



## 2017 USAT Junior Elite Series Guide



**@USATJuniors**

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## 2017 Junior Elite Series Events

The 2017 Series is comprised of the events listed below. Use the associated website link for each race to access details and registration. National Championship qualification information is located on page 4.

<p><b>USAT Sarasota Youth Elite Cup</b> Sarasota, Florida <i>*National Championship Qualifier</i> <i>Registration Opens: December 5, 2017, 12pm ET (am PT)</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.sarasotatri.com/index">http://www.sarasotatri.com/index</a></p>	<p>March 12, 2017</p>
<p><b>USAT Richmond Youth Elite &amp; Junior Elite Cup</b> Innsbrook, Richmond, Virginia <i>*National Championship Qualifier</i> <i>Registration Opens: January 23, 2017, 12pm ET (9am PT)</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.endorphinfitness.com/races-eventseast-coast-triathlon-festival/">http://www.endorphinfitness.com/races-eventseast-coast-triathlon-festival/</a></p>	<p>May 7, 2017</p>
<p><b>USAT Pleasant Prairie Youth Elite &amp; Junior Elite Cup</b> RecPlex, Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin <i>* National Championship Qualifier</i> <i>Registration Opens: February 6, 2017, 12pm ET (9am PT)</i></p>	<p><a href="http://recplexonline.com/triathlons-special-events/pleasant-prairie-cup">http://recplexonline.com/triathlons-special-events/pleasant-prairie-cup</a></p>	<p>June 4, 2017</p>
<p><b>USAT Monroe Youth Elite &amp; Junior Elite Cup</b> Lake Tye Park, Monroe, Washington <i>* National Championship Qualifier</i> <i>Registration Opens: February 20, 2017, 12pm ET (9am PT)</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.trimonroe.com">www.trimonroe.com</a></p>	<p>June 24, 2017</p>
<p><b>USAT Flatland Youth Elite &amp; Junior Elite Cup</b> Raccoon River Park, West Des Moines, Iowa <i>* National Championship Qualifier</i> <i>Registration Opens: March 6, 2017, 12pm ET (9am PT)</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.flatlandtri.com/">http://www.flatlandtri.com/</a></p>	<p>July 9, 2019</p>
<p><b>USAT Youth Elite &amp; Junior Elite National Championships &amp; Mixed Team Relay</b> Voice of America Park, West Chester, Ohio <i>*75 Starting Spots Per Gender; 55 4-Person Relay Teams</i></p>	<p><a href="https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Triathlon/Events/National-Championships/2017/2017-Youth-and-Junior-National-Championships">https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Triathlon/Events/National-Championships/2017/2017-Youth-and-Junior-National-Championships</a></p>	<p>August 5-6, 2017</p>

### Divisions and Distances

The USAT Junior Elite Series consists of two competition divisions: Youth Elite and Junior Elite.

**Youth Elite:** This division is open to athletes between the ages of 13 and 15 as of December 31, 2017. Athletes complete a super-sprint triathlon consisting of a 375m swim, 10k bike, and 2.5k run.

**Junior Elite:** This division is open to athletes between the ages of 16 and 19 as of December 31, 2017. Athletes complete a sprint triathlon consisting of a 750m swim, 20k bike, and 5k run.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Birth Years</b>	<b>Distances</b>	<b>Format</b>
Youth Elite	2001, 2002, 2003	375m/10k/2.5k	Multi-lap; Draft-Legal
Junior Elite	1997, 1998, 1998, 2000	750m/20k/5k	Multi-lap; Draft-Legal

### Registration, Wait Lists and No Refund Policy

Registration for Series events begins in December, continues through March (see page 1 for opening dates), and is first-come, first-served. Athletes can access event and registration information using the websites listed on page 1 for each event. Registration for the National Championship will follow each qualification event with a registration link and pass code provided by USAT to the qualified athletes via email. The minimum entry fee for each event is \$90, although prices may increase closer to the event date at the discretion of the Event Organizers.

Each event will maintain a Wait List of athletes seeking entry after the event is sold out. Athletes will add their name to the Wait List via a Google Form posted on the event website that provides a time stamp of their request. If and when a spot becomes available, it will be offered to the first athlete on the Wait List based on the time stamp. A deadline to claim the open spot will be strictly enforced.

There will be no refunds for scratches within 59 days of an event. All refunds requested prior to 59 days will be capped at 50%. There are no refunds for scratches from the National Championship event. Transfers or deferred entries are not available for the National Championship. USAT highly encourages prompt notification of scratches to [juniors@usatriathlon.org](mailto:juniors@usatriathlon.org) in the spirit of good sportsmanship and fair play among teams.

