



May 8, 2023

For immediate release:

It is with great sadness that we announce the cancellation of the Heartland Triathlon. This event has been our pride and joy for the past 18 years, but we have failed to rebound from the COVID shutdown with two years of significant financial losses. Sadly, we have made the gut wrenching decision that we cannot afford to continue the event. The main reason for the cancellation is a 'perfect storm' of both costs increasing over 200% in the past five years (especially in areas of safety, traffic management and the like) and athlete attendance steadily declining by over 50%. We have made every effort to minimize expenses – even moving to a one-day event format for 2023 – but, at the end of the day, the participant numbers still do not currently cover the cost of the event.

Over the past 18 years, we have fallen in love with over 5,000 unique athletes that have participated, are proud to have donated in excess of \$150,000 back into our community, and take pride in how the Heartland Triathlon has become a staple in many athletes' annual racing calendar. We have loyal sponsors that have helped to offset our costs and we are forever thankful to them for their years of support as well.

As we close down the event, we will be working to refund all current year paid entries and hope to have that wrapped up by the end of June. I would like to encourage you to look for other events like the Sommer Sports and Integrity Multisport Events to fill the void we have created. These are both great locally owned series who are working hard to grow the sport of triathlon here in Florida. While we have no plans to return in this current climate, we remain hopeful that the sport will rebound and participant levels will return to their previous highs. We leave the door open to possibly return with a far more optimistic and triumphant press release in the future.

However, in closing, thank you for years of support of the Heartland Triathlon! We have made friends for life through our event and the sport of triathlon and look forward to watching your successes at other events around the State. Please be safe, be respectful and race all the way across the line!

Warmest Regards,

The Heartland Triathlon