



The Laguna Phuket Triathlon has attracted a sell-out field of more than 1,000 triathletes representing a variety of ages and nationalities. High Resolution Images: <http://www.lagunaphuket.com/media-imagegalleries/MediaReleases/303/4D305010.jpg>



Race begins at 6.30am with a three-wave swim start at the Laguna Beach Resort beachfront on Bang Tao Beach. The swim distance is 1.8km, with a 100m beach sprint to swim the last 620m across a lagoon. The bike course is 55km and the run course is a 12km route around the Laguna Phuket complex. High Resolution Images: <http://www.lagunaphuket.com/media-imagegalleries/MediaReleases/303/4D304899.jpg>

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For Immediate Release
26 November 2011
Phuket, Thailand

Sell-Out 2011 Laguna Phuket Triathlon Smashes 1,000 Entries Barrier

Athletes from all corners of the globe to contest 18th annual "Race of Legends"

The 2011 Laguna Phuket Triathlon (LPT) has smashed through the 1,000 entries barrier for the first time in its 18-year history to underline Phuket's growing reputation as a top-class international triathlon destination.

With a total of 1,078 athletes from 41 countries registered - 985 individual entries and 31 relay teams - Sunday's "Race of Legends" is shaping up to be the most spectacular to date

The professional field is led by defending champion Italian Massimo Cigana, who will be seeking to beat the course record of 02:24:56 set in 2009 by Olympic gold medalist Jan Frodeno of Germany.

And the professional women's contest will see defending champion and multiple Ironman winner Australian Belinda Granger battling it out with returning 2009 champion Radka Vodickova of the Czech Republic.

The "Race of Legends" title is a tribute to the legendary triathletes who have contested the Laguna Phuket Triathlon over the years, and this year's event is no exception with a pro field that includes the Italian duo of Alberto Cassadei and Edith Niederfriniger, Sweden's Frederick Croneberg and Katje Rabe of Germany.

Personal Achievements

But as well as high-calibre professional performances, LPT is also renowned for personal achievements made by hundreds of triathlon devotees who flock to challenge themselves in the picturesque landscape of the Thai paradise island.

Among the 985 age group category entries Hong Kong leads the field with 260 entries of country nationals and expats - and Thailand is second with 217, demonstrating its booming triathlon enthusiasm.

Other regional countries such as Singapore, China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan are all strongly represented, as well as the USA, the UK and Australia.

There are also entries representing more far-flung countries such as Argentina, Norway, Luxembourg and Latvia.

Enthusiasm Spanning Ages and Nationalities

The event's age group categories contain entries demonstrating triathlon's unique appeal across all ages and nationalities.

In the male line-up, the youngest entrant is 18 year-old Victor Kirstein of Denmark and the oldest 74 year-old Wilf Deck of Australia; and in the female category youngest entrant is 18 years-old Lauren Smith of Australia and oldest is 62 years-old Lenore McLaughlin of the USA.

Another veteran is 62 year-old Australian Brian Hardaker - returning to compete in his 17th LPT.

And watch out for newcomer Tim Haddon, director of Golf at Laguna Phuket Golf Club - who has been on a six-month fitness regime, shedding 13 kilos to transform himself from a self-confessed couch potato with health conditions to full-on fitness freak, in a bid to compete his first-ever triathlon.

Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship

LPT is a curtain-raiser to the second Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship, an even more demanding triathlon that will be staged at Laguna Phuket a week later on Sunday 4 December.

An expanded field of pro athletes will be contesting for a slice of its US\$75,000 purse, led by Ironman legend Michael Raelert of Germany and reigning Ironman 70.3 World Champion Melissa Rollison of Australia, who placed second in Phuket last year.

LPT also kicks-off the week-long Tri-Fest carnival of sporting and social activities at Laguna Phuket leading up to the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship.

Michael Ayling, managing director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels, said: "Our Laguna Phuket Triathlon is established as an annual event that draws hundreds of triathlete devotees from all corners of the globe to our paradise island.

"It's also draws many people from local Phuket communities together to help us stage the event.

"We're very appreciative of the support we receive from the Phuket provincial government and its communities that enables this internationally-renowned triathlon to take place so successfully."

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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, Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket, Laguna Beach Resort, Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort and Villas, Best Western Allamanda Laguna Phuket, and Laguna Holiday Club Resort - 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 an on-site team building facility, and Latitude a unique stand-alone function venue.



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