

Appendix (D)

with Jane or the people racing but the incredible atmosphere generated by the triathlon and Taupo communities. It won't happen anywhere else. Just look at the Olympic distance nationals!

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **robinj** on **20 May 2006, 07:27:32 PM**

new girl ,

hmhhh you seem to know too much
for just another new competitor

Question: you really a girl ?????

come on show yourself

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **new girl** on **22 May 2006, 01:37:45 PM**

I can only assure you that i really am a girl, im from Chch if thats of any help, a few of you know who i am :-*
I just know a few different things about whats going on and im completely unimpressed by it all.

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **#9** on **22 May 2006, 03:05:42 PM**

Quote from: **robinj** on **20 May 2006, 07:27:32 PM**

new girl ,
hmhhh you seem to know too much
for just another new competitor
Question: you really a girl ?????
come on show yourself

That's harsh. Is it because she knows stuff that she must be a guy?

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **new girl** on **22 May 2006, 05:17:01 PM**

ooh, i like your thinking! girls are very intelligent and can produce their own information when required!

Seriously though, im not taking the piss, they are just things that have been made aware to me, so others should perhaps have the oppourtunity to know about this as well.

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **ianhep** on **25 May 2006, 01:17:39 PM**

I rarely look at discussion groups. Post Ironman in Taupo I realized there was considerable disappointment. That's obvious. But quite frankly enough is enough. The stuff I am reading is totally abhorrent, ill-informed, rude, incorrect and childish.. And if it expresses the consensus from the Ironman community, then I have completely misjudged the triathlon scene in which I

have volunteered so many hours and so many dollars over the past 15 years.

I am involved in Ironman (and have been at different levels for 12 years) and contract to the event. So let me fill you in on some facts. Yes there was most definitely a contingency plan for Taupo – an in-depth one in writing. Why do I know it? Because I was responsible for completing it. So to the person who called Jane Patterson's information to this "a liar" on this discussion group – I invite you to repeat it to me, and identify yourself – then I will hand over my computer to the appropriate authorities and we can settle it in court in a defamation suit.

Frankly the decisions made at the event were not difficult. They were made by a Contingency Committee (consisting of the Race Director Wayne Reardon, TRI NZ Race Referee Bruce Chambers and WTC Athlete Liaison, Greg Welch). It was Jane Patterson's role as Event Director to communicate the decisions made to you as a group. The make up of the committee members was to ensure such decisions were made purely on the grounds of athlete safety – and without any commercial or other pressures from the event owners. That Committee waited until there was sufficient light to determine that the swim was not possible. Not a tough call. The plan then called for a Bike Run full distance. The Contingency Committee ruled that the winds were too strong along the lakefront. Precise weather forecasts from the Met Service and Taupo Airport indicated that the front would slowly ease during the morning. When the winds began to ease towards 30kph the contingency committee made the decision that the event could start. Hence the 11am start time. By that time a two-lap bike-run was not possible. And the plan then called for a single lap bike-run. All fairly logical stuff.

Why not Sunday? Simply the logistics, the costs, the traffic management, the key professional and volunteer staff and the costs to athletes preclude it. Are we on our own here? There's not been one Ironman event anywhere in the world in the 28 years of the sport that has included a lay-day for the same reasons. After all had this event included a planned lay-day, the athletes would have always been told – because they would have to book an additional day of accommodation to cover the eventuality.

I've heard it suggested that it would not need an additional stay because people could just drive home after the race. Fact is two-thirds of the field finish after the 12 hour mark. Fact is three-quarters are competing because they wish to qualify for Hawaii. Fact is therefore there are set contractual requirements for the qualification procedure held the day after race day. Fact is we are honour bound (by contract to the athlete) and strongly believe that the Awards Function is an integral part of the event.

I understand why athletes were disappointed. The 2000 volunteers felt the same. So did the organizers.

Finally I have the privilege in my career to be involved in some of the major sporting events and organisations in New Zealand and around the world. I rate Jane Patterson among the best. She is bright, passionate, hard-working, exact, has integrity and she cares. That's why Ironman New Zealand has doubled in numbers, and why it is rated among the very best Ironman events in the world.

I've recently spent time with a group of young people who won't get to live for much more than half of my years on this planet. They have reason to complain about life. But after all this was just a damn sporting event. And yet there's a group of people who have displayed such ferocity and degrading personal notes towards this event and the people that run it –

that I have lost faith completely in this sport that has been such a passion for me.

Of course you will all vote with your feet. Do it with the facts and with history of performance – and not driven by the bigoted views of some individuals who clearly have other small-minded agendas.

Ian Hepenstall

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **ajjack** on **25 May 2006, 02:40:56 PM**

Thanks ianhlep for an objective, factual post instead of a subjective, emotional outburst. Reading the past entries it seems that emotion is behind much of the sad negative and unconstructive comments.

So, what would I know? Well I have completed 22 NZ Ironmen and three Hawaii IM. Last years event rated, in my opinion, the best IM event I have ever been in. It was thanks to the organisation, competitors, supporters, volunteers and all the people of Taupo. World class! (Better than Hawaii) So this year the weather impacted on the event and what happened. Mass disappointment for everyone involved. Difficult decisions, emotional outbursts, dummy spitting and constant blah,blah,blah. Get over it for goodness sake!. Ironman is 90% training anyway, the event is just the painful bit at the end. Many of my real Ironman friends have already done countless events since March, enjoying what they have and looking forward to what may be ahead.

I was at a presentation given by Juddy for the 25th Coast to Coast event. Part of that was to look back at the history which is older than the NZ IM. The training is just as hard, if not harder than IM and the costs are way higher. Get there, start the event and half way through the event you get told, "sorry, cancel the run, weather to bad" or the kayak is cancelled, or change the course to much rain. Miss that bit but finish anyway and then come back next year to do the complete Coast to Coast.. Nobody moans, calls Juddy names, asks why it can't be held the next day, asks for compensation, (you still get your free can of beer) or writes abusive letters to chat lines. Could we not learn something from these hardy multisport people who just get on and deal with it?

