

We at Houston Racing urge anyone who is considering entry into the My First/My Next triathlons currently scheduled for April 1, 2006 or the Gulfman International or Half-Ironman Triathlons currently scheduled for April 2, 2006 in Galveston, Texas to carefully read the contents of this document before doing so. Please be aware that the City of Galveston *cancelled* these races on January 24, 2006. When questioned about this, World Endurance Sport, the organizer, replied

"The race is not cancelled. We are in the process of moving to a safer venue, there is some misscommunicated (sic) information going around. Details will be posted mid next week on the website."

The following week, new information was posted. The organizer stated that the races had been moved to Galveston State Park, with the swim scheduled to take place in Como Lake and the bike scheduled to head out towards Freeport. The sites also indicate that race maps are being revised, and will be published on or before February 28, 2006. The state park has not issued permits for the race, and the head of the Galveston Police Department has stated that these races will not occur on Galveston Island. At the time of this writing, online entry for these races is still available.

Following is information related to World Endurance Sport and the head of that organization, Mr. Brent Kamenka. Please feel free to share this information with any individuals, clubs, or retailers that you feel might be interested in this information as well. Any decision regarding participation in a World Endurance Sport event is of course, up to the individual - our goal is to ensure that it is an informed decision.

The Houston Racing Triathlon Club is home to hundreds of triathletes from this region, and as such, we feel it is our responsibility to ensure that athletes are well-informed before signing up for an event that is potentially unsafe. Following is a discourse on the history of reported problems associated with World Endurance Sport and its leader, Mr. Brent Kamenka. It includes statements from the governing bodies of triathlon in two countries, comments from individuals who have been associated with World Endurance Sport as athletes and as volunteers, excerpts from news reporting agencies, and reported comments from municipal organizations filed after last year's events in Galveston. Houston Racing *urges* anyone who is considering competing in a World Endurance Sport event to read the following report before committing to spending any time or money on it.

For the last two years, World Endurance Sport, under the leadership of Mr. Brent Kamenka, has held a series of triathlons at the Moody Gardens hotel and resort complex in Galveston, Texas. The races were held under the names 'My First Triathlon' (a sprint distance event), and 'Gulfman' (a half-Ironman event). Since the races last year, there has been an outpouring of concerns, complaints, and outright anger from participants who felt strongly that the races were held with little regard to athlete safety, were poorly organized and staffed in general, and were significantly overpriced.

Extensive research into the company and its history has been conducted. World Endurance Sport and its leader, Brent Kamenka, are based in Canada, and have only recently ventured into the U.S. to hold their events. From what we have been able to glean from the internet and several individuals who have a history with the company and its events, World Endurance Sport has been in business for at least the past six years, and have apparently been conducting events consistently similar to those described earlier throughout Canada.

The comments that have appeared on message boards both in Canada and the U.S. are very similar. Complaints about things such as lack of fluids on the course, lack or absence of volunteers, no traffic control, incorrect maps, inaccurate timing, results that take weeks to appear, and inflated entry fees are common. All of these things, while inexcusable, are still only the comments of participants however. As such, they might be disregarded by *potential* participants. There are some facts, however, that cannot be ignored.

1) Tri BC, the governing body for the sport of triathlon, the home of the organizer and his company, issued the following statement :

"Triathlon British Columbia does not sanction any World Endurance Sport races in the province of British Columbia, Canada."

2) Following the events that occurred in Galveston last year, USA Triathlon, the governing body for the sport of Triathlon in the United States, issued the following statement :

"Any races produced by World Endurance Sport are not eligible for USAT sanctioning."

Tri BC would not elaborate on their reasoning for refusing to sanction races held by World Endurance Sport, but the comments received from a number of individuals who have experience with this group explain things quite clearly. Note the following example (quoted directly from an e-mail message received by Houston Racing) :

"For too long, I've done my best to discourage people from entering WES races, but the RD attacks the masses and appeals to the newbie with his promises of a "flat course" and "take all day, we'll wait for you at the finish line." The idea is a sound one. Get newbies to the finish line. Get them doing one, and they'll do another; they'll be hooked. Unfortunately, the execution is less than sound. I was skeptical at my first race (the My First Triathlon series when it was still held in Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia in 2002), and I wasn't even a racer back then. I just remember being struck by the amount of obvious disorganization. Now with several dozen events of all types and varying lengths under my (race) belt, I find the level of disorganization is profound."