### International Junior Events

USAT will host one international Junior Elite event in 2017: the **CAMTRI Sarasota North American Junior Championships**. The team selection criteria is posted on the USAT website Junior page. Start lists are not final until posted by ITU at [www.triathlon.org](http://www.triathlon.org) approximately 32 days prior to the event.

### Race Number Assignment and Starting Positions

All race numbers are assigned randomly by the Race Director or Lead Official. Athletes will be called to the start line by order of assigned race number and then immediately select their starting positions. Once the athlete has chosen his or her starting position, he or she may not move from it. Athletes must move straight forward to the water from the start line after hearing the starter's signal.

## USAT Youth Elite / Junior Elite National Championship Qualification

The USAT Junior Elite Series serves as the pathway to gain the necessary skills and competence for draft-legal racing, and to qualify to compete at the USAT Youth Elite / Junior Elite National Championship. There are only 75 spots per gender in the respective divisions (Youth Elite/Junior Elite – male/female) at Nationals, so competition for these spots is steep.

Athletes qualify to compete at the National Championship by meeting one of the following criteria at one of these events (the “Qualifiers”):

- a) Finish in the Top 6 among USA athletes at the **2017 Sarasota CAMTRI North American Junior Championships** or earn automatic selection via 2016 Junior Elite National Ranking to the **2017 Magog CAMTRI [Pan] American Junior Championships** (#1 and #2 ranked) (only athletes representing the USA are eligible);
- b) Finish in the Top 8 among Youth Elites at the **2017 USAT Sarasota Youth Elite Cup\***;
- c) Finish in the Top 16 among Junior Elites and Top 16 among Youth Elites at the **2017 USAT Richmond Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup\***;
- d) Finish in the Top 17 among Junior Elites and Top 17 among Youth Elites at the **2017 USAT Pleasant Prairie Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup\***;
- e) Finish in the Top 17 among Junior Elites and Top 17 among Youth Elites at the **2017 USAT Monroe Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup\***; or,
- f) Finish in the Top 17 among Junior Elites and Top 17 among Youth Elites at the **2017 USAT Flatland Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup\***.

\*Excluding athletes already qualified and/or athletes representing other National Federations (including Dual Citizens).

Spots earned are not held indefinitely. A registration deadline will be provided in the notification email sent to the email address provided at the time of registration for the Qualifier. Unclaimed spots will roll down to the 20<sup>th</sup> Junior Elite finisher and the 20<sup>th</sup> Youth Elite finisher (excluding athletes already qualified and/or athletes representing other National Federations) at each Qualifier. An athlete receiving a roll down will be provided a registration deadline with his/her notice. **On the 15<sup>th</sup> day after each qualifier, any unclaimed spots become Wild Card spots.**

Any spots not claimed per these criteria will be reserved as Wild Card spots. To receive a Wild Card invitation, the athlete must receive a written nomination attesting to the athlete’s proficiency in the *Draft-Legal Competencies* listed later in this document from a USAT Certified Youth/Junior Coach, High Performance Team leader, Talent Identification Coordinator, or member of USAT’s High Performance staff. Wild Card requests are reviewed by USAT High Performance staff on a rolling basis with invitations made accordingly at USAT staff discretion. An athlete receiving a Wild Card invitation will be provided a registration deadline with the invitation.

Athletes who qualify and claim a spot, but later decide not to race, are expected to notify the USAT Junior/U23 Program Manager immediately to allow of prompt reassignment of the spot.

Criteria (a) above provides a direct qualification pathway for USA athletes whose competitive season is based primarily on international events. While the athlete may earn National Ranking points at these events, they do not score in the Junior Elite Series Championship.

The results of a Qualifier will count even if the swim is cancelled. Should a Qualifier be cancelled and is not rescheduled to take place at least two weekends prior to Nationals, then the spots may be redistributed to the other Qualifiers if time permits or opened for general registration at the discretion of USAT staff.

### **Mixed Team Relay Registration**

There are 55 “team spots” available for the Mixed Team Relay at Youth Elite / Junior Elite Nationals, accommodating participation by 220 athletes. **Each team must be comprised of two (2) females and two (2) males.** Athletes must be between the age of 13 and 19 as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the competition year and proficient in the *Draft-Legal Competencies* described later in this document.

In order to afford as many USAT High Performance Teams and Registered Clubs as possible with the opportunity to participate in the Mixed Team Relay there will be two (2) registration periods.

