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## 2011 Ironman 70.3 World Champion Joins Pro Line-Up at Laguna Phuket

Current Ironman 70.3 World Champion Melissa Rollison will contest the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship at Laguna Phuket on 4 December – the latest addition to a stellar line-up of elite professional triathletes heading to the island.

Rollison, of Australia, completed her first Ironman 70.3-distance race in September 2010 and in just 12 months, has gone on to claim three 70.3 series titles, as well as the prestigious World Championship trophy.

A former steeplechase runner, Rollison took up cycling to maintain her fitness during bouts of running-related injuries. This inevitably led to her first triathlon.

Rollison finished third in last year's inaugural Asia-Pacific Championship race, but her World Championship title-win in September in Las Vegas proves she is a force to be reckoned with. She is set to face off against reigning champion Caroline Steffen of Switzerland who has confirmed she will be coming back to Phuket to defend her 2010 title.

More than 950 athletes, including 31 pros and 9 relay teams, are now registered for the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship.

Other international pros that will compete for top honours include 2010 Laguna Phuket Triathlon champions Massimo Cigana of Italy and Australia's Belinda Granger; 2011 Ironman 70.3 world champion runner-up Chris Lieto; 10-time Ironman New Zealand Champion Cameron Brown; 2011 Ironman 70.3 winner and talented up-and-comer Paul Matthews; and 2010 ITU Long Distance World Champion Silvain Sudrie.

Professional athletes will compete for a slice of the US\$75,000 prize purse, as well as 30 qualifying slots for the 2012 Ford Ironman World Championship in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii and 45 slots for the 2012 Marine Corps Ironman 70.3 World Championship in Las Vegas. Laguna is one of only a small number of worldwide Ironman 70.3 triathlons offering 2012 Kona and Las Vegas slots for winners of age group categories.

Laguna Triathlon Director, Debbie Dionysius, says: "We're thrilled to have such a star-studded line-up at this year's Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship.

"Top athletes who competed in last year's inaugural race are coming back in 2011 and that reflects well on the event. It proves that the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship is a world-class race and that Phuket is a world-class triathlon destination."

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### Note to the Editor

Laguna Phuket is Asia's finest destination resort – a collection of deluxe hotels and villas including Banyan Tree Phuket, Angsana Laguna Phuket (opening December 2011), Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket, Laguna Beach Resort, Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort and Villas, Best Western Allamanda Laguna Phuket, Laguna Holiday Club Resort, and Laguna Property offering luxury investment and lifestyle residential properties - all sharing 1,000 acres of tropical parkland and three kilometres of beach frontage with the Laguna Phuket Golf Club, Canal Shopping Village, Banyan Tree Spa, four Angsana Spas, Laguna Wedding Chapel, Quest Laguna Phuket Adventure on-site team building facility, and Latitude a unique stand-alone function venue. [www.lagunaphuket.com](http://www.lagunaphuket.com)



2011 Ironman 70.3 World Champion Melissa Rollison is bound for Phuket to compete in the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship.

High resolution image available at: [http://www.lagunaphuket.com/media-hub/imagegalleries/MediaReleases/296/Melissa\\_Rollison.jpg](http://www.lagunaphuket.com/media-hub/imagegalleries/MediaReleases/296/Melissa_Rollison.jpg)

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