The race in question at Harrison Hot Springs deserves a closer examination as well. Following is an excerpt from the Chilliwack Times newspaper, which covers the town of Harrison Hot Springs. This article was written two years after the race referred to in the above paragraph :

It took a Supreme Court injunction, but the village of Harrison Hot Springs has blocked triathletes from competing on its streets this weekend.

Harrison mayor John Allen had been trying for months to stop World Endurance Sport's annual Bigfoot Triathlon-mainly because of inadequate paperwork, lack of approval from the village, and the fact Allen and others felt the more than 1,000 athletes, spectators and officials would clog village streets during the event- which was scheduled for between Aug. 7-8 and 14-15.

On July 30 the Supreme Court of B.C. agreed, and declared the Bigfoot Triathlon would obstruct a highway and public place according to definitions set by the Community Charter. Consequently, Supreme Court Judge Masuhara declared World Endurance Sport was prohibited from holding the event in Harrison Hot Springs under the village's Street Event Bylaw. The village was also granted the use of RCMP members to enforce that order.

According to Allen, race director Brent Kamenka started selling triathlon tickets several months before applying for permits to hold the event within Harrison's boundaries. When Kamenka did file the application, it was rejected for not falling within bylaw 802 which regulates street activities.

Mr. Kamenka's failure to obtain necessary permits appears to be a recurring issue (which will be addressed with regards to the Galveston races later in this document), and apparently so does the practice of holding sub-standard races in the same location year after year. Following are excerpt comments from athletes pulled directly from the Tri BC message boards following the 2005 events held in the same location :

...I participated last year in a big foot sprint distance tri he held in Harrison. It was a joke as well. I can only imagine how angry I would have been if I'd been doing the Iron distance. I also encourage people to boycott this race director and to tell others. His races are a disgrace to the sport. There are so many awesome races around to take part in that are so wonderfully organized and have such incredible volunteers.

...I am writing about the Bigfoot/My First Triathlons. I competed in the short distance this past summer as well and was just as disappointed as many others. First, the race was supposed to be in Hope, but got moved to Harrison. I never received any e-mail or phone call about the change, nor did my boyfriend who also competed. Fortunately, I had the sense the morning of the race to check out Harrison (just in case)

and there it was. The race director didn't even seem to care about what had happened. The race was awful. Twice I was sent in the wrong direction and went way too far! As did my boyfriend, who was in the lead pack and is certain he didn't go far enough. I put in another vote for a boycott. I sent World Endurance Sport a lengthy e-mail about what had happened and never received a word back (though they were readily able to send me an e-mail about next year's event!)

...Good to see the negative comments about the Big Foot Triathlon on the TRI B.C. website. I won the 1/2 Ironman this year, and in my 18 years of racing, I've never been so disappointed! I say never burn your bridges, but this one ill torch myself. It could be one of the best races in Western Canada, if it had a race director that actually cared about its athletes, volunteers, and town of Harrison. I will be spreading my view on this race as well, and I hope that someone out there will take this race under their wing, and turn it into what it could be.

...We both are appalled to hear that people are still continuing to have such negative experiences with the current race situation in Harrison. Both of us along with at least 5 other race directors and Tri BC made a plea to the City of Harrison at the end of 2002 to allow another race director to provide a safer and well managed event.. As long as people support poorly run events, those events will continue to be run.

Considering the statements made thus far, it appears that World Endurance Sport and Mr. Kamenka have repeatedly held events that were not well-received by participants. In addition, it appears that at some point the governing body of triathlon in British Columbia found enough fault with the practices of World Endurance Sport to discontinue sanctioning any events produced by them. While this should be of grave concern to anyone participating in a race in British Columbia, it likely has little to no effect on athletes in the U.S, and rightly so. The remainder of this document will therefore be devoted to addressing the practices of World Endurance Sport in the United States.