**First Registration Period:** In the First Registration Period, which takes place beginning June 25<sup>th</sup> and ending July 11<sup>th</sup>, USAT will allocate team spots as follows:

- Priority #1: The Top 3 teams from the prior year’s Mixed Team Relay will be awarded one (1) team spot each;
- Priority #2: Gold-level High Performance Teams will be awarded one (1) team spot each;
- Priority #3: USAT High Performance Teams in good standing will be awarded one (1) team spot each; and,
- Priority #4: USAT Registered Clubs in good standing that make a formal request for a team spot by June 1<sup>st</sup> may be awarded one (1) team spot each on a first-come, first-served basis until all spots are allocated or the First Registration Period ends, whichever comes first.

All allocations are cumulative, meaning, in the First Registration Period, a team/club that earned a Top 3 finish in the Mixed Team Relay in 2016, Gold status, and is a High Performance Team in good standing in 2017 will be awarded three (3) team spots, accommodating participation by 12 athletes (6 females/6 males).

Between June 25<sup>th</sup> and July 11<sup>th</sup>, High Performance Teams and Registered Clubs must claim their allocated spots by completing Step 1 of the online registration process. Step 1 involves naming the team and paying for the spot. Spots not claimed by July 11<sup>th</sup> will revert to the pool of team spots available in the Second Registration Period.

**Second Registration Period:** The Second Registration Period will begin July 12<sup>th</sup> and remain open until 14 days prior to the individual championships or until all 55 team spots are filled, whichever comes first. Available team spots may be claimed by registering online on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be no wait list. There are no refunds if withdrawing a team.

**Deadline for Setting Team Composition:** Coaches must complete Step 2 of the registration process by entering the names of the relay team athletes in the online registration system – in the exact order of the relay – no later than ten (10) days prior to the event weekend or risk forfeiting the team spot.

**Injury/Illness Substitutions:** Injury or illness substitutions must be delivered to the Event Organizer or his/her designee within two (2) hours of the finish of final Youth Elite or Junior Elite competition of the day to assure that a change can be made in the timing system. Substitutions will be made at the sole discretion of the Event Organizer working with the Timer. Substitutes must have previously demonstrated competence in draft-legal racing (e.g. finished a Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup) and/or demonstrated proficiency in the *Draft-Legal Competencies* described later in this document.

**Numbering:** Each HPT or Club will be assigned a random number for the purpose of calling up the first athlete to the start line and rack assignments in transition. HPTs or Clubs may assign an internal ranking designator to each of its teams at the time of registration (Step 1), such as Team 1, Team 2, and so on. This must be readily apparent in the registration database or USAT will assign a ranking of its choosing. The Event Organizer will assign the first team from each HPT or Club a starting position according to the random order assigned all HPTs and Clubs before repeating the process until all relay teams are given a call-up position.

The order by which each athlete completes the relay will be requested at the time of registration (Step 2) and may be altered only when replacing an injured or ill athlete.

**Composite/Foreign Teams:** The organization of composite teams is allowed, provided they are associated with an HPT or Registered Club or organized by the USAT High Performance Department. The names of combined HPTs or clubs must be identifiable in the team name, such as “HPT-Club Composite 1”. Composite teams will not factor in subsequent year allocations of team spots. Teams comprised of athletes representing other countries may enter the Mixed Team Relay either during the Second Registration Period or earlier at the discretion of the USAT High Performance Department to further USAT’s solidarity initiatives or enhance the quality of field, however, these results will not factor in subsequent year allocations of team spots.

**Maximum Number of Teams:** Any single HPT or Registered Club may enter a maximum of five (5) team relay squads, unless the event is undersubscribed at the end of the Second Registration Period, in which case there will be no limit and spots can be claimed first-come, first-served. Composite teams will not count toward the maximum. In the event that all 55 team spots have not been filled following the close of the Second Registration Period, USAT may waive the gender composition requirement to allow for the most number of athletes to participate in the event.

### **Junior Elite Cup Podium Awards**

The top three male and female finishers at each Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cup, regardless of nationality, will receive podium medals provided by USA Triathlon. Event organizers may provide supplemental race awards at their discretion. In addition, the top three male and female Junior Elite Series Champions will receive special recognition by USA Triathlon at the conclusion of the National Championships. Athletes must finish the event in order to claim any prizes or scholarship-type awards.

