



Athlete Development Event Narratives

Youth F1 Triathlon

USA Triathlon's *Youth F1 Triathlon* format provides a gateway into the athlete development pipeline for young teens. Youth F1 racing is designed to transition athletes from entry-level youth, or "kids", triathlons into the more challenging draft-legal format, while still providing age-appropriate racing distances. The purpose of these events is to enable more young athletes to gain competence in the draft-legal race format before they commit to national-caliber Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup triathlons. Athletes between the ages of 12 and 16 are encouraged to try-out a Youth F1 race. Events are comprised of a 250-400 meter swim, a 7-10 kilometer bike, and a 2-2.5 kilometer run.

Youth Elite Cup

USAT Triathlon's *Youth Elite Cup* triathlon format provides a venue for competition amongst the nation's top 13 to 15 year old athletes and a common entry point for elite talent identification. Youth Elite Cups follow international draft-legal rules. Events are comprised of a 400 meter swim, a 10 kilometer bike, and a 2.5 kilometer run. The multi-lap, criterium course design demands additional physical and mental preparation and is more spectator-friendly for parents and friends. Competitors also learn team tactics and how to exploit their individual strengths in this dynamic racing style. Youth Elites learn to master sub-30 second transitions from one discipline to the next. The average finish time is 32 minutes for males and 35 minutes for females.

Junior Elite Cup

USAT Triathlon's *Junior Elite Cup* triathlon format provides a venue for competition amongst the nation's top 16 to 19 year old athletes. In addition to preparing junior athletes for international competition, these events are used as part of USAT's selection process for Junior Pan American and World Championships, Can-Am Challenge races, and Youth Olympic Games. Junior Elite Cups follow international draft-legal rules. Events are comprised of a 750 meter swim, a 20 kilometer bike, and a 5 kilometer run. The multi-lap, criterium course design provides an additional physical and mental challenge over traditional triathlon races and is more spectator-friendly for parents and friends. Competitors learn to maximize their individual strengths while employing team tactics in all three disciplines. Junior Elites learn to master sub-30 second transitions from one discipline to the next. The average finish time is 57 minutes for males and 64 minutes for females.

Elite Development Race

USA Triathlon's *Elite Development Race* format is intended to prepare emerging elite athletes for the ITU Continental Cup circuit. Elite Development Races provide a competition platform that engages athletes across a broad age range, from Junior Elite to post-collegiate, with the goal of retaining more athletes in the talent identification pipeline over a longer time period. The draft-legal sprint distance format also facilitates a shorter triathlon race preparation phase necessitated by these athletes' ongoing participation in high school and collegiate sports. Athletes between the ages of 16 and 23 are automatically eligible to compete, while older athletes may petition USA Triathlon for invitation based on exceptional talent in swimming and/or running. USAT Elite athletes may use these events as preparation for the international racing circuit, providing younger athletes a chance to measure themselves against the best in the sport.