As stated earlier, following the events that occurred in Galveston last year, USA Triathlon issued a statement in which they reported that any races produced by World Endurance Sport are not eligible for USAT sanctioning. Apparently this decision was made due to the fact that World Endurance Sport advertised the series of events as being USAT sanctioned, when in fact they failed to comply with a significant number of sanctioning agreement terms. The following violations of the sanctioning agreement were reported to Houston racing by a source that chose to remain anonymous :

- *Correct USAT membership fees were not collected or remitted to USA Triathlon.*
- *The large number of complaints from participants and the Parks Board indicated that appropriate safety procedures were not in place*
- *Membership forms were not forwarded according to the sanction timeline, and fees were not collected for one of the events.*
- *Post event materials were not submitted and USAT had to negotiate payment for 2 of the events. Payment was not received until months after the event took place.*
- *The Race Director failed to meet requirements (waivers, money, event conduct) as reported to USA Triathlon by race participants.*
- *USAT also agreed to 'unsanction' the My First and My Next triathlons. The reason : the one-day membership fees and signed waiver forms were not collected for either of the races.*
- *In addition, the local race director, signatory on the Galveston Triathlons sanction application, sent an affidavit to USA Triathlon stating that he did not sign the sanction agreement. He also states he did not sign an agreement with the Galveston Parks Board for the permit to produce the events. The Galveston Parks Board also sent in an affidavit stating they witnessed Brent Kamenka signing the race director's name to documents.*

A post-race report was issued by the Galveston Parks Board following the events. In the report, the services associated with the event reported any issues of concern related to the event. Following are reported excerpts from those documents. The source of these reports chose to remain anonymous :

Galveston Beach Patrol

- *No water in the transition area for racers to fill bottles, put in pans to wash off feet, etc.*
- *More crowd control needed in transition - several times bystanders were wandering through the area*
- *Lack of appropriate number of medical units.*
- *The run and bike course looked like there was a lot of mixing with traffic...at the 81st Street Fishing Pier cyclists had to look over their shoulder to see if cars were coming. Normally the city does a great job of making sure these types of conflicts don't occur when a race has a permit. Brent Kamenka told the Beach patrol that they had a permit, but his race director and a member of the Parks Board both said he didn't have a city permit.*
- *All the races had a late start - possibly as a result of something in the packet pickup or the race briefing process. As a result we had to hold our workers longer and went over budget. We received many complaints about inadequate staffing and a lack of organization*

City of Galveston Traffic Department

- *The traffic department was unaware of the event.*
- *The event changed the proposed route without notifying the traffic department.*

Moody Gardens (recommendations)

- *Make signage more visible*
- *Have numbered and assigned bike racks*
- *Measure swim distance from Yellow Submarine at Palm Beach*
- *Use different colored caps for each swim wave*
- *Use P.A. system at Palm Beach*
- *Double number of portable toilets*
- *All staff wear Event Staff t-shirts*

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees

In October 2005, the Special Events Department reportedly sent a letter to the Galveston Parks Board of Trustees that included the following (this information was provided to us by a source which chose to remain anonymous) :

"After two years of working closely with World Endurance Sport and Brent Kamenka in the planning and execution of past triathlon events in Galveston, along with researching World Endurance Sport's reputation with other race venues both in the United States and Canada, the Special Events Department finds the relationship between the Parks Board and World Endurance Sport to be detrimental to the image of the Galveston Parks Board, Moody Gardens, as well as the overall image of Galveston Island. The following reasons explain why we feel it is to our advantage to discontinue our relationship with World Endurance Sport :

- *Poor past performance at this venue and other venues*
- *Concerns that race management is not capable of meeting safety and competitive rules criteria, and other factors indicating potential problems in race operations*
- *Not being in good standing with USA Triathlon*
- *Failing to comply with the conditions of sanctioning requirements of USA Triathlon*
- *Other matters in preserving the reputation of Galveston Island as a premier Triathlon destination"*

Reportedly attached to this letter were references to three separate articles from Canadian newspapers highlighting the problems experienced with Brent Kamenka and World Endurance Sport due to lack of permits, inadequate paperwork, and lack of approval from municipal organizations. Also highlighted were the costly effects of the legal battles between World Endurance Sport and the village of Harrison Hot Springs, and comments from Cultus Lake B.C. and Lake Chelan, WA officials regarding the lack of permits and 'adequate at best' event organization.