### **Junior Elite Series Individual Championship**

USAT Junior Elite Series Individual Champions are determined from the results of the five (5) Junior Elite events and six (6) Youth Elite events, in both the Youth Elite and Junior Elite divisions, based on the points table shown in [Appendix A](#). An athlete's **best three (3) scores** will count toward their individual total score.

Any ties for the top three positions in the Series overall will be broken by comparison of head-to-head finishes in series events. If there are no head-to-head finishes to compare, the athlete who raced the final event – the national championship – wins. If neither athlete raced nationals, the athlete with the fastest cumulative time wins. Ties at Series events will be broken by the times provided by the timer in the official results or by photographic evidence, if available. Only athletes representing the United States are eligible to score points and be ranked in the series.

### **USAT Youth Elite & Junior Elite National Rankings**

An athlete's National Ranking is determined by the sum of up to his/her **four (4) best scores** based on the Points Table shown on [Appendix B](#) at USAT-designated Ranked Events in a calendar year. For 2017, Ranked Events include: ITU Junior World Championship (Rotterdam), ITU/CAMTRI Junior Triathlon Championship (Magog), ITU-designated Junior Continental Cups (worldwide), ITU/CAMTRI North American Junior Championship (Sarasota), USAT Youth Elite/Junior Elite National Championships (West Chester), USAT Youth Elite/Junior Elite Cups (Sarasota YE, Richmond, Pleasant Prairie, Monroe, Flatland), ITU Continental Cups and USAT U25 Elite Development Races (U25 EDRs) that meet the ranking criteria defined below.

**For ITU Continental Cups, U25 EDRs, and international events**, points are awarded based on actual finish place irrespective of other U.S. athletes, age divisions or other international athletes. For example, if the first U.S. athlete finishes third at the ITU Junior World Championships, she would earn 856 points toward her ranking, not 1000 points. **For Junior Elite Cups and Nationals**, points are awarded based on finish position against U.S. athletes in the field only. For example, if the first U.S. athlete finished 2<sup>nd</sup> to a Canadian athlete at the Richmond Junior Elite Cup, he would be awarded 1000 series points and 400 ranking points. For U25 EDRs and ITU Continental Cups, athletes receive points based on their actual finish position, regardless of the age or status of athletes finish ahead of him or her.

Only athletes representing the United States will be ranked. Dual-citizens competing in the Ranked Events must declare which country they are representing with an understanding that ITU rules govern changes in national representation in the future.

An ITU Continental Cup or U25 Elite Development Race must have a minimum of twenty-five (25) total starters per gender to be included in these national rankings. For instance, an Elite Development Race at which thirty (30) females and twenty-two (22) males started would award national ranking points to the females only.

No points are awarded at Youth F1 Triathlons.

### **High Performance Team Recognition Program**

USAT ranks and recognizes High Performance Teams with Gold, Silver and Bronze designations based on six assessment categories:

1. **Series Team Standing (ranking):** Teams are ranked based on their Top 5 scoring athletes in each race division (Youth Elite Male & Female; Junior Elite Male & Female). Points are awarded from 1<sup>st</sup> to 75<sup>th</sup> so that all finishers have an opportunity to score for his/her team. A total of 20 scores are possible per event per team/100 scores over the course of the Series. (See [Appendix A](#) for the points table)
2. **Average Points Per Scoring Athlete (ranking):** Teams are ranked based on the average score of their Top 5 scoring athletes in each division. This number will provide a quality of performance assessment for each team over the course of the Series.
3. **Percentage of Earned Scores Out of Maximum Available (ranking):** Teams are ranked based on the total number of earned scores out of a possible 100, stated as a percentage, to assess the balance of each team's development program across the four race divisions.
4. **Number of Unique Athletes Competing at Series Events (ranking):** Teams are ranked based on the total number of individual athletes who participate in the Series.
5. **Number of International Starts (deduction):** The total number of international race starts earned by a team is subtracted from its combined ranking score (determined by adding 1 through 4 above). International starts include CAMTRI and ITU Championships, CAMTRI and ETU Junior Continental Cups, and World Triathlon Series/World Cup/Continental Cup starts.
6. **Service to Sport (deduction):** The total number of service to the sport activities carried out by the team will be subtracted from its combined ranking score. For 2016, service to the sport activities include –
  - a. Hosting an International Junior Elite event
  - b. Hosting a USAT Youth Elite/Junior Elite Cup
  - c. Supplying five (5) or more volunteer officials to assist with equipment checks during the course of the season at Series events (1 volunteer working 1 event counts as 1)
  - d. Conducting a draft-legal education clinic within your region (must be documented)
  - e. Hosting a non-endemic talent recruiting event targeting high performing athletes

The sum total of the four rankings minus the two deductions will serve as the final team ranking score.



