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IRONMAN unveils first full distance race in Italy

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IRONMAN, a Wanda Sports Holding company, has today announced the addition of the IRONMAN Italy Emilia Romagna triathlon. The inaugural full distance race in Italy will take place on 23 September 2017. In addition, a 5150 Triathlon Series event will take place on 24 September 2017.

The race will be located in Cervia, a seaside town with a population of 29,000 in the Italian province of Emilia-Romagna, which lends its name to the event.

“Emilia-Romagna is honoured to welcome an international event of this scale,” said Andrea Rossi, Undersecretary to the Regional Council Presidency. “We consider our region a land of sports, and hosting an IRONMAN race confirms our ability to bring to life an event with such magnitude. It is in this spirit that we welcome athletes and supporters who want to experience the joy of this wonderful sport in a great location.”

Characterized by beaches and crystal-clear water, the history of Cervia traces back more than 1,300 years. Located just over an hour away from the province’s capital Bologna, Cervia is accessible by car and train as well as via Bologna International Airport, which is served by state airline Alitalia and low-cost carriers from all over Europe.

“This is an excellent opportunity to combine triathlon and tourism,” added Andrea Corsini, Regional Minister for tourism of the Region Emilia-Romagna. “Cervia is an ideal choice for an IRONMAN event and we are excited to welcome athletes from all over the world. This race will help us showcase the beauty of our Riviera to even more people, and attract new visitors.”

IRONMAN Italy Emilia Romagna will be the first ever full-distance IRONMAN event in Italy, with the country previously hosting the IRONMAN 70.3 triathlon in Pescara, located 300km south of Cervia.

(The Pescara event was previously flying the flag for the M-Dot brand, following the cancellation of IRONMAN Civitavecchia and IRONMAN 70.3 Rome at the end of 2015. Civitavecchia was to be the first full-distance IRONMAN event in Italy with the IRONMAN Civitavecchia triathlon originally scheduled for 16 October 2016; while Rome was to host the IRONMAN 70.3 Rome triathlon on 20 August 2016.)

“We are thrilled to be adding a second event in Italy which will contribute to the further growth of our European series,” said Hans-Peter Zurbrugg, Managing Director of IRONMAN Europe, Middle East and Africa. “Last year more than 3,000 Italian athletes raced in our European races. Bringing a full-distance

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IRONMAN race to Italy is something we have been working towards for quite some time – it is a great way to provide more opportunities and thank our loyal Italian athletes.”

Athletes will start their race on the beach of Cervia. The swim course will consist of one loop of 3.8K, which includes an ‘Australian exit’ – a quick shore leave between two portions of the swim course – after approximately 2.5K.

The two-loop bike course of 180.2K starts on the promenade of Cervia and moves through the hills of Romagna. Athletes then head through the picturesque natural park of Salt Pans, where pink flamingos can be seen in their natural habitat. Next, it runs through the vineyards of Sangiovese and follows the ‘street of wine and taste’ of Romagna.

After passing the top of the hill in Bertinoro, the course descends back to Cervia. The total elevation gain of the bike is about 700m. Athletes will finish their race on a flat three-loop 42.2 km run course. After reaching the port canal, the course continues through the main streets of the nearby Milano Marittima. Athletes then enter the heart of Cervia and cross the square of the historic ‘salt warehouse’ before reaching the finish line on the beach promenade.

“This is an exciting opportunity for us but especially for the people of Cervia and Emilia-Romagna,” said Björn Steinmetz, Regional Director Central Europe at IRONMAN.

“With the IRONMAN race on Saturday and the 5150 Triathlon Series event on Sunday we are not bringing one, but two races to this exceptional town. It’s been a pleasure working on creating these events and we have experienced an extremely positive and welcoming atmosphere. This will be a true triathlon festival and we are proud and excited to be part of it.”

IRONMAN Italy Emilia Romagna will offer a US\$40,000 professional prize purse and 40 age-group qualifying slots for the 2018 IRONMAN World Championship.

General registration for IRONMAN Italy Emilia Romagna will open at 14:00 CET on 4 November 2016.

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