Thus far, we have outlined comments and reports from Canada concerning past events, standings with the governing bodies of the sport of triathlon in two countries, and reports and comments from parties closely associated

with last year's events in Galveston. These clearly illustrate the nature of the World Endurance Sport organization. However, as potential participants in any event held by World Endurance Sport, a more useful tool for determining whether or not to participate is likely feedback from participants in last year's events. Following are excerpts from the Runner Triathlete News message boards concerning last year's events :

"To anyone planning on doing my first tri in Galveston. I strongly urge you to contact the race director Brent Kamenka and confirm the date of the event, the facilities being used, the course, the race directors knowledge of the course as well as what support he has organized for this event before you register. I almost did one of his triathlons in British Columbia last summer and would be happy to share my experience with you. You may also contact British Columbia Athletics for some history on this race director. B.C. Athletics will no longer sanction any of his races and it looks as though he has decided to move south. I would hate to see any 'first timers' be left with a bad impression of triathlons or race directors in our area."

"How can anyone charge \$69 early entry for a sprint tri that is not USAT sanctioned, does not matter when or if you finish and seems to be unorganized? I hope anyone considering this race will think twice."

"I've been to one of Brent Kamenka's races in Lake Chelan, it was the worst race I have ever been in, and would not recommend entering any of his events, he acts under the company name World Endurance Sport. Apparently he got into trouble with parks boards and city councils when he held races where he didn't have permits or something like that, I'm sure if you Google his name you'd find some articles about him. It was a total rip off - \$89 for what? A T-shirt with some silly drawing that looks like a kid drew it, and a medal."

"They are coming back from Canada to fleece us again in 2006. No doubt because they made so much money, by charging a lot and providing so little in 2005. Worst run race in Texas. A Texas race promoter is trying to takeover this race, but these pretenders have a 3 year contract. Boycotting the race is the way to send a message."

"I am from BC, Canada and this fellow took a Town all the way to the BC Supreme Court to hold the race even though the Town had sued. He ended up moving 10 miles down the road. He had a lot of races in BC and just seems to keep moving from area to area once bridges have been burned. At transitiontimes.com Washington page his lake Chelan race was voted worst race in WA. Be careful as he is very tenacious."

"Last word was that he did talk Galveston into giving him the race for next year (2006). It looks like he will be back. Be prepared for whatever happens. Hopefully for the athletes sake he has learned something for his past races."

"Yep, its true. He was able to convince the Galveston board that it was not HIS fault the race was so poorly run. (who's else fault could it have been?) When you are Race Director, you take responsibility for the entire race and make sure there is WATER, VOLUNTEERS, MARKED COURSE, SAFE RACE CONDITIONS etc. He did none of this. I was there. I know this race lacked in every aspect. And I also hear he is wanting to put on other races in our area. The only way to get rid of him (as other states AND COUNTRIES have done) is to NOT DO HIS RACE : BOYCOTT GULFMAN should be the theme in 2006. He will go away if he can not make his \$100,000. There will be other local races to do, support them and forget GULFMAN."

"I have looked even further into this race as it was one of my "A" races this year. I contacted ...USAT sanctioning and was told that they had some problems here but that they had received results from the Int and Half IM distances. Its been a month and still no points are posted for this race. I had a super finish at the top of my age group and no points. As USAT members we should not only boycott this one again next year, but barrage USAT with e-mail to get them to properly score this one and to not sanction it again next year. It is really a shame though, of all the races I have done over the years, it was one of my favorite venues. Tell your friends what a poor job they have done and lets keep this from happening again."

"Wow- I'm glad I found this site now- after I dropped a \$120 on this sham- and for all of you that said to lighten up- I guess that isn't a lot of money to you but to me- I at least expect a race packet, maybe some mile markers, paper cups instead of styrofoam, no ice in my water, some security for my bike, maybe a chase vehicle on the bike and run coarse, the little army guys could have known something, maybe being able to even find a race official and not just have one throwing gel packs at me- I almost didn't get my finishers medal because they didn't decide to hand them out until about 5:30 or so (I know it was just a finishers medal, but I trained hard for this race) and what else- the airlines lost the results- please! Maybe some professionalism- The list could go on. I can't believe Moody Gardens backed this thing- I think I am going to write them. Well, it was a fun experience, (I felt like the race was organized by a bunch of high school football players- at least someone who has never himself done a triathlon) but I feel cheated! Oh well, you live you learn- at least I have my cool sweatshirt- oh wait, anyway- oh well"

"I can sign up for next year already? That is great, let me take out my credit card! NOT! There is no way I'm slapping down any more of my cash for this idiot's 'race'. As far as I'm concerned, these canucks stole over a hundred grand from us! A LOT of people complained and asked for an explanation. All we got in return was a 'volunteer' saying it is going to be better next year because they are actually going to hire a volunteer coordinator. Clearly, though, these people don't understand what it takes to put on a race. They laughed all the way to their Canadian bank this year, but I hope that will change in 2006. I feel sorry for the people who don't know any better and throw their money away. I personally am going to tell everyone I know to stay away from this race and save their money for quality races."

