

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**MEMORIAL HERMANN IRONMAN TEXAS TRIATHLON TO RETURN TO THE WOODLANDS AS 2017 IRONMAN NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP**

*Seventh edition of race in Woodlands set for April 22, 2017;*

*General registration to open on Wednesday, July 27th*

**TAMPA, Fla.** (July 19, 2016) – IRONMAN announced today that the Memorial Hermann IRONMAN® Texas triathlon will return to The Woodlands for 2017 and be designated as the IRONMAN North American Championship for the third consecutive year. In addition, the event will now take place on April 22, 2017, shifting from its traditional date in mid-May.

“We are pleased to be able to continue our relationship with Montgomery and Harris Counties and keep this event in The Woodlands and surrounding areas,” said Shane Facticeau, Chief Operations Officer for IRONMAN. “We have always believed that this is a great location for a championship event and the new agreement will allow us to uphold the highest of standards that our athletes deserve. At the same time, the change to April establishes a cooler race date in which both professional and amateur triathletes can now compete in an early season event in North America.”

One of more than 40 events in the global IRONMAN Series, the Memorial Hermann IRONMAN North American Championship Texas triathlon will lead athletes along a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2-mile run throughout The Woodlands and its surrounding areas. The point-to-point swim takes place in Lake Woodlands, where athletes enter the water at North Shore Park and swim toward South Shore Park. The new bike course will then take competitors through Montgomery and Harris Counties, utilizing the flat and fast Hardy Toll Road. Athletes then enjoy a triple-loop run entirely within The Woodlands that concludes with a spectacular finish on Waterway Avenue.

“We are thrilled to have IRONMAN return to the Woodlands after finalizing and approving a route that includes a new bike course,” said Montgomery County Commissioner James Noack. “This event means a lot to our community and we look forward to hosting athletes from around the globe for a seventh year as they fulfill their IRONMAN dreams here in The Woodlands, Texas.”

“It is great to be partnering with IRONMAN as title sponsor of the IRONMAN North American Championship once again in The Woodlands,” said Wayne Fraleigh, Vice President of Operations of Ambulatory Services for Memorial Hermann. “We would like to thank the Montgomery and Harris County leaders, along with IRONMAN for making this race happen. It is an event not only enjoyed by the athletes but by the community as well.”

An automatic bid to the 2017 IRONMAN World Championship will be on the line as all professional winners of each IRONMAN Regional Championship race will receive automatic qualification to the IRONMAN World Championship held in Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i on October 14. The Memorial Hermann IRONMAN North American Championship Texas triathlon will also offer a \$150,000 total prize purse distributed among the top ten male and female professional finishers.

In addition to a competitive professional field, the race is expected to draw approximately 3,000 registered age-group athletes. The race will offer 75 coveted age-group qualifying slots to the 2017 IRONMAN World Championship.

General registration for Memorial Hermann IRONMAN North American Championship Texas will open on Wednesday, July 27 at [www.ironman.com/texas](http://www.ironman.com/texas). Athlete inquiries may be directed to [texas@ironman.com](mailto:texas@ironman.com). For more information on the IRONMAN brand and global event series, visit [www.ironman.com](http://www.ironman.com). Media may contact [press@ironman.com](mailto:press@ironman.com).

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### **About IRONMAN**

A Wanda Sports Holdings company, IRONMAN operates a global portfolio of events that includes the IRONMAN® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® 70.3® Triathlon Series, 5150™ Triathlon Series, Iron Girl®, IRONKIDS®, six of nine International Triathlon Union World Triathlon Series races, road cycling events including the UCI Velothon Majors Series, mountain bike races, premier marathons and other multisport races. IRONMAN's events, together with all other Wanda Sports Holdings events, provide more than 680,000 participants annually the benefits of endurance sports through the company's vast offerings. The iconic IRONMAN® Series of events is the largest participation sports platform in the world. Since the inception of the IRONMAN® brand in 1978, athletes have proven that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE® by crossing finish lines at the world's most challenging endurance races. Beginning as a single race, IRONMAN has grown to become a global sensation with more than 260 events across 42 countries. For more information, visit [www.ironman.com](http://www.ironman.com).