I hope this sort of minority group gossip does not drive people like ianhlep out of the sport. We all need him and the Jane's and all the others who give of their time or there will be no events for you few people to moan about!

As a foot note, I bumped into a Taupo man associated with the Taupo Iron Virgins and was told after their first meeting following the 2006 event they all signed up to do the 2007 event. Great attitude, real Ironmen!

Title: **Re: Ironman 2007**

Post by: **mickey** on **25 May 2006, 02:45:28 PM**

Hey thanks for your input Ian.

What you have outlined with respect to contingency etc. all makes sense. I guess from the context of providing feedback in light of the information that you have just supplied; should the athletes not have been advised of the contingency options on the day as events unfolded? You have indicated there were multiple options available dependent upon certain factors. I'm sure outlining these at the outset of likleyhood of being required may have

All I can say is I'm glad I do Multi-sport and am not a triathlete as swimming in a calm lake, biking on the road, running on the road all while the sun shines and the wind is calm sounds a little boring to me.

Maybe multisporters are getting hard while triathletes are getting soft we may never know... ;)

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Carl B on 07 Mar 2006, 04:15:52 PM

having done both i can assure you that it's something to bike 180km in 4hrs 30, and then to run a 2:40 marathon...(i know, you know that ;-)

I agree multisport is more enjoyable but Ironman will never be a soft option, and when the good ironmen have a crack at multisport there will be raised eyebrows.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: aucklander on 07 Mar 2006, 06:57:49 PM

Droopy, I just want to jump in on the contingency day issue. Firstly, my major gripe with the organisers is that they never had a contingency day up their sleeves. Secondly, a couple of people have mentioned that this would cost more. WHO CARES? The entry fees for an Ironman (like the C2C) are a miniscule portion of the total cost. I took time off work and that alone cost me 10 times the entry fee. A mate of mine works on an hourly rate, he reckons the "debacle" cost him \$15,000.

When I sit down and really think about it, what really gets me is that the "organisers" have not once mentioned how they stuffed up or even how sorry they feel for the athletes. All they can talk about is how tough it was for them. Made me sick on the day, not for myself because I've done it before and I'll do it again, but for those who don't have this option.

Hey, MacGiver, Carl - I've done every major multisport race in NZ except for 3 (Goldrush, Mt Cook and Southern Traverse - me Aucklander you see) and I love the Ironman because it is so damn tough. It is a mind game like no other. No scenic distractions, just pain. It's the best.

Go the new Queenstown Ironman 2007.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Jakib on 07 Mar 2006, 09:37:31 PM

Was supporting at Ironman in the weekend and just want to say that I really felt for all the competitors, first timers the most. Those of us who have done the Ironman in Taupo know what an awesome day it is and the feeling of getting that result after all that time training. I just hope not too many people are put off by their experiance over the weekend.

It seemed to me that once things started to go wrong on Saturady it just compounded and by the end of the day it was a shambles.

The decesion should have been made sooner about the bike/run so that everyone could have finished before the midnight cut-off. Also as Wellyman

said they got the TT round the wrong way. Out on the run the tail-end runners, most of them women, where out there till god nows when with very little support! Don't get me wrong some of the women where kicking arse but a lot were finding it pretty hard. They should have sent the age-groupers first.

I did notice at the finish that the recovery tent was a mess. I know they had to drop the marquee due to the bloody thing nearly blowing away but to try and put all those people into that small tent was a joke. There was no room to swing a cat! People passing out all over the place. Madness. I just hope that the reason for so many people colapsing was due to the amount of effort put in on the day and not thru lack of training as for most this was pretty much a training distance. If your from Wellington then the wind was about normal as well.

I don't really like to complain so I'll finish by saying well done to all of you who got out there and raced in those conditions. They were pretty tough and it was HOT!! It was nice to see a lot of you still smiling on the run course. Hope there is not too many people put off by what happened as when you get to do Ironman NZ you'll never forget it. Then again I guess you'll never forget this one either. I told my mate who was a first-timer that atleast he's got another years base for 2007 and he got to do the Weet-bix Ironman on the way.

Title: **Re: Another Debacle**

Post by: **JC** on **08 Mar 2006, 07:55:25 AM**

I'm going to jump in here in reponse to the multi-sporters (and multisport organisers) are tough/ triathlons are soft comments...

Last weekend as well as Ironman Moehau Man was run. In the race regs and website it stated that there was a 3pm cut-off for starting the ocean kayak leg. Understandable as you dont want people out in the Pacific Ocean after dark - however, at the race briefing the organisers advised that they were going to bring the cut - off forward an hour to 2pm - not due to weather concerns, but because if you didn't get to the paddle before 2 you might not get off the water until 5 and to the finish until 7 and they wanted to be able to send their officials home.

To give you an idea of how tough it would be to make the cut-off - only 3 women (1/2 the womens field) did.

I accept that organisers can set cut-offs but to change the time after people had paid for and trevllled to the race is wrong. There was no safety reason for making this change - the sea was flat on the east coast on Saturday. I (and many other competitors) were extremely disapointed at having our abikility to complete the event (with an official time) taken away from us - we are not all hares - multisport has many tortoises who are just there to finish the day but will never be in the elite category. Sure - the cut-off might be something to aim for next year - but whose to say it wont be lowered again...

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **threat** on **08 Mar 2006, 08:55:18 AM**

Lets get some clarity into this discussion. Speaking as a long time competitor at IM in NZ and overseas as well as an organiser of races here in NZ.

