



## 2012 Age Group Committee Report

### Introduction

The Age Group Committee represents the age group multi-sport athlete in issues and serves in an advisory capacity to the national board of directors.

In addition to our advisory role on policy matters, the AGC oversees the Athlete of the Year Award and selects its recipients each year, is responsible for coordinating and moderating the Annual Town Hall Meeting, administers a grant program for education in rules and safety, oversees the administration of the National Rankings process and coordinates the Hall of Fame selection and induction process.

The AGC meets via teleconferences which are held regularly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of alternating months. During 2011 there averaged about 12 members on the committee from various regions. The committee strives to have representation from each of the 10 regions that comprise USAT and although some regions have not been responsive to designating someone to be representative on the AGC, we continue our efforts to attain this goal.

### 2011 Accomplishments

During 2011, the AGC accomplished several key goals:

- One of the highlights of the year was the execution of the “**First Annual Athletes of the Year Celebration and Cruise**”. In previous years, recognition of our Athletes of the Year consisted of a write up in USA Triathlon Magazine and the mailing of an award to the recipients. With the support of the board of directors, the AGC received a budget allocation to plan an awards event that was held in conjunction with the Age Group National Championship. This event, a dinner cruise aboard the Ethan Allen II in Burlington, VT., featured a sit down dinner, guest speaker Karen Smyers and the presentation of awards together with a specially designed warm up jacket. The sell –out event received glowing comments from those who attended. A second Annual Celebration and Cruise is scheduled to be held again in Burlington, VT in 2012.
- During the year, the AGC reviewed and made recommendations for modifying the **qualifying criteria for the Age Group National Championship**, tightening the criteria in response to the growing popularity of the event and to insure that all of the best age group competitors, nationwide, who wish to compete at the championship have the opportunity of doing so without being closed out from the event. Recommendations are planned for implementation for the championship to be held in 2013.
- There was a significant amount of research which resulted in the writing of a white paper on the **age up rule governing youths**. Based somewhat on the findings published in Malcolm Gladwell’s book “The Outliers”, the AGC recommended that youths, ages 12 years and younger, race in a group based upon their age on race day as opposed to their age at 12/31. At year-end 2011, This matter was still open, with a recommendation that the change in age up criteria be at the race directors discretion for 2012, so that an evaluation of the impact of a potential rules change would have.





- The AGC adopted a recommendation that the **maximum prize purse available to age group athletes** be increased from the present ceiling of \$4,999.99 to \$9,999.99. This recommendation was largely based upon the increase in CPI since the adoption of the present ceiling, which puts the present value of that prize purse at \$9,575.00. The committee submitted its recommendation to the Prize Money Task Force, which had been dormant for over a year, and at year-end, that task force has not come to any decision on this recommendation. The AGC is currently considering bringing this recommendation to the board of directors directly, in resolution form, if no action is taken by the task force in the very early part of 2012. Again, due to the change in CPI, this is more of a housekeeping change than any change in philosophy concerning prize money.
- Another highlight of the year was the committee's pursuit of **promoting the growth of Aquabike**. There being an increasing number of athletes who are either injured, aging or who simply don't want to run any longer, but wish to remain competitive, Aquabike has been growing in popularity. A major success of the committee came with the scheduling of the first Aquabike National Championship, to be held in June 2012. Further recommendations in this area are expected, specifically due to the venue selection process which resulted in only one bidder for this race. A significant percentage of committee members believe that some of the requirements levied on bidders discouraged additional race directors from submitting proposals. The committee also believes that the distance of the national championship should be at a minimum, the Olympic distance and not a sprint, which was the distance approved for the initial national championship. It was agreed that a survey of Aquabike competitors would be conducted to ascertain their preferences with the anticipation that most would prefer distances longer than a sprint, given the expense of traveling to an event that would last for less than one hour.
- The AGC, through a sub-committee of its members, worked with staff in the creation of a number of **year-end awards and Lifetime Achievement Awards** to provide a broader recognition of those active in the multisports lifestyle. At year-end, a list of awards, along with criteria for each was established, nominations were solicited and received and the sub-committee has set to work on evaluating the nominees with a February 7, 2012 goal for announcement of award recipients.
- While the above is not an exhaustive list of the Age Group Committee's work in 2011, these items do represent the highlights of its accomplishments during the year.

### 2012 Goals

Some of the goals of the Age Group Committee for 2012 include:

- Executing a second annual sell-out Athletes of the Year Celebration.
- Insuring the execution of recommendations made in 2011 for qualifying criteria for the Age Group National Championship.
- Having the age up rule for youths (age 12 and under) include an option for a race director to sanction using an "age on race day" convention.
- Achieving an increase in the maximum prize purse for age group athletes to at least \$10,000.





- Revising the criteria used for soliciting proposals to host the Aquabike National Championship in order to encourage more competition for the hosting of this event and insuring that the distance of this championship is reflective of the distance participants in the sport want to compete at.
- Executing the recognition of those selected for the newly created year-end and lifetime achievement awards and creating the process to continue this new initiative into its second year.
- Achieving at least one member of the committee from each of the 10 regions of the organization, and continuing to collaborate closely with the regional councils and other committees of USA Triathlon.
- Work with staff on the review of the current rankings system to see where modifications might be needed and insure the implementation of those adjustments.

### **Conclusion**

Members of the Age Group Committee dedicated many hours of work during 2011 to some very worthwhile matters in our endeavor to improve and further grow the multisports lifestyle. Many of the issues started during the year still have some work needed in order to bring them to a conclusion. Thank you to all of the members of the AGC for your dedication to the sport and for your conscientious work during 2011.

Respectfully submitted by:  
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