Teams' combined rankings will be ordered lowest to highest. The Top 15% of HPTs will earn Gold status, the next 15% will earn Silver status, and the next 15% will earn Bronze status. Teams will be recognized with special prizes, use of recognition logos, and additional HPT grant opportunities.

### **All-American / Honorable Mention / Athlete of the Year**

All-American honors are bestowed upon the Top 5% of ranked athletes, the USAT Youth Elite/Junior Elite National Champion, and athletes earning a first place finish at the CAMTRI Pan American Junior Championships, a first place finish at the CAMTRI North American Junior Championships, and a Top 8 finish at the ITU Junior Elite World Championships.

Honorable Mention recognition is awarded to the Top 6-10% of ranked athletes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers at USAT Youth Elite / Junior Elite National Championships, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers at the CAMTRI Pan American Junior Championships, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher at the CAMTRI North American Junior Championships, and for a Top 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> place finish at the ITU Junior Elite World Championships.

USAT High Performance staff will nominate athletes for **Junior [Elite] Athlete of the Year** honors based on the collective achievements of the athletes throughout the course of the year.

### **Series Participation by Foreign Nationals**

USAT welcomes participation in USAT Youth Elite and Junior Elite Cups by representatives of other National Federations provided space is available. Foreign nationals may earn podium medals and prizes based on their finish position, but are not scored in the Series Championship or National Rankings.

USAT may, at its discretion, offer solidarity invitations to non-U.S. athletes to participate in the Youth Elite and Junior Elite National Championship. Foreign athletes will not be recognized with national champion podium awards, but may receive general recognition for outstanding performances by the race announcer.

### **Mandatory Race Meeting and Competition Jury**

The Lead Official will provide a briefing on the rules and enforcement at the mandatory Athlete Meeting **held one day prior to each event**. It is important that you plan your travel to the race so that you can attend this required meeting. The Lead Official will provide the names of the Competition Jury and procedures for filing protests at the meeting. All race-specific officiating concerns must be brought to the attention of the Lead Official **at the race venue**. General questions or concerns about the officiating of the series must be directed to USA Triathlon National Events promptly following the event, however, all protests must be filed onsite with the Lead Official.

## Competition Rules Summary

The USAT Junior Elite Series is officiated by USAT National Technical Officials (NTO). NTO's apply international rules for draft-legal racing, as defined by the International Triathlon Union. The most current version of the rules is posted at <http://www.triathlon.org/about/downloads/>. Athletes, coaches and parents are expected to be familiar with the rules. The Lead Official will post the race briefing and other reminders for each event at <http://draftlegalrules.com/>. Questions about rules enforcement should be directed to USAT at [juniors@usatriathlon.org](mailto:juniors@usatriathlon.org), **not ITU**.

In the interest of athlete development and accessibility to the race format by younger athletes, the following modifications apply to the USAT Junior Elite Series events (but not to USAT-hosted ITU International Events, such as Sarasota North American Junior Championships):

### **Race Wheels**

NTO's will enforce ITU Competition Rules 5.2(d)(vii), which requires race wheels and those placed in the wheel pit as spares meet the follow specifications:

- Wheels shall have at least 12 spokes;
- Disc Wheels are not allowed.

### **Brakes**

NTO's will enforce ITU Competition Rule 5.2(i), which prohibits the use of disc brakes in draft-legal competition.

### **Lap Out**

NTO's will enforce ITU Competition Rule 5.4(a), which states that lapped athletes on the bike course will be withdrawn from the race.

Athletes planning to race an ITU International Event (e.g. North American Championships, Pan American Championships, World Championship, Continental Cup, ITU Junior Cup) are advised that their wheels must comply with ITU Rule 5.2(e)(vi) and be clearly present on the current **UCI Wheel List**. Furthermore, athletes must comply with ITU Rule 2.4(c) and Appendix Q requiring a pre-participation physical examination (PPE) that includes a 12-lead at rest electrocardiogram test. See <http://www.triathlon.org/about/downloads/category/medical> and the Junior page of the USAT website for instructions in certifying compliance to USAT. USAT cannot nominate a Junior athlete to participate in ITU International Events without certification that the PPE has been satisfactorily completed.

