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**Anthony Ellrod, Al De La Cruz and Brian Moss to Speak at the IHRSA 2008 International Convention, the Premier Gathering of Fitness Industry Professionals**

Los Angeles, CA – November 8, 2007 – Anthony Ellrod, Al De La Cruz and Brian Moss, leading experts in sports, recreation, and attractions law from the law firm Manning & Marder, Kass, Ellrod, Ramirez, will deliver a presentation titled, The Health Club Survival Guide - How To Avoid Catastrophic Liability, at IHRSA 2008, the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association's (IHRSA) 27<sup>th</sup> Annual International Convention & Trade Show, which will be held March 5-8, 2008 at The San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, CA. In addition, they will be moderators at the IHRSA legal forum also being held during the Convention.

Avoiding or limiting personal injury claims may be the most important step in health club risk management. This seminar will provide a general discussion of areas of potential liability and how to minimize the risks of exposure, including discussions regarding waivers and releases, proper documentation, reasonable care, accident investigation, and personal injury litigation in the health club industry. It will also address the potential legal land mines that exist, such as violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act, violations of Dance and Health Studio Acts, Violations of Federal or State Do Not Call laws, etc.

"Injuries are a reality in any sport or athletic pursuit, and are therefore not uncommon in the health club setting" said Ellrod. "In today's litigious environment, every injury is a potential lawsuit regardless of fault, or lack of fault. The skyrocketing cost of liability insurance isn't helping matters. Thus, risk management is becoming increasingly important to the success, or even survival of a health club. In addition, what is considered a single, innocent act can result in catastrophic liability that can destroy not only a single club but an entire chain. For example a trial in California last fall led to a \$253 million verdict against a company that sent 169,215 unsolicited fax marketing materials."

Manning & Marder, Kass, Ellrod, Ramirez has a team of attorneys who specialize in representing health clubs and other sports and recreation businesses. The firm represents many of the largest health club chains and attractions in the world, as well as various self-insureds and governmental entities. Anthony Ellrod who heads the team has conducted countless successful jury trials in both State and Federal Court on health club cases, including matters involving products liability,

premises liability, general negligence, and primary assumption of risk. Mr. Ellrod is often called upon to argue such matters before the California Court of Appeal and California Supreme Court, and has obtained favorable published opinions for the industry. In addition, Mr. Ellrod and his team are intimate with the issues that are common in the health club industry from the business litigation and business transactions perspectives.

This marks the 5th year that members of the firm have delivered a presentation at IHRSA's convention, which is the largest, most comprehensive educational and networking event of its kind. More than 12,000 fitness industry professionals are expected to attend this year's event celebrating *IHRSA 2008: The One for All*. Over 400 exhibitors will participate in the trade show.

Additional information about Mr. Ellrod, Mr. De La Cruz and Mr. Moss' appearance at IHRSA 2008 can be found at [www.mmker.com](http://www.mmker.com). Additional information about IHRSA's 27<sup>th</sup> Annual International Convention & Trade Show can be found at [ihrsa.org/convention](http://ihrsa.org/convention).

#### About IHRSA

The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) is proud to celebrate its 27<sup>th</sup> year serving the worldwide fitness industry. The not-for-profit association has established itself as the voice of quality and innovation for the global fitness industry representing more than 8,800 clubs in 74 countries, along with over 600 industry suppliers.

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