Not a small race

Just remember that we are talking about a business here that takes in 900k in entry fees alone, and theres the sponsors and what the Taupo Council puts in to have the race there. There were 800 people from overseas racing. Investment in the region from competitors, supporters etc is estimated to be over 10 million

Contingency Planning

- There was no clear plan. We were told at the race briefing a desicion would be made at 5:45am. We actually got nothing till close to 7am. Contingency plans are things that are well thought through. They dont involve the race organisor ringing anyone they can find in Turangi to see what the weather is like there! Who cares read my point about the actual saftey issues on the course. Remember this is not a 1 - 2 hour race.
- I believe there was no clear leader on the day with their desicion process, this was made worse with making up plans as the day went.

Safety

- The Swim would have been dangerous and the right desicion was made to cancel this.
- The Bike course safety centred on a small 2k stretch along the waterfront. So we in reality are talking about a 4k part of the 180k bike course that was "Rideable" but just with some care.

The rest of the course was fine, yes there was some wind, but that is just part of what makes the race what it is. In fact those who actually understand the layout of the bike (its an L shape), you are only ever riding directly into the wind for 15k the rest is side wind.

Would we reduce the course if say the temperature dropped to under 5 degrees or soared to over 40?

If you have ever been to Lanzerote or Hawaii strong wind on the course is part of the culture of the race, and adds to the challenge

Ironman is about pace judgement, nutrition, physical and mental strength and the wind on Saturday should have been seen as just a challenge to overcome. The race that we ended up having was about none of those things. Yes there was some carnage out there, but I believe that was nothing to do with the conditions, but more to do with everyones nutrition strategies being turned upside down. I had my breakfast for the race at 4am and didnt actually start my race till 12:30pm

I think that they got it all wrong. A southerly wind in Taupo is not out of the norm! We have been talking about the possibilty of this scince the race went to Taupo its a really great shame that others had not!

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **paddy** on **08 Mar 2006, 10:02:40 AM**

Quote from: Macgyver on 07 Mar 2006, 03:53:17 PM

Maybe multisporters are getting hard while triathletes are getting soft we may never know... ;)

Haha, based on the amount of shaved legs and lycra I see at multisport events these days you don't have a (hairless) ;)leg to stand on.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle**Post by: Old Timer on 08 Mar 2006, 10:25:37 AM**

My last word on this (I promise!)

"Threat" above - an experienced IM competitor - analyses it all very well - hear hear.

Running around on Sat am like a blue assed fly is not a contingency plan. Immediately switching the Kepler Challenge to an out and back run up the Iris Burn is a contingency plan - known in advance, well understood, still a good challenge.

Ms Patterson - please reflect on this.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle**Post by: SV on 08 Mar 2006, 11:07:35 AM**

The "Debacle" debate could be resolved very easily by IMNZ opening the books and publishing the IMNZ Contingency Plan.

I'm sure all event promoters would learn from this document, potentially saving lives in the future.

To read through the list of potential issues and risks, the likelihood, impact & mitigation would be an immense benefit to all.

Personally I like the chapter covering decision trees as this provides a good insight into what decisions need to be made when, dependencies, benefits, impacts and timeframes involved.

I'm sure the IMNZ log (an event manager's version of a captains log) of the days events would make interesting reading. What issues arose, what was the input (who said what) and the rationale around the decisions made. (Usually one of the first places the government agency reference when things do go really wrong).

All of these must have been present and up to date as all the officials at the competitor, media & elite briefings were singing from the same choir book.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle**Post by: Macgyver on 08 Mar 2006, 11:13:16 AM**

Paddy you are correct there is more lycra and saved legs, maybe I'm getting soft and don't know it yet! Really just added the comment on an otherwise dull Tuesday to stir things up a bit, the discussion has become quite sanitised since the new login scheme. Horses for courses really IM and multisport both have pros/cons and are as tough as you push it I suppose.

On JC's comment's I did the "little" moehau was not affected by cutoff's but thought it was a bit rough changing it on the day before, I feel anyone that prepares for a race reads the website/entry makes a call about ability to make cutoffs based on the information provided and enters accordingly, changing it the day before is just plain unfair. It is the third year of doing that race and this year there seemed to be so many changes on the Firday registration/briefing/cutoffs/backup legs it was not funny. The first kayak

was threatened and the plan was to do a bike to Waitete for the "little" race, this is all tarseal and the question was asked can we use any bike? the answer Yes! Most people would not have been packing a road bike as all legs were MTB but anyone that did would have had a huge advantage, again just a little more thought on the contingency would have gone a long way.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Bones on 08 Mar 2006, 11:44:29 AM

Was also a supporter over the weekend and just wanted to say as a supporter I felt just as lost and sad over what happened.

Last year was my first experience of an IM event and this would be the first event I have been to which has made me so inspired to attempt this event in 2007. Being at the finish line (2005) for the last few was a magical moment.

I agree, an early decision for both entrants and supporters would of kept the event alive and motivated.

It is all very sad for all, just sad.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: paddy on 08 Mar 2006, 12:26:25 PM

Hey Macgyver I was replying in the spirit intended, the winking emoticaon didn't work!! ;D

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: shwaa on 08 Mar 2006, 12:29:09 PM

Hi,

I thought I would share with you the letter I will be sending to Ironman NZ and the worldwide head office. I have also been told that the army are releasing a press statement this week as they are gutted with the comments made during the event which indicated they were not available.

Letter:

As I look back on the Taupo Ironman weekend recently there were many positives from the weekend as well as many negatives. The build up to the Ironman was exceptional from an administration viewpoint, as was the commitment and complete dedication from the volunteers.

