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The Ironman Triathlon—Such Humble Beginnings

By Ray Fauteux

The Hawaii Ironman grew from very humble beginnings. Really not much more than a few friends discussing who was the better athlete—a runner, a biker or a swimmer.

A suggestion was made that a race be invented that included all three elements. That day, an event was born that would change the landscape of sporting history.

What started as a 2.4 Waikiki rough water swim, a bike race around the island, followed by the Honolulu marathon gave birth to multi-event races that had never before existed.

Even races such as the Eco-challenge originated from that small gathering of friends. Little did they know that the race would one day move to Kona on the big island and explode into prominence in 1982 when ABC television covered the race. Television viewers were enthralled when Julie Moss collapsed in sight of Kona and then again feet from the finish line.

Who would have believed back then that the triathlon would find prominence as an olympic event that draws athletes from countries around the world.

How could they possible imagine that pros would be racing for huge prize money and that amateurs from every corner of the earth would challenge the Ironman distance, forever changing their lives for the better when they realized their dream of crossing that distant finish line.

The amazing thing is, there seems to be no end in sight. Races are filling in record time year after year as individuals from all walks of life are "Ironstruck" and hear the call of the Iron Gods drawing them to this incredible event.

If you are considering challenging the Ironman for the first time, I sincerely hope you do it. Everyone I know who has reached the Ironman finish line has seen it as a life-altering experience. There are countless Ironman race-day stories that are shared by those who have been there.

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Some are satisfied to finish one race, but there are also those who return year after year to feel that special Ironman bond that can only be experienced by taking part in the frenetic, sometimes terrifying mass swim start, a long bike ride full of climbs and near-misses and harrowing downhill curves and a marathon that will test the will, spirit and courage of everyone who takes on this challenge.

All this thanks to a few friends who had an idea that turned into one of the worlds most amazing sporting events that gives the ordinary person the opportunity to accomplish something very, very special.

My name is Ray and I'm a veteran of over 25 years of endurance events including 14 Ironman triathlons.. Come visit 'IRONSTRUCK'..the site I created that's full of training and racing tips for tri beginners and novice Ironmen.

<http://triathlon-ironman-myfirstironman-ironstruck.com>

Ironman Wisconsin Triathlon

By Sandy Saylor – WisconsinGuide Magazine

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The Madison area is host to the Ironman Wisconsin triathlon with more than 1,800 elite athletes from around the world are expected to participate. The rush of excitement is building as September 7th is fast approaching. Record attendance is expected this year, as this triathlon is one of the four sanctioned events in the United States.

The persistence of these men and women will be challenged to the fullest as their determination shines through. The 2.4-mile swimming loop will be in the incredible waters of beautiful Lake Monona. The biking portion is a 112-mile loop that stretches into the rural country backroads touching the entire town of Verona. Take time to visit this proud community as spectators stand on the curbs cheering the disciplined bikers as they flash by. Verona's festival last year alone attracted over 20,000 people and was likened to the "Tour de France". The pumped-up pedalers will also be racing through Mount Horeb and Cross Plains. The final 26.2 miles is the running portion that tests the endurance of each individual. This part of the course will take the triathletes through scenic parks, historical sites and local attractions such as the University of Madison.

Ironman North America and Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation should stand tall as the lead organizations that brought this exciting event to our magnificent state. Their generous sponsors and ambitious volunteers deserve credit for sharing their efforts in setting up water and first aid stations along the way, coordinating shuttles and lodging, working with local and state officials, and their endless generousities could go on. Thanks for helping make this triathlon run so smoothly. If you are unable to attend, don't feel left out. You will be able to view the Ironman Wisconsin on various regional stations throughout the state and on National TV stations: ESPN, the Outdoor Life Channel and CNN.

The vigorous training of each triathlete should be commended. The mindset to push oneself to attempt

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an Ironman triathlon goal is exhilarating. Each contestant should embrace the honor of participating in this inspiring event. The hard work and time spent in developing these awarding-winning talents to accomplish their dream is the true reward.

None



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