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## When the Boss is an Adrenaline Junkie

Forget drinking scotch and smoking foreign cigars. This Inc. 5000 CEO savors his success with speed and sweat.

By Andrew Dermont for *Inc.com*

“The Ironman World Championship in Hawaii is the holy grail of triathlon racing,” says Vinu Malik. On October 11, 2008, he along with 1,700-plus athletes from around the world will descend upon coastal Kailua-Kona to compete in the defining event of triathlon racing.

This will be Malik’s 26th Ironman — a race consisting of 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike, and 26.2-mile run — and his sixth performance at Kona. In past years he performed despite a bout with the flu, a broken nose, and severe dehydration.

Qualifying for the championships places Kona’s competitors ahead of thousands of athletes worldwide who failed to earn a coveted spot in the race, but for Malik, reaching Hawaii required more than a rigorous training regimen.

As a college student Malik was bed-ridden by chronic fatigue syndrome. Though he lacked the energy to live a normal life, he saw triathletes on television and in magazines and they inspired him to begin spending his free time exercising.

“You’d think exercise would make you more tired,” he says. “But it helped stimulate my system, and taught me to focus on my nutrition.” Before long, Malik was training for an Ironman. But at 19 and still chronically fatigued he failed his first attempt.

“I had a lot of dehydration issues,” he recalls. “So I came up with the FuelBelt.”

Malik designed a belt for holding water bottles to stay hydrated while running and biking. The invention was so successful he patented the idea and began selling FuelBelts full-time. The company made No. 2384 on the Inc. 5000 list this year.

Now the nifty invention is essential equipment for endurance athletes everywhere. Last year, Kona’s first and second place contestants sported FuelBelts and this year over 700 contestants are expected to use one too.

“There is nothing cooler than watching people getting their picture taken at the finish line wearing their FuelBelts,” he says. •

## About FuelBelt, Inc.

FuelBelt, Inc. is the world leader in hydration belts and accessories. Founded in 1998 by 6-time Ironman World Championship participant, Vinu Malik, FuelBelt continues to evolve to serve the needs of athletes, from runners to cyclists, to competitive triathletes such as Ironman World Champions Craig Alexander and Chrissie Wellington. FuelBelts have been used to break world records, personal bests, and have even been used at the Olympic world stage, where every effort and every second counts. For more information, please visit [www.FuelBelt.com](http://www.FuelBelt.com).

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