Ironman is regarded as one of the toughest and most professionally run events in New Zealand and the world, offering a true test to an individual's mental and physical strength. I took on the challenge of Ironman after many years' building myself to this goal, and I would like to express my extreme disappointment at my first Ironman experience. The crisis that occurred on Saturday 4 March was one that I believe is due to poor event management and administration, which absolutely could have and should have been avoided.

Taking emotion out of last weekend's race I am amazed at the decision that was made on behalf of the athletes. Fundamental event management involves contingency plans that are given the same level of detail and forward planning as your master plan. You communicated to us why

drinks.

PS: Anyone keen to provide passer-by the time at Northcroft Reserve?

Pss: Drafting is optional, but not advised

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **Macgyver** on **08 Mar 2006, 01:23:59 PM**

Paddy realised that ;)

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle - 2007 Contingency**

Post by: **Dan** on **08 Mar 2006, 01:33:30 PM**

Quote from: NE on 08 Mar 2006, 01:07:25 PM

2007 Unofficial Contingency Plan...

LOL...

Very sad, very true.

I'm just another voice chiming in, I suppose, but a lack of planning really does seem to have been the key problem here. I hereby echo the calls of 'bollocks' to the claims that there was sufficient planning and that the half-length-duathlon thingy that ended up being held was somehow the best call. The saddest part, IMHO, is Cameron Brown being robbed of the sixth consecutive win he would very likely have come away with had a true Ironman been raced last weekend, particularly if it'd been in the perfect weather Taupo had on Sunday.

I'm not familiar with the organisational and financing structure of IMNZ, but whoever was responsible for Saturday's fiasco should either front up to the participants with documentation that defends their planning and execution, or offer their resignation. Destroying one of the world's best endurance races through bad planning should not result in automatic second chances. I think somebody needs to think about a new career - flipping burgers or delivering newspapers might be appropriate.

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **trispoke** on **08 Mar 2006, 02:39:11 PM**

For those of you thinking that we wouldnt have been able to to the full bike and run think again!! Had the decision been made to can the swim first thing rather than 10:15 the iron distance bike/run could have gone ahead.

Of course after the run I thought to myself that I couldnt run another lap. I rode my bloody legs off on the way out to get out there as fast as possible and then rode deeper into the ground to get me home. I still averaged 34 for the 90 km, which in the conditions wasnt too bad - If we were to do 180km i would have probably ridden 10mins slower per lap - still not a shabby time.

So move onto the run. Its only 21km and there is no point in holding back so i ran as fast as i could from the start and ran a pretty good time. I missed a Kona slot by less than 1 minute. But the Ironman was irrelevant, it had turned into a Kona qualifier for me.

I am totally gutted that the event wasn't the full iron bike/run and even more so that it wasn't postponed till Sunday. But I will be back next year to compete as I still want to get to Kona. I just hope that my entry is discounted and that we receive a massage and a post race photo.

And for those guys saying Ironman athletes are soft, I agree with Carl B - we still train and race rain, hail, wind or shine. It takes a gutsy athlete to throw caution to the wind and ride at 55-60kph for as long as you can when you know you have to turn back into it for the same distance and then get off and run as fast as you can for 21kph. Look at how fast Cam Brown rode back from the turn, it was faster than most of the people riding out.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: **Kati** on **08 Mar 2006, 02:57:42 PM**

Thread, I agree. They got it all wrong.

My coach, obviously a wise man..., told me to go through all the worst case scenarios and prepare for them accordingly. Right O, off I went, first timer, looking forward to the biggest challenge in my life and prepared myself for a choppy swim, a windy ride and a hard run. You'd think if a first timer has him/herself prepared, an event organiser would do the same? I'm considering shouting Jane Patterson a training session with my coach...

I'm over the disappointment that I haven't done the race (at least I keep telling myself this), but I'm still angry about the way the organisers handled the situation. Asking the petrol station for a weather report in Turangi and telling us there would be no wind on the way to Reparoa - is that professional? Telling us over and over again, how hard the event organisers day was and to feel sorry for them? Is it her/their job or what? At least they got paid for this muck up...

Roll on Quelle Challenge Queenstown I say.

p.s. - Cameron Brown's view on the day is fairly interesting too.
<http://www.xtri.com/article.asp?id=1684>

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: **beaker01** on **08 Mar 2006, 02:58:13 PM**

As I wasn't in Taupo on the day, I have only managed to gain the feedback from talking to people who were racing or supporting and via the feedback on discussion threads like this.

I was just wondering if any of the competitors out there were going to formally request a copy of the Event Management contingency plan. After paying \$600 - \$700 entry fee surely the event management team should have things like Contingency plans, traffic management plans available for inspection. After all they keep telling us that this is why our entry fees keep going up.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: **paddy** on **08 Mar 2006, 04:52:14 PM**

I certainly feel sorry for Cameron, but I feel far more sorry for the first

timers, some of who may never have another window of opportunity to attempt an Ironman again. Their efforts to get to the start line are in many ways more impressive than the pros.

I don't think any of the comments about Ironman competitors being soft are really more than tongue in cheek.

Although I really do think the multisporters are just a bunch of glorified trampers...kidding, kidding.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Macgyver on 08 Mar 2006, 06:02:43 PM

With the amount of compulsory gear being carried I do feel like a tramper sometimes!

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: threat on 08 Mar 2006, 06:54:32 PM

Paddy, agree with you. In fact all people involved from supporters to those who competed.

BTW there is already cross-over between the sports, we no longer walk the drink stations at Ironman we "Trek" them he he

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Bestbet1 on 08 Mar 2006, 08:28:06 PM

Amen to your last comment old timer, I ran the Kauri run in the coromandel 2 years ago in diabolical conditions half an hour faster than I ran it last year on a perfectly sunny day. Weather is a challenge!