"I wish it were as easy as offering this guy constructive criticism, but let's face facts. This guy has been putting on races, in fact several a year, for many years (since at least 1999 when he was in Hawaii). He KNOWS what he's doing and he doesn't care. Why should he...just look at the bucks (over \$100k in pre-registered entry fees) he raked in for the weekend. And he does this several times a year. He is making a very nice living (with very little investment on his part) by putting on races."

"I guess from your responses we will not get our times anytime soon or at all. It definitely was the worse tri I have ever participated in - I am thinking that these results will never get into the rankings. A big waste of money if that is the case. Has anyone reported this to US Triathlon? I plan to - for there were so many things wrong with the race and the price? Oh please. I am just sorry that I participated. If anyone does find out where we can get our results - let me know."

"I trained for 3 months and spent time away from my family to achieve this goal. I think we all have a right to be upset. From the "creating an illusion of an USAT sanctioned event" to the inaccuracy of the course, the RD had little respect for the nature of the sport and its athletes. I could list out dozens of things that showed he did not prepare adequately...no water, no gels (except for the ones flying out the car windows), no mile markers, no clock, no organization.....and no responses to my e-mails prior to race day. I was waiting in line to pick up my race number in the morning and one of the organizers came down at 6:30 and said to the girls working the tables, "Oh great, you all are here already". The race was supposed to start at 7:00 a.m.!...except they forgot about daylight savings time. I am more upset than angry. I achieved my goal, but still feel a little cheated or unofficial, especially without the race results."

"I did not feel safe on the course! No medical, marshalls and our backs were to traffic on the run course with NO cones! It was as though they had never seen a race before much less put one on. The people that hired them did not get their money's worth....I'm not really sure what they did....including making up the course the day before!"

"Did the international distance last Sunday.. and I must say... It was totally disorganized... Water stations with no water, the organizers said they will provide Gatorade and gels on the stations... found none of that..I think the place is beautiful, but they need a little more organization and volunteers...I won't be doing that one next year... "

"Yeah, I was a little bit suspicious when the announcer said under their breath something like...."How long could it possibly take a bunch of Texas hillbillies to finish this race? It must be all of that salt water they took in where they have no teeth." Not very professional if you ask me. And, why aren't the results posted yet? I thought my ridiculous entry fee would more than cover the man hours to post them in a timely manner. Not to mention, I think I'm still thirsty from the end of my run, and not having any water. The only thing I had to drink was a 16 ounce cup of chocolate milk I stole from a 6 year old on-looker...and I STILL feel bad about that"

"Anybody notice that the race organizers couldn't spell triathlon? They spelled it wrong on the finish line banner. That should have told us right away to turn around and go home."

"Bush-league all the way around. From the time that they couldn't provide a bike course map til the finish line. One correction-there were 5 gels on the course. As I was running with another guy, the race director drove by and threw 5 gels on the ground in front of us. He may think that is great support, but the fact is its irresponsible and dangerous to expect people to complete a 13 mile run without calories. I also suspect the timing company that they are blaming for the results problems is their company. Racer beware."

"Okay, please note that the following are MY experiences and MY OPINIONS are based on MY experiences :

The "My First/Next Triathlon" (sprint) series is a great way to become inducted into the sport (put on by World Endurance Sport). In fact, I did the "My First Tri" one year and the "My Next Tri" the following year at Harrison Hot Springs in British Columbia (BTW, the town banned them from holding those triathlons at that venue in 2004 citing "lack of proper permits," which is entirely typical of him). My first impression at my very first triathlon, and only my third race overall, was that the race seemed very unorganized (I was quite the neophyte after all). By the following year, I had done quite a few more races and was less of a neophyte. I was even more appalled at the lack of apparent organization.

Anyway, while these races are great for jumping into the sport (there is no competition as "placing" isn't recognized), don't go into one expecting to get a first class event. The distances aren't entirely accurate and the races are NOT USAT sanctioned. Heck, while USAT rules may apply, they certainly aren't enforced because there are no USAT officials in attendance. In addition, don't expect all his volunteers to know what they are doing because THEY weren't properly briefed. At one race I did, runners and cyclists were colliding because the volunteers were sending them off helter skelter. In the same race, some athletes were running further than necessary while others didn't go far enough. Not exactly a fair contest even if it wasn't competitive.

