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Kewarra Beach mother dies in hospital after Ironman Cairns swim leg

MURRAY WENZEL AND GRACE UHR • THE CAIRNS POST • JUNE 16, 2015 2:12PM



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NEWS

Wounded Pride looking for



Erica Atkins, 43, was pulled unconscious from the water during the 70.3 Cairns Ironman event at Palm Cove. PICTURE: SUPPLIED

UPDATE: A Kewarra Beach mother pulled unconscious from the water during the Cairns Ironman has died in hospital today.

Erica Atkins, 43, had been in an induced coma for two days after lifesavers pulled her from the water just 20 metres from the Palm Cove shoreline.

The mother-of-two had been taking part in the 70.3 Cairns Ironman team event and had been due to hand over to husband Mark for the cycle leg.

She was pronounced dead this morning in Cairns Hospital with family by her side.



payback



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Ironman competitor dies



UPDATE: A Kewarra Beach mother pulled unconscious from the water during the Cairns Ironman has died in hospital today.

He's 75 and off to Kona



MOST 75-year-olds would be happy to just break into a run, let alone spending almost 17 hours battling through an Ironman.

NEWS ➤

BREAKING NEWS

NATIONAL

Emergency crews attend a female competitor during the Cairns half Marathon at Palm Cove. PICTURE: JUSTIN BRIERTY

EARLIER: A Kewarra Beach woman was fighting for her life last night after being pulled unconscious from the water of the Ironman event just 20 metres from the Palm Cove shoreline.

Erica Atkins, 43, was doing the 1.9km swim leg of the 70.3 Cairns Ironman team event yesterday and was due to hand over to her husband Mark for the bike leg.

But the mother-of-two was last night in a critical condition in Cairns Hospital after getting into difficulty in the water.

A family friend, who did not wish to be named, said Mrs Atkins was in an induced coma and her distraught family were waiting by her bedside for news.

"She's a lovely woman, they are really nice people," he said.

"This is horrible. The family are in total shock."

Surf Life Saving Queensland North Queensland regional manager Col Sparkes said the woman was no more than 20 metres from the finishing point of the leg when she found trouble.

He said life guards with rescue tubes reached her first, before a board and then an inflatable rescue boat brought her to shore. "They did a great job and then it was just amazing the number of skilled people that were there to assist as members of the crowd or Ironman staff," he said.

"Doctors, nurses, just came in from everywhere and there were probably six working together to give CPR for more than 10 minutes.

"She was given the best opportunity possible and it was just amazing to see everyone come from nowhere to help."

Paramedics were called just before 8am to the northern end of Palm Cove beach

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as life savers worked to revive her.

She was then transported by ambulance to Cairns Hospital under police escort.

Ironman chief marketing officer Jeff Gillies confirmed the incident had taken place during the relay event.

“We had our water safety on the scene, they’ve immediately taken her to the beach, she’s received emergency treatment and she has been taken to Cairns Base Hospital,” he said.

More on the Cairns Ironman in our [live blog](#) and [gallery](#).



PICTURE: JUSTIN BRIERTY

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A sad week

POSTED AT 2:19 PM JUNE
16, 2015

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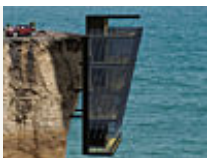
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Wounded Pride looking for payback

Local sport

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Wounded Pride looking for payback

Local sport

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