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: tonyoh on 09 Mar 2006, 01:20:49 PM

My take on the event:

Ironman is an extreme endurance test, not a special K tri (which has its own place)! You need to expect some hardship – whether it is wind, rain, distance, heat, cold etc. A hard event is memorable! Sometimes athletes need to take responsibility and make a call for themselves. I don't think it is unreasonable for the race director to say "if you are not confident – don't start". If someone starts an event and they die during it, because they did not prepare properly for the event – it is their fault – not the events. Dumbing down of events is increasing the risk to competitors, as competitors are not taking responsibility for their own safety!

I have been in 5 different Ironman events, and by far New Zealand has been the best organised event, I also have 9 finishes in NZ – so I do feel experienced to comment. NZIM has a fantastic track record.

The weather was not kind – but in over 20 years of IM, you HAVE to expect the prospect of bad weather at some point – surely! Jane Patterson was given an opportunity to step up and make the most of a bad situation, and show what she was made of. She was caught with her pants down and she did not have clean underwear on!!!

The joke that is now the Tauranga half event and this debacle, disgusts me. Both events have been "dumbed down" to the lowest level. They are supposed to be hard endurance events, not a feel good event for the race director. They should be a test for the athlete, that is fair.

To call off the swim, bike and/or run is a judgement call. Either it is safe or it isn't. If it is safe to ride 90, then why is it not safe to ride 180?? I personally think the swim was not extreme, and I think I have swum previous IM in similar conditions (old Auckland IM!). But that is irrelevant.

There was no real contingency plan.

A quick look at the weather map on Monday or Tuesday would have surely indicated that spending a few hours on a contingency plan was worthwhile. For detailed weather information, try the metservice (0900 99907), rather than a petrol station!

In Friday's briefing - a possible 180-42 event was mentioned. How were they going to start 1400 competitors in windy conditions in a non-drafting event on the bike first? Surely a run of some description if there is no swim would have been better. They have had a quick thought - but that is it!

I think some thought the bike was more dangerous than swim. The reports that it was only windy in town were obviously a complete lie. I am sure if many knew that the conditions were worse further along the course, they would not have started.

If you have no contingency - fine, just say so, and it is hard luck. Don't lie and try to cover your ass, or try to put some event on to fill your live TV feed.

The execution of the alternative plan is the main negative to Saturday's event as I see it:

Medical cover was the excuse for no Sunday race - bollocks! If road closure, volunteers, etc were all sorted, then medical could have been sorted! I know 5 qualified medics (3 doctors) watching that would have been happy to help if it meant the event going ahead. I am sure there were many more out there if they were asked!

Kayak volunteers were told at 5:30am there was no swim - the athletes should have been told at by 6am that there was no swim.

Having athletes sit around for literally several hours waiting for a decision is shocking. Totally unacceptable! The decision should have been made at 6am and announced then - end of story. If the wind was peaking at 9am, come back at 9:30 for a briefing or a race cancellation, and race will start at 10am.

Starting order - This just goes to show how little the event management knew about sport in reality! Cameron was robbed - there is no way that the first seed starts first. That is just crazy! If there are Kona spots up for grabs, then people should be started in age group waves, so you can race against your competitors. The age group woman should have started before the age group men. Ideally slower ones start first, and fastest last!

At the end of the day, have the guts to apologise to the athletes, not bleat on about how hard it was for the poor event organiser. At the end of the day, the athletes are the customers, and the event organisers chose to offer their services (for money!), if they stuff up, they should be accountable.

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **trispoke** on **09 Mar 2006, 03:04:45 PM**

Well put Tony.

Post by: **paddy** on **13 Mar 2006, 08:06:35 AM**

That is bloody great to see you guys organising Ironman Auckland 2006. I'd help for sure but am in Wellington. Hope it is a great day where you all get to achieve the goals you have trained so hard for. Can't wait for the event report.

A couple of points:

- Although Jane Patterson has to hold ultimate accountability I don't think we should indulge in a witch hunt. There is a big team involved in organising an event like IM and I (assume) that the team all agreed on the decisions made at the time.

- Let's just hope that all the disappointment experienced by so many this year is a lesson and from 2007 a contingency day is set up and planned for. If it happens again the event will die.

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **skeeto** on **13 Mar 2006, 03:02:14 PM**

I have viewed with interest much of the comment about this race and the many comments critical of why it could not have been postponed to the Sunday.

Well one very good reason which many of you have over looked is the fact that whilst a number of people provided services to this race and to others of the same kind the vast majority of people who assist are non paid volunteers. This race does not finish in the normal course of things until well after midnight, many of the volunteers who fill crucial roles have travelled from afar to assist and would then have to leave in the early hours of Monday morning to return home and be ready to start their normal occupations on Monday morning.

Many will have taken unpaid time off already on the Friday to travel as well and to ask them to forgo another days pay is just not on. Don't forget it is these volunteers that make the race work and often keep the cost down.

Title: **Re: The Ironman Debacle**

Post by: **new girl** on **13 Mar 2006, 03:44:59 PM**

right, where to begin...

This was going to be my first Ironman, and it was also my partners first ironman, between us, we spent a good 22k each on new bikes, nutrition, gear etc, not to mention the time we both took off work, him reducing his work to part time, and myself not working for the last hard month of training either, in that alone it was costly, but hey, that was the sacrifice for ironman, so we thought.

The friday morning down at the lake, athletes were laughing at the 1.5m waves, you knew damn well then that it would not ease, the weather reports also claimed the exact same thing....did perhaps the event organisers not read or listen to the weather reports?..or did they have their own gods that they were praying to??...a petrol station for a weather report?...you have to be kidding me, what a joke.

To be kind enough to have us all getting numbered etc from 5am, they could have had the decency to tell us that the swim was canned, i saw many athletes getting oiled up into their wetsuits, only to take them off and try

and remove all that god awful oil to no avail.