## Uniform Rules

To remove a potential financial barrier to participants new to developmental draft-legal racing, the USAT Junior Elite Series does not require full compliance with the ITU Junior Uniform Rule. The following elements of the Competition and Uniform Rules do apply:

- At all USAT Junior Elite Series races, the athlete's torso must be covered from the start of the swim until the finish of the run.

- Torso covering means no midriff showing and the front zipper of the suit closed at all times.
- At Youth Elite/Junior Elite Cups, athletes are not required to have their last name and country code on their suit.
- At the Youth Elite/Junior Elite National Championships, athletes are highly encouraged to have their **last name** and **country code** on their suit. If and when applying one's name and country code, athletes must follow the layout and dimensions specified in the Uniforms Rules (see Appendix F of the ITU Competition Rules [http://www.triathlon.org/about/downloads/category/competition\\_rules](http://www.triathlon.org/about/downloads/category/competition_rules)).
- Rear zippered tri suits are highly recommended for male competitors. Female competitors may wear a one piece swim suit or a tri suit (with or without rear zipper).
- While logo dimensions and locations are not enforced in the USAT Junior Elite Series as a way to reduce costs incurred when starting the sport, USAT highly recommends that athletes and teams use the ITU Uniform Rules template when designing their suits. This may allow athletes to use the same suit at international events officiated by ITU Technical Officials. Not following these templates will require the purchase of a separate uniform.

#### **SafeSport**

USA Triathlon participates in the USOC's SafeSport program. SafeSport addresses the issues of child sexual abuse, bullying, hazing, harassment, and emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. These issues extend to online (cyber) behavior. All participants in the Series – athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, and event organizers – are encouraged to take advantage of the free SafeSport training and resources offered by USOC. Participants are reminded that USAT's Competition Rules, as well as its Athlete Code of Conduct, address unacceptable conduct toward fellow USAT members on and off the field of play (including online). Any concerns or complaints should be directed to USAT's Coaching Education department. For more information, visit <http://safesport.org/take-the-training/>.

#### **USADA**

USA Triathlon expects strict adherence by athletes participating in the Series with all anti-doping protocols. Participants in the Series may be subject to in-competition drug testing. Drug testing is routine at international junior competitions. Athletes, coaches and parents are encouraged to avail themselves of the resources provided by the U.S. Anti Doping Agency (<http://www.usada.org/>) and to clear all medications or supplements in advance of competition.

#### **Camps**

USAT High Performance designates and sanctions a limited number of National Select Camps for U19 athletes. Camp dates and locations are posted at [www.usatriathlon.org/juniors](http://www.usatriathlon.org/juniors).

**Qualifying for International Championships**

U.S. junior athletes, ages 16 to 19, have the opportunity to earn starts at a number of international championships each year. These include the ITU Junior World Championship, the CAMTRI [Pan] American Junior Championship, the CAMTRI North American Junior Championship, and, every four years, the Youth Olympic Games (next held in 2018 for athletes ages 16-17). USA Triathlon is responsible for selecting the athletes and naming them to the teams that represent the United States at these events. The official criteria to qualify for these events are posted on the “Junior Elite” page of the USAT website. The following is a summary of the criteria.

<b>Event</b>	<b>No. of Spots</b>	<b>Selection Event(s)</b>	<b>Other Selection Criteria</b>
<b>ITU Junior World Championships</b>	Up to 3 per gender	CAMTRI Pan American Championship ; USAT Junior Elite Selection Event(s)	Discretionary
<b>CAMTRI [Pan] American Junior Championships</b>	Up to 8 per gender, 10 if host country	2015 Junior Elite National Rankings; CAMTRI North American Junior Championships	Discretionary
<b>CAMTRI North American Junior Championship</b>	Up to 25 per gender	2016 Junior Elite National Rankings	Discretionary
<b>ITU/CAMTRI Junior Continental Cups</b>	Varies	Current Rankings	Discretionary

## Draft-Legal Competencies

Athletes seeking to compete in the series should possess the following minimum knowledge and skills.

**Knowledge Competencies:** An athlete must be able to identify or describe –

- the multi-lap, draft-legal format, and race distances;
- the type of swim start and the start commands;
- the flow-through style transition and proper set-up of transition space;
- the rules applicable to draft-legal racing, including uniform and bicycle set-up;
- mount/dismount line rules in draft-legal racing;
- the requirement to attend the pre-race briefing and morning-of check-in;
- proper application of race number decals;
- age and skill-appropriate racing distances for juniors;
- location of athlete development information on USAT website;
- USAT athlete development pathway from Youth Elite to Elite;
- how to access the USAT Talent ID website;
- USAT Athlete Code of Conduct;
- where to find USOC Safe Sport information; and,
- where to find anti-doping information (USADA).

