

„Strong enough for Fuerte“

Fuerteventura will become new member of world-wide Challenge Family in 2011

ROTH/FUERTEVENTURA. As of 2011 Fuerteventura, one of the sunny Canary Islands, will be a new location in the Challenge world series, which will then include as many as nine triathlon events each year. On May 1, 2011 the premiere of the Playitas Challenge Fuerteventura half-distance race will take place in southern Fuerteventura. The Playitas Sports Resort is going to be the main sponsor and co-organizer of the event. The Resort has achieved a good reputation among endurance athletes for the various training camps that are offered there, and is also well-known for its sponsorship of the Saxo Bank bike team.

The athletes may look forward to an unusual competition in the southern part of Fuerteventura, with a race course that reflects the rough beauty of the island. After the swim on a circuit in the Atlantic the demanding bike leg includes several inclines and leads through the beautiful communities of Tuineje and Pajara. The final half-marathon will be the highlight of the half Challenge: After a five-kilometre asphalt lap and two laps round a golf course, the run will take the athletes to a light house with a spectacular view of the sea. The run course is definitely very challenging and will demand a great deal of the athletes, so the race in Fuerteventura will certainly not be among the easiest races of the world-wide Challenge series. So it definitely fits what people often say in Fuerteventura: “Eres fuerte para Fuerte?” (“Are you strong enough for Fuerteventura?”).

Challenge organizer Felix Walchshöfer was impressed by the planned race course when he visited the island: “A Challenge is a test of one's abilities in a demanding undertaking – and this competition is going to be just that for the triathletes. The Playitas Challenge Fuerteventura is definitely going to be a new athletic highlight for the Challenge series, and the landscape is simply breathtaking!”

As regards the spectators, the location of the hot spots will be just perfect, since they will be very concentrated: The swim start, transition zones, run course as well as the finish line will be located directly in the hotel grounds, so that a major part of the race can be watched right from the Playitas hotel. But this was not the only reason why the local organizer Jörg Kinder, Sports Manager of the Playitas

Resort and an active triathlete himself, wanted to have a Challenge race on Fuerteventura: “When I landed on the island for the first time about one and a half years ago, and did my training on the future race course, I thought: Wow, one should have a competition right here.” Kinder says that the Playitas Challenge Fuerteventura is a great chance for the island and for the Playitas Resort to obtain a better market position that differs from the current image as a sun and beach destination. The local Challenge organizer promises: “Together with the island government we are going to do everything to establish this event as a long-term athletic highlight in the Canary Islands. Especially the run course with the light house will be something that everyone remembers”.

The surrounding conditions for the competition are ideal. Fuerteventura International Airport is only a 40-minute drive away, the training conditions such as climate, little traffic and street quality leave nothing to be desired. The date for the competition on May 1 has also been well chosen. Says Felix Walchshöfer: “The date for the Challenge Fuerteventura has been set at the end of the training camp season and at the very beginning of the race season. It’s the perfect race to prepare for the Challenge Roth and of course for the whole season. I’m sure that the Playitas Challenge Fuerteventura will make the Challenge series even more attractive and we warmly welcome the new member in our Challenge Family”.

The well-known triathlon travel business Hannes Hawaii Tours is already working on the organization of special trips for athletes to the new Challenge event. Further information on the race: www.challenge-family.com , www.playitas.net and coming soon www.challenge-fuerteventura.com