Even with all that said, it was my experience as a volunteer on his long courses which caused me to have the most serious concerns because of their potential danger to the athletes. For example, intersections are not always properly covered. One year, I was put in charge of one the busiest intersections in that com-

munity. I had absolutely NO safety vest, equipment, or even a warning flag. I received NO training, NO support (does a single bottle of water count?), and NO relief (I was out there for almost 8 hours). Heck, I wasn't even a citizen of the country and here I was directing their traffic!

There is little or no communication between the race director and aid stations (communications usually consist of a buddy riding up and down the course in a car - maybe), the water gets warm, there is no ice available (during warm weather tris, this can be crucial), and any other sustenance is almost non-existent. In a different year, I was manning one of the bike aid stations (actually, two of them, one was across the street). Again, I was out there for several hours. All I had to offer the athletes was warm water and dried out oranges. And *I* (the volunteer) was the one that had to ask permission of the store owner to set up on his corner. A classic example of this race director not getting all his ducks lined up. Why wasn't this permission secured in advance? Lastly, the athletes have been known to get lost because the courses aren't always well marked (minor detail as an athlete should always KNOW HIS COURSE).

Now, I'll allow that it's possible that since he has migrated these races into the U.S., the local governments are making him toe the line a little more closely. In the past, he has started scheduling races and collecting fees without jumping through all the necessary hoops like securing all the proper permits and insurance (liability) coverage (Harrison Hot Springs and Cultus Lake - both in British Columbia - are prime examples). And it is the middle to back of the packers who should have the MOST concern about his lack of support as WE are the ones that are most likely to need that support.

Again, these are only MY OPINIONS. I think that he has a great idea, but very poor execution/organization. I also think he is more interested in lining his pockets than in the welfare of the athletes (which is why I think he makes a lousy race director).

I pass on this information so you will be fully informed. You will not have the same type of experience in one of his races as you would in one that was properly supported and well run, but it will be an experience. Just be prepared to be fully self-supporting and cover your own ass. The choice, as always, is yours."

And finally, following are excerpts from the Houston Racing Triathlon Club forums concerning last year's events in Galveston :

" I went down to Galveston yesterday to cheer on some of the people that come to my track workouts. The races run on Saturday have possibilities but is in serious need of organization or someone will get hurt badly. Cars on the course, cars cutting the course, run, transitions, and start badly organized. I wound up going down to watch and wound up volunteering and believe me, they could have used a whole lot more experience. Any feedback from Sundays Olympic distance and Half? Personally I'm glad I wasn't able to make my race."

" I did the My First Tri and you are right it was dodgeball out there. Very poor organization. The swim was OK I guess. The only thing is your chip went off at the mat and then they made you wait about 5 minutes before you could start swimming. There were plenty of lifeguards and buoys that people could hang on if they got tired.....and I saw a lot of people hanging on for dear life....in 2 feet of water.

The bike was littered with cars and not all of them seemed to care that we were trying to do something here. The bike turn around was probably the worst..."go down there to the end and turn around".....there was no one at the end of the road...no cone...no marker, nothing....people were turning around everywhere.

The run was OK except the volunteers doing the water stations seemed to think they could fill one cup of water at a time as people came to them....they ran out also. Got no water!

Also...I along with others started their kick too soon...they had a 5k on the same course that morning and we saw the sign that said "Finish"...but it wasn't ours.....oh no....another 350yds....after the corner....They needed to take that down.

The finish line was a mess too. People were everywhere crowding the line. They were supposed to be handing out medals but I had to go back and get mine.....I also heard them say my name.....about 2 minutes AFTER I crossed the line.

But....I had a great time...learned a lot about the sport, organization of an event and myself."

"It was just as bad for the OD and Half. They did change the bike course to a more direct route to the seawall, which the police made them do. The run course was just unbelievably unsafe with all those cars on the course. I heard people who were farther back had aid stations with no water, which was all the aid stations had. They said their would be water, Gatorade, and Hammer Gel but they only had water. Not to good for an endurance event. I was glad that I slammed a few endurolytes when I headed out on the run. While I'm at it, some mats on the sidewalk from the swim would be nice too. My feet are raw from such a long run on concrete...they didn't have anyone monitoring the transition area either. Anyone could go in or out with anything they wanted."