**Skill Competencies:** An athlete must be able to –

- take his/her starting position on a ITU-style start line without hesitation;
- perform a dive start from a pontoon (pool's edge) on starter's command;
- perform running beach entry/exit;
- set up his/her transition area and demonstrate correct use of rack and basket;
- use elastic bands to secure cycling shoes;
- locate the mount/dismount lines/zones;
- handle bike while running at speed;
- perform flying mount and dismount (i.e. without stopping);
- ride in single-file paceline and two and three-abreast;
- rotate positions within a paceline;
- use hand/signals to communicate within a paceline;
- use proper hand positions on the handlebars;
- apply proper cornering techniques;
- apply seated and standing climbing techniques;
- remove, drink, and replace water bottle while riding in a paceline;
- place bike on transition rack during T2;
- monitor the penalty board and serve penalties in the penalty box or transition; and,
- demonstrate competency in draft-legal rules while performing these skills.



### Frequently Asked Questions

**What is a Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cup?** Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cups are USAT-designated, draft-legal triathlons organized exclusively for athletes between 13 and 19 years of age. Each year, USAT designates a small number of these events to serve as national-level racing opportunities. The purpose of these events is to prepare athletes for international competition and to prepare athletes to enter the elite ranks.

**I can't find a Junior Elite Cup nearby. Are there other opportunities to participate in a draft-legal triathlon?** Two other options for athletes between the ages of 13 and 19 are USAT-designated "Youth F1 Triathlons" and "USAT U25 Elite Development Races".

Youth F1 racing is designed to introduce entry-level youth athletes to the draft-legal format, while still providing age-appropriate racing distances. The purpose of these events is to enable more young athletes to develop competency in the draft-legal race format before they commit to national-caliber Youth Elite or Junior Elite Cup triathlons. Athletes between the ages of 13 and 16 are encouraged to try-out a Youth F1 race. Events are comprised of a 200-400 meter swim, a 7-10 kilometer bike, and a 2-2.5 kilometer run.

The U25 Elite Development Race format is intended to prepare emerging elite athletes for the ITU Continental Cup circuit. U25 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 25 are automatically eligible to compete, while older athletes may petition USA Triathlon for invitation based on exceptional talent in swimming and/or running.

**What does “draft-legal” mean?** The term “draft-legal” refers to the competition rules that are followed in the ITU/Olympic short-course triathlon format. During a draft-legal triathlon, athletes may ride directly behind other athletes to save energy or join in team tactics. This is often referred to as riding in a “pack” or “peloton.” Under USAT Age Group Competition Rules, drafting behind another athlete would result in a penalty. Under international draft-legal competition rules, there is no penalty for drafting...in fact, it is encouraged. Drafting in this format of triathlon adds another dimension to race tactics and skill.

**Where do I learn about international competition rules?** The ITU Competition Rules are at <http://www.triathlon.org/about/documents>. Because these rules are written more specifically for major international events, there are some rules or interpretations that may not be applicable or enforceable in developmental junior races. If you have a question about the rules, be sure to raise it with the Lead Official prior to your event.

**What is the purpose of these types of events?** Because the Junior, Collegiate Elite (FISU/NCAA), Under-23, and Armed Forces championships all are draft-legal triathlons, Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cups provide America's young athletes an opportunity to develop the skills and experience necessary for international-caliber racing as they progress through the development pipeline. They also serve as a stepping stone toward becoming an elite/professional triathlete competing in the ITU World Triathlon Series or even the Olympic Games.

**What are the race distances and format?** A Youth Elite Cup is comprised of a 375 meter swim, a 10 kilometer bike, and a 2.5 kilometer run. Youth F1 events may be slightly shorter. Junior Elite Cups and U25 Elite Development Races are comprised of a 750m swim, 20k bike, and a 5k run. The swim starts from either a platform (dive from a floating pontoon, pier, or riverwalk) or a beach start. An in-water start may be used where no other suitable option is available. The bike course is typically multi-lap (e.g. 4 x 5k). The run is also multi-lap (e.g. 2 x 2.5k). As with any triathlon, distances may vary slightly from venue to venue.