The fact that the marquee was falling down around us should have been a clear indicator that it was going to be a bad day of weather, but why wasn't it stopped there??...instead, they usher us all out of the marquee, and to have it fall down a good hour later...imagine if it had come down on all 1400 athletes...not good.

It has to be a hard day for everyone, athletes in particular, but seriously, how hard is it for an apoligy??...a few annoying notes on my behalf, i didnt get a finishers shirt cause they "couldnt find it" apparently will be posted out, and the lack of what was in our registration bags, i got a rotten orange and a rather brown banana, (the ladies special K duathlon, which is also run by Jane, they got a watch, a bunch of skin care products, and a Asics top, not bad for their \$50 and a hour race) What exactly is our entry fee going on??...i felt like i went there with all this knowledge to do my first ironman, and now, i came back with nothing, except a feeling of being gutted, and looking seriously at the queenstown Ironman, hopefully more for my money's worth.

Cam Brown, also, that has to have sucked for you, i dont think that was fair at all, and we all know that you are the champion!!

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Brendo on 15 Mar 2006, 02:37:43 AM

Ive got to say that looking through all of the postings put up by people, Jane Patterson and the organising committee of IMNZ have something to answer for. I was in Taupo for the event as a spectator (flew from the UK to follow a mate competing) and I have to say that the hours between 6am and 11am were a complete debacle. Everybody knew just by looking at the lake at 5:30 in the morning that the swim was going to be cancelled. Why wasn't the full bike ride and marathon started earlier in the morning - say 8am? Now I've heard quotes that the race committee were told that the wind could get worse and might not calm down until 11am. This is a friggin Ironman people - you race in whatever is thrown at you (barring snow of course) - it's a test of your ability to race what is thrown against you. I've been to Kona on several occasions to spectate and luckily enough been able to get out on the bike course during the race. Now Kona gets windy and I've been out there when the winds have been up near that level like what we saw in Taupo. Do the organisers of Kona in the future say that they are only going to do half the race because it's too windy or going to get too windy. I think not. I feel sorry for all of the age-groupers who trained for this event and only got a Half Ironman (wasn't even that) race instead. They paid for an Ironman and that is what they should have received - barring the swim of course.

This race was a 90k bike and half marathon time trial. It should never be regarded as Ironman NZ 2006 because it wasn't an Ironman. Did Ken Glah really finish 50 Ironman races? In my opinion no - it wasn't an Ironman distance race. Even Jo Lawn says she doesn't feel that she has equalled Erin Baker's record. And in 2007 Cam Brown will be going for his 6th Ironman title in a row (2006 should not be reflected in any record books). On that note why did Cam have to go out first on the bike - it's a time trial - you never throw your number 1 seed out first. Why couldn't they have run the pro's in reverse order or had them start all at the same time? Age-groupers could all have gone out at the same time? These are some of the questions that I'll be asking Ms Patterson and the organising committee.

Registration must take place on the allocated times (9-4pm) on Thursday. There is a process that needs to be followed including medical information and ID checks, this is only in place in Taupo during this time.

I hope you can arrange something. Please let me know.

Kind Regards
Janette Blyth
Event Co-Ordinator
THE PATTERN LTD

You can imagine how I felt when they casually reopened the registration after the Friday morning briefing.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: Crash on 24 Mar 2006, 11:24:53 AM

While I am over it, I have been thinking about this for a while, and after reading an interview on www.xtri.com of an interview they had with Jane Patterson the IMNZ race director, I felt that I had to say my piece. Below is the letter I sent to that website.

Thought that you might be interested to read it.

I was at Taupo for Ironman 2006. I was swimming faster than I ever had, and was fitter than I have ever been. period.

Upon reaching the Lake front at 5.30am I knew that there would be no swim and naturally I was disappointed as was everyone else, athletes, support people, volunteers and organisers. We all know that the weather has the final say.

However what we can do is hope for the best, but plan for the worst. I, and many many other athletes do not believe that this was done adequately prior to the 4th of March 2006 or the week preceding the event.

As a professional engineer with a number of years of experience in risk management and contingency planning I have an understanding of what makes sound contingency planning. To be considering contingency plans in the week prior to Ironman (as discussed in the recent interview with Jane Patterson) in my opinion is too late. A good contingency plan should be established well in advance of the event (a number of plans may be required for a number of possible adverse events), and the alternative options planned in as much detail as the original event. Without going into details, if this had been done properly a Sunday Contingency would have been possible and we would have 500 new iron people in the world.

An event with 1500 entrants, all paying \$620 each, plus other contributions from sponsors and Council equates to close to \$1million in revenue. For this sort of money the Ironman community have every right to expect better contingency planning from the organisers. Contingency Planning is mainly about having the time to plan for adverse events...So what else are the organisers doing for the rest of the year that they are not in Taupo?

We, the Ironman community can only hope that lessons have been learnt by the IMNZ organisers (who must be held accountable as a group, not individually) from this years event. As athletes we prepare for Ironman for 6

to 12 months in anticipation of challenging ourselves both physically and mentally in order to achieve our dreams and goals. It seems only fair that the organisers put as much time into the event.

While event organisation has become a business for many, the organisers must never forget that Ironman has always been, and should always be about the Athletes and not about the money.

Yes it was a tough week for the organisers, and I feel for them - it must have been stressful. Yes they should enjoy the week as well, they have every right to that. However, in making comments about how hard it was for them they have forgotten that the event isn't just about them but about athletes, supporting families, volunteers and the people of Taupo as well. Is it too much to ask for them to say that they are sorry, that they have learnt from this experience and they will plan more comprehensively for future events, regardless of the likelihood of adverse conditions occurring again?

