Mass participation sport successfully returned to the Sunshine Coast last week with IRONMAN 70.3 Sunshine Coast delivered under a Queensland Health approved COVID Safe plan.

The event, the first IRONMAN 70.3 to be held in Oceania since the pandemic was declared, saw more than 1,000 athletes take part in a 1.9km swim, 90km ride and 21km run throughout the Sunshine Coast.

In developing the COVID Safe Event Plan the IRONMAN Group worked closely with stakeholders including several Queensland Government departments, Sunshine Coast Council, Triathlon Australia and Triathlon Queensland, along with event contractors and suppliers.

The approved COVID Safe Event Plan was developed to manage the risks associated with the transmission of the virus, and central to the Plan was The IRONMAN Group’s COVID Safe Return to Racing Principles, which focus on tracing, education, enhanced hygiene, density reduction, touchpoint minimisation, athlete self-reliance and screening.

Dave Beeche, Senior Vice President and Managing Director of The IRONMAN Group Oceania, thanked everyone involved in the event for their contribution to its success.

“It was great to see athletes back out doing what they love on the Sunshine Coast last week,” said Beeche. “A significant amount of work went in to developing and executing a COVID Safe Event Plan that ensured we could deliver a great event for all participants while also looking after the health of the community.

“I’d like to thank the numerous stakeholders we worked with in developing the plan, their contribution allowed us to get to a position where we could successfully deliver an event in a COVID Safe manner,” he said. “Athletes were great in complying with the COVID safety requirements of the event and we were able to show that mass participation sporting events can be delivered in a way that meets all of the Government requirements while allowing those taking part to be active, outdoors and gaining all of the mental and physical benefits that come from participating in an event such as this.”

Sunshine Coast Council Economy Portfolio Councillor Jason O’Pray said it was great to see smiles on the faces of athletes in competition mode after a long break.

“I would like to acknowledge the tremendous effort of the team at The IRONMAN Group Oceania, it took a lot of work behind the scenes to get to the start line, and then to deliver to the athletes,” he said. “A massive pat on the back to all the staff and volunteers involved.

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“Sunshine Coast Council is keen to see our event industry bounce back, and are continuing to provide support to major event operators to achieve the best possible outcomes for our community and local economy,” Cr O’Pray said.

Sunshine Coast resident Margo Mackintosh was taking part in her third IRONMAN 70.3 event, this time as a part of a team entry, and said that the athletes were thrilled to be back racing.

“It was brilliant to finally be back racing, everyone who was there was really appreciative of the effort that went into getting the event up and running,” said Mackintosh. “I’d say that people were less concerned with their individual performance on the day and there was a feeling of gratitude and excitement out there.

“It was so obvious that all of the steps were in place to create a safe event,” she said. “From check in to recovery you felt safe, there was a high visibility of COVID Safe staff and constant reminders to keep your distance from the commentators but it certainly didn’t dampen the day, you felt there was a level of safety there.”

IRONMAN 70.3 Sunshine Coast featured a number of key COVID Safe measures, including scheduled check in and bike racking which regulated the number of athletes on site at any time and 1.5m distance markings were used in all queues and capacities in spaces were regulated by event staff.

Organisers also ensured that there was a thorough cleaning schedule undertaken by staff, volunteers and contracted cleaners, and spectators were educated on key health messages throughout the event by on-site commentators and COVID Safe Officers.

IRONMAN racing heads further north this weekend, with the Cairns Airport IRONMAN Cairns Asia-Pacific Championship taking place in Tropical North Queensland on Sunday 27 September.

IRONMAN 70.3 Sunshine Coast is supported by the Queensland Government through Tourism and Events Queensland and features on the It’s Live! in Queensland events calendar.

For more information on IRONMAN 70.3 Sunshine Coast visit https://www.ironman.com/im703-sunshine-coast

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About The IRONMAN Group

The IRONMAN Group operates a global portfolio of events that includes the IRONMAN® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® 70.3® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® Virtual Racing™ (VR™) Series, 5150™
Triathlon Series, the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series®, the Rock ‘n’ Roll Virtual Running™ Series, IRONKIDS®, ITU World Triathlon Series, premier running events including the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon™ and The Sun-Herald City2Surf®, Ultra-Trail® World Tour events including Tarawera Ultra and Ultra-Trail Australia™, mountain bike races including the Absa Cape Epic®, road cycling events, and other multisport races. The IRONMAN Group is the largest operator of mass participation sports in the world and provides more than a million participants annually the benefits of endurance sports through the company’s vast offerings. Since the inception of the iconic IRONMAN® brand and its first event in 1978, athletes have proven that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE® by crossing finish lines around the world. Beginning as a single race, The IRONMAN Group has grown to become a global sensation with hundreds of events across 55+ countries. The IRONMAN Group is owned by Advance (www.advance.com), a private, family-owned business. For more information, visit www.ironman.com.