), Monday 11 April 2026

## HOKA Ultra-Trail Australia by UTMB returns for a second consecutive year as the UTMB World Series Major in Oceania

From **14 to 17 May**, HOKA Ultra-Trail Australia by UTMB®, the first of the four UTMB® World Series Majors, returns for its **18th edition** in the spectacular World Heritage Listed Blue Mountains. The event will welcome more than **8,000 runners** and promises a weekend combining high-level competition with opportunities to explore the region’s cultural heritage and landscapes. As a Major in the series, it will be broadcast live, including on **live.utmb.world**.



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### A true celebration of the region and its community

Set in the heart of the Blue Mountains, the event has established itself as a key fixture, deeply rooted in the region. This is reflected in participation figures, with **90% of runners coming from Australia and 65% from the area the Blue Mountains**— highlighting the strong local engagement behind the event.

The event offers an exceptional opportunity to experience a UNESCO World Heritage Site. **Six race formats** are available — **161km (100M), 101km (100K), 51km (50K), 22km (20K), 11km, and 1km (reserved for children)** — each offering a different perspective on the region’s striking landscapes. From sandstone cliffs and dense forests to iconic sections such as the legendary Furber Steps, the courses combine physical challenge with a deeply sensory experience.

The event is also marked by a **strong cultural commitment to Indigenous communities** and to **recognising the lands it crosses**. Aboriginal culture is honoured through a **Welcome to Country** ceremony, **traditional smoking rituals of cleansing and welcome**, and the presence of **yidaki players** along the course.

In the lead-up to the event, dedicated content helps runners understand the history and significance of the landscapes they pass through — reinforcing the connection between sporting performance, sense of place and living heritage.

### A leading example of gender balance in ultra-trail

Oceania is **one of the most advanced regions on the circuit for female participation** in trail running. With particularly strong momentum over shorter distances and high overall representation, HOKA Ultra-Trail Australia by UTMB confirms this trend, with **women accounting for 43% of the field** — one of the highest proportions across the UTMB World Series.

On short formats, participation is even higher, reaching **55% in the 22km** and **61% in the 11km**, reflecting a clear broadening of access to the sport.

This is underpinned by **practical initiatives** that support an inclusive environment, including **dedicated facilities** (changing rooms and toilets), the provision of **feminine hygiene kits** at aid stations, and dedicated panel talks on the main stage.

This progress is part of a wider regional shift, already evident in New Zealand at Tarawera Ultra-Trail by UTMB, which recorded **historic gender parity across all its races** earlier this year. Together, these events reflect a lasting shift in trail running across Oceania, where gender balance is no longer a target, but an established reality within the culture of the sport.



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### World-class elites set for the season’s first Major

[The 50K promises to take centre stage, with a particularly strong women’s field.](#)

New Zealand’s **Ruth Croft (NZ, UTMB Index 823)**, winner of UTMB 2025 and currently on a streak of four consecutive victories, will line up against China’s **Miao Yao (CHN, UTMB Index 822)**, winner of the OCC 2025. Two reigning UTMB World Series champions, separated by just one point in the UTMB Index, set the stage for a contest that promises to be as close as it is compelling on the Blue Mountains trails.

In the men’s race, New Zealand’s **Daniel Jones (NZ, UTMB Index 942)**, a leading regional figure and defending champion, returns with the aim of retaining his title.

[Strong Asian representation across all distances](#)

For this 2026 edition, the UTMB World Series Finals qualifying races will feature a particularly strong contingent of Asian runners, underlining the region’s growing presence on the international stage. In the 100M, **China’s Lin Chen (CHN, UTMB Index 783)**, winner of the 100M at Kodiak Ultra-Marathons by UTMB 2025, arrives with strong ambitions. The 100K field is also set to be highly competitive with **Guidu Qin (CHN, UTMB Index 924)** and **Guomin Deng (CHN, UTMB Index 898)** both expected to feature at the front. Meanwhile in the 50K, **Japan’s Hiroki Kai (JPN, UTMB Index 847)**, winner of the 20K at the final Major of the 2025 season, Chiang Mai Thailand by UTMB, adds further depth to this international and competitive line-up.

### A local event with global reach, broadcast live on live.utmb.world

Benefiting from its status as a Major UTMB World Series, two races (the 50K and 100K) of the HOKA Ultra-Trail Australia will be broadcast live on video on [DAZN](#) (excl. Canada and USA) and [Flosports](#) (USA), with commentary provided by renowned experts. In addition, [live.utmb.world](#), the global tracking platform for UTMB World Series events, will offer an even more immersive viewing experience, featuring enhanced interaction during the live broadcast, a live chat, statistics, runner tracking, and real-time results. The event will also be covered across the **UTMB World Series** and **event social media channels** ([Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [YouTube Shorts](#)), with additional highlights and behind-the-scenes content.

*“We are delighted to open the UTMB Live season with an event so deeply rooted in its region, fully reflecting our vision for the circuit: a strong local experience, driven by its community and made accessible to audiences worldwide through an enhanced, more immersive live broadcast this year,”* said **Antoine Aubour, Communications, Marketing and Media Director, UTMB Group**

#### Broadcast informations HOKA Ultra-Trail Australia by UTMB

**Date:** Live on 16 May from 04:45 to 17:00 (local time, UTC+10) — 20:45 to 09:00 CET  
**Languages:** English (commentary by Majell Backhausen and Jacqui Bell), French (Ugo Ferrari and Nicolas Martin), and Chinese (Sun Ruiyi)

**Platform:** Watch on [DAZN](#) (excl.Canada and USA), [Flosports](#) (USA) & [live.utmb.world](#).

### Note to editors

#### UTMB® World Series

UTMB® World Series is the trail running circuit that brings together the best athletes in the sport and amateur runners in top international events held in some of the most beautiful places on the planet. The UTMB® World Series is rooted in a passion for the mountains and respect for the environment and offers trail running enthusiasts the chance to experience the UTMB® adventure across the globe, with events taking place in Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is the way for everyone to start their quest towards the HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc, where the UTMB® World Series finals take place. Launched in May 2021 with the collaboration of UTMB Group and The IRONMAN Group, the UTMB® World Series circuit brings together 64 events in 29 countries. For more information, visit <https://utmb.world> | [Press Area & Photo](#)



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