Finally, as athletes we know about the five P rule - Poor Planning and Preparation = Poor Performance. Hopefully IMNZ organisers will have a better appreciation for this rule now.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: paddy on 27 Mar 2006, 04:28:22 PM

Agree wholeheartedly, we can only hope that while the public face of the organisers has been steadfastly defensive, that they have in fact learned some lessons and will put them to practise next year.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: geoffh on 28 Mar 2006, 03:09:28 PM

I was entered for the race on the 4th. It was my third race at ironman distance and my third at Taupo. I was disappointed with the race format but like many before have said I supported the organisers decision to call off the swim. I was somewhat surprised at the length of time it took organisers to make a final decision about the race format and the poor organisation that took place at the finish line.

These organisational glitches (for want of a better word) I believe had a cumulative effect on the athletes morale before, during and after the race. For example, in previous years the finish line and the opportunity to compare war stories in the large marquee was a highlight. I even told a friend of mine who was a first timer that the time time after the race talking to other finishers was also part of the excitement and adds to the overall value of the event. So when I was herded through a tent which was bursting at the seams with people requiring: medical attention; trying to get finishers shirts, swim bike bags and in amongst it all have a chat with other finishers was in my opinion 'slack'.

Sure the day had been pretty messed up, but my understanding is that Jane Patterson is a professional event organiser. I won't hold the weather against

her or the modified event format. We were asked to make the best of a bad situation and from what I observed people did, I know I went as hard as I could and I am sure the majority of competitors did as well. My observation is that the organisers lost perspective and to get the whole thing over as quickly as possible and move on.

I hope like any good business IMG WTC or Ironman NZ will review this event, appriase those responsible take action where necessary. My final gripe I guess is that events have offered athletes who competed at the IMNZ 06 discounted entry fee, but not IMNZ. Is this a message about how they value our committment to this race.

Cheers.

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: dude on 01 Apr 2006, 10:07:52 PM

I just thought I'd add my own personal experiences from the day.

I am diabetic. Before an ironman or indeed any other fairly long race I allow for the race in my insulin doses. I adjust my insulin according to when I will be racing and how long the race is for. On the morning I gave myself the insulin I would give myself had the race started at 7am. Exercise brings your blood sugar down and therefore you can get away with injecting less insulin whilst exercising. Anyway...I gave myself barely any long acting insulin.

I lost 4kgs during the course of the race. Reason? I was hanging around waiting for it to start for 5 or so hours after it was meant to. As a result my blood sugar levels skyrocket. When your blood sugar levels go high, you piss. I was pissing every 30 minutes or so all morning.

So..by the start of the race I was already quite dehydrated. I was beginning to cramp just after the first hour of the bike. So I had to hold back for most of the return leg of the bike just to stave off cramp. Then on the run, my day basically turned to shit and my quads, hammies, calves, and muscles on top of my shins all went at once on both legs.

This was all due to the race starting 4 hours later than it was going to and my blood sugar levels consequently being fluffied as a result. And I had been feeling soo good!

Why didn't they sort their shit out earlier? Like some have said, it seems there was a fair bit of disorganisation...

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: SV on 19 May 2006, 02:28:34 PM

There has been a lot of passion posted here. Now months down the track has a report on the event been released, with recommendations?

Title: Re: The Ironman Debacle

Post by: scott71 on 19 May 2006, 04:25:37 PM

I've emailed IMNZ to try and find out what will happen in 2007 if the

and skill in a event of this maginitude requires the development of contingency plans with care unavailable in the week leading up to the event.

Ironman has been in Taupo for 5 years! The planning of the perfect event had to be done before the first of them. I could understand the lack of contingency planning if it was that first year, but the have charged more each year and done what appears to be no more planning for that extra money.

Some people may say I should get over it. I disagree.

Even if they don't agree with my actions, I sure most people who were effected by the event would agree that that Ironman New Zealand 2006 was not run with reasonable care and skill!

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**

Post by: **Big Iron Dude** on **24 Dec 2006, 06:27:32 PM**

You miss the point entirely fit.

Yes, we agree that IMNZ 2006 was badly run, and that contingency plans should have been in place - don't argue that for a single second. Hell, I was one of the senior marshals on the course that day, I was consulted, and told them that the swim (and this was at 0530) should not take place. Little did I know that there were NO contingency plans in place. I only found that out afterwards.

We will not, as a result of your selfish choice to get litigious, see the price go up. We will see the value go down - end of story. The insurers will put their price up - that is a given. We don't agree with your actions simply because the impact will be negative for the athletes.

And I note that you have not once yet to confirm any of your utterly spurious 'facts' with source. You confuse passion and rhetoric with fact. You aren't Helen Clarke by any chance are you? :P

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**

Post by: **fit.fix** on **24 Dec 2006, 06:39:00 PM**

Most of you who have read this will note that I don't have many facts. Most of us don't. All I want is facts, or compenstation. BUT I won't accept neither!

Events are like all other services and if the organisers and owner aren't negiligent then they won't have problems. I don't believe that insurance should protects them from everything - it doesn't protect drunk drivers, and their performace at Ironman (to me) is no better than that. Insurance shouldn't go up because it shouldn't cover that kind of incompetence. BID - had you read my claim? If you did then what assertions aren't in fact? NONE!

Love your name because what you said in your last statement would bury the organisers of the event!!!

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**

Post by: **Big Iron Dude** on **24 Dec 2006, 07:15:55 PM**

Quote from: [fit.fix](#) on [24 Dec 2006, 06:39:00 PM](#)

Regards

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: fit.fix on 30 Dec 2006, 10:06:01 AM

Jane posted a statement on this site about having no involvement in anything relating to the Rotorua half; I've just made a comment on it so should be close to top of listing now. Thread is titled "Statement from Jane Patterson"

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: dude on 07 Jan 2007, 03:53:10 PM

given the conditions on the day, and if the swim was not held, in hindsight would anyone have wanted to have done the full 180km ride and marathon?