" The Galveston Tri on Saturday was a textbook case for how not to put on a race....

When we got there, nothing was set up and when we finally found where they were setting up there were lines with no clear indication of what they were for. We had preregistered but they had to pull all the items together and then send you to another line to get your swim cap. We asked the person checking us in if she could just grab a few swim caps from the other line which she did. We then proceeded to take one and pass them down our line. I think there was even a "get your safety pin line". Still another line for the t-shirts which we found out that the t-shirts didn't exist for my next tri....they said they ran out.

At one point the race director stood up and gave totally inaccurate information when someone else stood up and corrected him.

Nobody ever checked the helmets before entering the "unassigned" transition area. Everybody seemed to be welcome to hang around in the transition area as it was filled with folks who were not racing. Then we went to the next line for the timing chips which was just a disorganised as the other lines.

The lifeguards were plentiful in and around the water although they were being asked a lot of questions and had been told nothing. The race was over an hour late and the only salvation was that it was getting warmer the longer we waited. There were a lot of sharp rocks with barnacles on the beach. Even being very careful, I managed to cut the bottom of my foot.

After the swim running through the sand it would have been nice to have had a small pool of clean water to run through so I didn't have to take the sand with me on the ride. Pulling out of the resort I encountered cars everywhere along with some other race with people yelling at me saying I was going through their cones. The course was so poorly marked that I ended up riding almost 14 miles in total. I figured out later the place we were supposed to turn around was a totally blind corner...I am shocked there were not wrecks!

Coming back into the transition area I yelled 3 times at three army dudes standing in the way and finally ran directly into them with my shoulder and my bike.... There was not water leaving for the run and when I asked the guys said he didn't know. I finally saw a guy with an ice chest and I asked him if this was a water station. He then opened the ice chest and made me a glass of water... I got to stand there and wait while he did this. Coming back to the resort after the run against cars and being passed from behind by bikes....I assume this was not the proper route, I got directed to go around the far side of the hotel and through the parking lot and then got directed to start the run over again at which time I turned around and managed to find my way to the finish line. They called out someone else's name when I crossed mat and then after I was done, I heard my name.... Not sure how much over 3 miles I actually ran.

The only water was in an ice chest for you to go and drag a cup through. There was a little fruit and beer. People were crowded all around the finish line.....I hate to criticise but when I pay more than I have paid for any other sprint and all this happens what can I say. There is no excuse for saying it was their first at-

tempt.....last year was CB&I's first attempt and they made ever other race I have done in the last two and a half years look unprofessional....races should not be allowed to happen without demonstrating they will be meeting certain USAT standards....which by the way we have an e-mail saying this was a sanctioned race from the race director.....I think the race director should be sanctioned !!!"

"I've got two years experience with this RD when he was up in Canada. All I can tell you is he doesn't get any better. Ever. He is only out to line his pockets and he does it at the expense of the athletes. He typically picks on new triathletes because they usually don't know how a good race is run. I'm not the least bit surprised at the disorganization or the lack of cups at water stations. Heck, I'm not even surprised he ran out of water. It's typical for him. As for USAT, well, he claims USAT rules apply, but he doesn't enforce them (at all!) and USAT is nowhere to be found. It is NOT a sanctioned race. My advice? Run him out of town. He's a menace to the sport. I'd hoped he'd learned and was waiting for a good report on him. I'm both sorry and angry he hasn't." (Please note - the events WERE sanctioned by USAT).

"He (the Race Director) won't answer your e-mails. He too busy counting all the money he made. He got kicked out of Canada as far as putting on races. He now comes to central Washington and puts on a series of high priced "My First Triathlon and My Next Triathlon" The newbies don't know better. Then he went down to Texas, again you guys didn't know any better. He'll most likely be heading to Michigan, New York or Florida next. He started to hand out flyers at a race in 2000 and the racers basically told him to take a hike."

Houston Racing is committed to generating interest in and supporting the sport of triathlon in our community and the surrounding area. We take an active interest in the safety of events that our members and members of our community take part in, and are committed to presenting triathlon as a fun, healthy, and ethical endeavour. The purpose of this document is to provide members of the community with information regarding the past activities and practices of World Endurance Sport and Mr. Brent Kamenka. We feel it prudent that potential participants in events held by this company and person be fully aware of the pattern of practices that have emerged both in Canada and the United States over the past few years, and take this into consideration before entering any events.

