



In 2009 USAT launched the Collegiate Recruitment Program, targeting graduating senior collegiate athletes who excel at the highest level in either running or swimming for their University, and who have a background or potential in the other sport. USAT is looking for athletes who meet the following criteria:

For Swimmers:

- NCAA Championship Division I, II, or III qualifier, or Division I Conference Semi-Finalist, primarily, but not limited to, the middle distance free, distance free, and IM events.
- Athlete has either a running background in high school, or the talent identified by the coach from dry land training that he/she has running potential and a runner's build.

For Runners:

- Men with a 10k PR of Sub 31' or 5k PR of Sub 14:45.
- Women with a 10k PR of Sub 35' or 5k PR of Sub 17:00.
- Athlete has a swimming background, either from high school or club.

For background, triathlon was introduced to the Olympic program in 2000 at the Sydney Games. In all three Olympics, all but one of the USA Olympians has come to triathlon from a NCAA Division I Swimming (7 of our 8 women, plus 1 male) or Running (5 of 7 men, plus 1 woman) background. Surprisingly, fewer than 25% of our Olympians competed in a triathlon prior to their college graduation. Looking ahead, USAT believes a majority of our 2012 and beyond Olympians will follow the pattern of having a collegiate swim or run background, along with some prior experience in the other sport.

The Olympic triathlon format is a 1.5k swim, 40k drafting bike, and 10k run. Most men's races come down to the run, with the top men in the world running around 30'. In the past, women with a swimming strength have been able to breakaway in the swim to create a lead before the run. This trend seems to be ending, and the run is becoming more important, with the top women running 33'.

The goal of the program is to mentor an athlete into our sport. After an athlete contacts me, I answer questions on logistics of a first triathlon, gear selection, and all other topics triathlon related. Concurrently, I assess the potential in the athlete's "other" sport through benchmark testing. If I feel there is potential, the athlete is officially in our Program, and I connect the athlete with a local coach.

Finishing collegiate eligibility can be a sad time, but it can also be exciting. Speaking from experience, collegiate swimming was such a highlight; I didn't think it could get any better. In some ways, such as the team aspect of an individual sport, it is hard to beat. But after embracing the challenge of mastering three sports, and balancing them into life, I can tell you triathlon is an amazing sport. It is still hard for me to believe I was a better triathlete than I ever was a swimmer. My hope is to find many athletes in the future who can say the same thing. Maybe even you!!!

If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact:

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