I dunno if I would have...one lap of the bike was enough for me with that wind!

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: Big Iron Dude on 07 Jan 2007, 05:06:02 PM

Its the toughest day in sport for a reason. Sorry to sound like a labour voting soft c0ck (Yes, I know Steve, bad boy ;)), but thats why its called ironman. Toughen up or go do some needle work. So the wind blew. It does every year in Taupo. Last year it blew hard. Bragging rights for ever - I survived IMNZ when the wind really blew.

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: dude on 07 Jan 2007, 05:14:56 PM

I believe even Cameron Brown has stated he would not have liked to have done the full 180kms in that wind...

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: Big Iron Dude on 07 Jan 2007, 05:17:56 PM

He did indeed, as did any number of pros. No one in their right mind would have wanted to. But thats Ironman. We don't do it cos its doable - we do it because it pushes us to the very limits of human endurance, and sometimes beyond what even we think we can achieve.

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: landes118 on 07 Jan 2007, 05:54:45 PM

The question should be, would Cam Brown have done the event with those winds if the organiser said it was a go.

Title: Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?
Post by: Big Iron Dude on 07 Jan 2007, 06:07:57 PM

And the answer is simple - yes. Which was the answer he gave when asked on the day. This is what I still cannot figure. Its Ironman for goodness sake - if it was easy anyone could do it. Prepare for the worst, enjoy what the

He also said he didn't want to swim. Unfortunately Cameron's tune has changed - I suspect due to sponsorship and professional responsibilities.

One thing I'm sure most competitors would have like to tackle was the full marathon after either half or the full bike. That would have been an pseudo-iron effort rather than a training day!

Given the amount of political nonsense within sporting organisations I'm not sure that TriNZ involvement will make any difference - it certainly won't have the clout of the ITC which is required for ironman.

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**
Post by: **bluetogs** on **08 Jan 2007, 10:46:21 AM**

This topic has changed direction. It started out as to whether the event nature changed and if so should there have been a refund. Now it deals with the event direction.

The Crimes Act requires event directors and others to take care of their fellow citizens. you cannot contract out of this Act. Lets look at the issues.

The swim. Was too rough for the kayakers, many who said they would not ride the waves when on the same quarter of the boat. No safety service means health and safety at a risk. At the Utah IM [2004?] in water that was not as rough as Taupo one competitor drowned and others finished up in hospital. A rescue boat hit the rocks and competitors were covered in sick from the boat crew, as they tried to get about the boat!! Get real. What race director will run that risk? In USA the race director was sued.

The cycle. Only Lake Tce was bad with heavy crosswind but rideable with care. However the distance takes many competitors from 8 am till 5 pm to ride in normal condition.

The run can be done in most weather. But has to finish at midnight, because of Temporary traffic Management Plans having a close down time.

An alternative date is not available because people have to get home and there is not enough time for that to be done if it is mid-night Sunday. The race date had to be the Saturday.

At Utah, it took 2 hours to get an alternative race organised which was a long course duathlon. It needs to be a duathlon since you cannot have a mass start in triathlon where drafting would then take place. The other option is a time delayed start which is what happened but it means that some competitors are starting up to two hours behind the first starters. Had the full course been ridden, many bike would be on the course in the dark with no lights.

Race directors planning for such an alternative have to do so well in adance, as an alternative Traffic Plan has to be filed with Police and Council for the first run of say 10 km; this would then sort the field and avoid a mass start.

I see in the Tauranga HIM such alternative plan was given.

Refunding entry fees is a legal issue but the competitors in a 40 km run which was stopped by the police because the TTMP was altered without their approval got no refund and as the race stopped halfway through the evnt they all walked/run back to start.

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**

Post by: **Triathlete** on **08 Jan 2007, 12:00:40 PM**

Good to see most people who did line up for IMNZ06 have an opinion. I think you'll find that as Big Ironman Dude said and most competitors thought that there would be no swim which I believe was a great decision. The bike ride being shortened was a disappointment, but anyone who had trained for Ironman with a realistic goal of finishing the bike would have loved a chance to try given that it is a challenge. As for the marathon, well there is no reason whatsoever that if the organisers had taken care to action plan B,C or even plan D a marathon not could but should of happened. That is what makes the ironman tuff!!

Let us not worry about getting over it, lets make it better and prevent this from happening again. The only response I have received from IMNZ has been to say that they would do the same next time. At least Perth offered a discount. It's not just about the lack of a reasonable bike, run event but also the lack of food/drink in transition while we were waiting to start, the lack of information passed onto competitors (the swim timing mat was being removed before 0645-20 minutes before I was told by the race director), limited space for massage/food and not to mention my finishers t-shirt being 2 sizes larger than the one I ordered back in July 05.

Like most of you have said, I'm not going back to IMNZ either, I'd rather go elsewhere.

Good luck to you Fit Fix, I can't believe that JP won't explain herself fully. I think we have the right to hear from her she made a mistake. I hope you get the answers you are after.

Title: **Re: Ironman NZ 2006 in breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act?**

Post by: **landes118** on **08 Jan 2007, 02:43:22 PM**

Perhaps the organiser can not answer because she has no answers and does not want to hold her hands up and say "I stuffed up" Safety does come first and the swim must be good enough for the weakest but as a plan B why not just say it is a duathlon starting at 3 minute intervals of x amount in a group. Waves depending on start number. The decision to change can be made in an instant, plan B would roll into effect cause it would have been planned already only hassle would be to advise the competitors and change the cycle course if it was to be shortened. If there was then congestion on the course at least the organiser have a crack. Instead what occurred showed poor or confused decision making. I think I said earlier when things go right most are good organisers when things go wrong we see who are the good organisers.