We also feel that the Moody Gardens venue with which these events are associated should not be held in a negative light as a result of the practices of World Endurance Sport and Mr. Brent Kamenka. Galveston island is a superb triathlon destination, and Moody Gardens is a near perfect venue for such an event. It is our sincere hope that Moody Gardens will continue to be open to triathlons in the future regardless of the state of affairs with World Endurance Sport and Mr. Brent Kamenka.

In summation :

- World Endurance Sport, under the leadership of Mr. Brent Kamenka, has been conducting triathlon events for at least the last six years in Canada and the United States
- World Endurance Sport and Mr. Brent Kamenka have demonstrated a failure to secure permits necessary for conducting events of this nature
- Triathlon British Columbia (Tri BC), the governing body for the sport of triathlon in British Columbia, does not sanction any World Endurance Sport races in the province of British Columbia, Canada.
- Individuals who participated in World Endurance Sport events were unhappy enough with the circumstances surrounding the events to make numerous posts on the Tri BC message boards detailing the problems experienced
- After last year's events in Galveston, USA Triathlon, the governing body for the sport of triathlon in the United States, issued a statement that any races produced by World Endurance Sport are not eligible for

USAT sanctioning. Reasons reported to Houston Racing include :

- Failure to collect and remit USAT membership fees
- Large volume of complaints from participants and Galveston Parks Board leads USAT to conclude that appropriate safety procedures were not in place
- Membership forms were not forwarded within sanction timeline, and money was not collected for one of the events.
- Post event materials were not submitted and USAT had to negotiate payment for 2 of the events. Payment was not received until months after the event.
- Organizer's failure to meet basic requirements (waivers, money, and event conduct) as reported to USAT by participants.
- Reportedly an affidavit signed by the signatory of the sanctioning agreement stating that he didn't sign the agreement, and that he also didn't sign an agreement with the Galveston Parks Board for the permit to produce the event.
- Reportedly an affidavit was received from the Galveston Parks Board stating they witnessed Brent Kamenka signing the race director's name onto documents.
- The Galveston Beach Patrol's post-race report reportedly highlighted a lack of water on the course and in transition, lack of crowd control in transition, an inappropriate number of available medical units, traffic on the run and bike course, conflicting reports as to the existence of a permit, and inadequate staffing with a lack of organization
- Reportedly the City of Galveston Traffic department was completely unaware of the event
- Moody Gardens (the race venue) reportedly made a number of recommendations for action items that are typically standard procedure for any race
- The Special Events Department for the Galveston Parks Board, after two years of working closely with World Endurance Sport and Brent Kamenka, reportedly found the relationship between the Parks Board and World Endurance Sport to be detrimental to the image of the Galveston Parks Board, Moody Gardens, as well as the overall image of Galveston Island. As a result, they have reportedly discontinued their relationship with World Endurance Sport (if true, this likely means that the Parks Board will not be involved with the events that are held this year).
- A strong reaction from past participants in World Endurance Sport events and the races in Galveston was demonstrated at the online message board of Runner Triathlete News and the Houston Racing Triathlon Club forums. Negative comments focused on an overall apparent lack of concern for the safety of the participants, a lack of organization in general, and a lack of timely, accurate follow-up after the conclusion of the events. Positive comments were limited almost exclusively to the beautiful nature of the venue itself.

We at Houston Racing urge anyone who is considering entry into the My First/My Next triathlons currently scheduled for April 1, 2006 or the Gulfman International or Half-Ironman Triathlons currently scheduled for April 2, 2006 in Galveston, Texas to carefully read the contents of this document before doing so. Please be aware that the City of Galveston *cancelled* these races on January 24, 2006. When questioned about this, World Endurance Sport, the organizer, replied

"The race is not cancelled. We are in the process of moving to a safer venue, there is some miscommunication (sic) information going around. Details will be posted mid next week on the website."

The following week, new information was posted. The organizer stated that the races had been moved to Galveston State Park, with the swim scheduled to take place in Como Lake and the bike scheduled to head out towards Freeport. The sites also indicate that race maps are being revised, and will be published on or before February 28, 2006. The state park has not issued permits for the race, and the head of the Galveston Police Department has stated that these races will not occur on Galveston Island. At the time of this writing, online entry for these races is still available.