

# Kemah Bridge an uphill battle

**R**unners in Saturday's race over the Kemah Bridge can't say they weren't warned.

After all, the race's name is the Toughest 10K in Kemah, so there's no mistaking what lies ahead for them.

And, unlike most races here in the flatlands, they actually can see the challenge ahead of them, as the bridge looms in front of them a total of four times, as they make two back-and-forth passes over the 83-foot high landmark bridge en route to the finish line at the Kemah Boardwalk.

The Kemah Bridge has long been a popular training spot, especially for runners with plans to run in hilly environments. The bridge features a 4.3 percent grade elevation in one direction and a 5 percent on the other side, making for a chal-



**Bernice Torregrossa**

On the Run

lenging climb rewarded with a panoramic view of Galveston Bay and Clear Lake.

The first race over the bridge was held in 2008 in the wake of Hurricane Ike, and it has grown quickly to a field of about 700 runners. Last year, Blake Culp, of Seabrook, led the field by finishing in 34 minutes and 18 seconds, and Virginia Jones took home women's honors in 41:38.

Apparently, the Kemah Bridge alone doesn't constitute enough of a challenge for almost 100 intrepid runners who have signed up for all three races in the Texas Bridge Series — the Kemah race; the Tough-

est 10K Galveston, a loop over the causeway; and the LaPorte Half Marathon in December, which takes in the Fred Hartman Bridge spanning the Houston Ship Channel.

Participants in Saturday's race still can sign up then for the other two races in the series. Completing all three of the bridge races earns them their choice of a special medal or shirt. Registration also will be open on race day for those opting to start with just one event.

The Toughest 10K Kemah begins at 7:30 a.m. Saturday at the Kemah Boardwalk, 300 Bradford Street. Race-day registration is \$40, which includes a variety of race premiums. More information is available at [onetough10k.com](http://onetough10k.com).

**Bernice Torregrossa is a five-time marathoner and a water exercise instructor at Island Wellness Aquatic Fitness. She can be reached at [bernice92@aol.com](mailto:bernice92@aol.com).**