

Record conditions and multi-million-dollar upgrades celebrated at Mt Hutt's open day

7 June 2019 - Canterbury's best-loved ski area Mt Hutt today celebrated its opening day with new trails and facilities, bumper crowds and the best snow base in 10 years.

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Defending its four-year title as New Zealand's best ski resort, Mt Hutt reaped the fruits of a timely snowstorm that dumped more than 75 centimetres of snow, with parts of the slopes sitting at an incredible one-metre deep.

The record conditions added to an electric alpine atmosphere, with all three chairlifts in action as well as two surface lifts for beginners. Two thousand skiers and snowboarders rugged up to hit the slopes, with about 12 die-hard regulars camping on the mountain overnight to catch first lifts at 9am this morning.

Mt Hutt ski area manager James McKenzie was on hand to soak up the ambience at the chairlift, and NZSki CEO Paul Anderson cracked open a bottle of bubbles to declare the season officially open.

"It's a real treat to be able to open the mountain with such a fantastic snow base. Guests were excited to hit their favourite trails, try out one of the new trails and enjoy the bluebird conditions. To top it off, our brand new, state-of-the-art groomer arrived on the mountain late last night and will be put straight to use tonight to deliver that perfect corduroy for the weekend."

For the 2019 season, Mt Hutt has injected more than \$2.5 million into the resort's facilities, including a renovation of the ski and board rental base and the introduction of 2.5km worth of new trails. One new trail, Hoods Hollow, was tried and tested today. It includes beginner terrain park features, banked turns, bumps and hollows, undulating terrain and a new ski-through covered tunnel.

"The focus for this year's upgrades is geared towards beginner terrain development and a strong emphasis on sustainability, while the upgrades to our rental facility will help us improve flow, comfort and convenience," McKenzie says. "Mt Hutt Park's crew has built two terrain parks for the jibbers and jumpers and we're also re-introducing loading at mid-station of the Triple chair lift. It's safe to say that this is the kick off we were hoping for, and we're thrilled with the turnout."