**Why are these races so short? I thought triathlon was an endurance event?** The distances for Junior Elite Cups mirror that of the ITU Junior World Championship. Since Junior Elite Cups combine the usual elements of a sprint triathlon with the dynamics and required skill level of draft-legal racing, reasonably short distances are most advisable. At age 13 or 14, an athlete is transitioning from the very short Youth distance races to the dynamics of draft-legal racing. Physiologically, these athletes are in a very dynamic

stage of development where coordination, balance and an athlete's center of gravity are changing rapidly. The Youth Elite events provide a safe, age-appropriate distance upon which to build a foundation for success in the junior ranks.

**How old must I be to compete?** For Youth Elites, eligible racing ages are 13, 14, or 15 years old as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the competition year. For Junior Elites, eligible racing ages are 16, 17, 18, or 19 years old as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the competition year. U25 Elite Development Races allow athletes 16 to 25; those over 25 by special invitation. The age range of a Youth F1 will be determined through coordination between the event director and USAT Athlete Development prior to receiving the designation.

**May I "race up" a division?** No. Athletes must compete according to their age as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the competition year. For example, a 12 year old who does not turn 13 by December 31<sup>st</sup> may not compete in a Youth Elite Cup. Likewise, a 15 year old who does not turn 16 by December 31<sup>st</sup> may not compete in a Junior Elite Cup. In the same spirit, an older athlete may not "race down" a division.

**What is a High Performance Team?** USAT has recognized a number of developmentally-focused teams around the country as USAT High Performance Teams. These teams are led by experienced junior development coaches and share a common mission with USAT's High Performance Department: *identify, recruit, develop and support rising talent in the practice of elite-level triathlon.* HPTs focus their seasons around the USAT Junior Elite Series and qualifying athletes for international competition. If you are interested in learning more about USAT High Performance Teams, visit the Junior Elite page of the USAT website. [www.usatjuniors.com](http://www.usatjuniors.com)

**Do I need to be on a High Performance Team to compete?** No. While there are many development teams that focus on preparing Youth Elite / Junior Elite athletes, being a member of such a team is not expected or required in order to compete at a Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cup.

**How do I register for these events?** Registration is handled separately by each race director. Because many Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cups are held in conjunction with age group races, be certain you are registering for the Youth Elite Cup (13-15) or Junior Elite Cup (16-19) event. Use the website link on page one of this document to locate registration instructions.

**Do I need to be a USAT member to compete?** Yes. Because the Junior Elite Series is a pathway to selection for international championship teams, USAT's High Performance Department expects all participants in the series to be annual members. Junior athletes may hold a USAT Elite License and still compete in the Series.

**What type of bike do I need in order to participate?** For Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cups, you must ride a "traditional road bike," as opposed to a "tri bike," "time trial bike," or "mountain bike." For exact specifications, please consult sections 5.2 of the ITU Competition Rules (referenced above). Any exceptions to these rules will be briefed by the Lead Official prior to each race.



**Does that mean I need to own two bikes?** Certainly not. A few minor modifications to your “traditional road bike” will make it race-ready for any non-drafting triathlon. A road bike will provide the versatility to do both styles of triathlon at the lowest cost.

**Can I use aerobars on my bike?** You may use aerobars, however, they may not extend beyond the brake hoods or shifter levers. A simple way to check this is to take a piece of cardboard and hold it against both brake hoods/levers. If your aerobars are touching the cardboard or prevent it from touching both hood/levers, your bars are extended too far. Because of the short distance of the race and the slower speeds, USAT recommends that Youth Elite athletes not use aerobars because they offer minimal performance value and slow down bike check-in on race morning.

**What is the “no bare torso” rule?** An athlete must have his/her torso (upper body) covered for the full duration of the race...from swim start to run finish. Many male athletes choose to compete in a form-fitting tri-suit that does not inhibit their swim stroke and is hydrodynamic. This rule is strictly enforced.

**Should I put my name on my race suit?** The Junior Elite Series is a talent identification program for USAT. The best way for our talent scouts to learn who you are while you are racing is to put your name on the front and back of your suit. Please review the competition rules section for specific guidance on race uniforms.

**Why is there a mandatory pre-race meeting?** The mandatory pre-race meeting is necessary to inform athletes of the competition rules and course specifics. Given the developmental nature of these events, these meetings serve as a critical part of the educational process. They also may be used as an opportunity to pre-inspect equipment (however, final inspection occurs as athletes enter the transition area). Whenever possible, these meetings will take place on the evening prior to race day. Please be aware that meeting space is often limited and access may be restricted to athletes only.

**How long are these mandatory meetings?** Approximately 45 minutes.

**Are wetsuits allowed?** Yes, provided the water temperature is 20C (approximately 68F) or below. Variations in this limit may be enforced by the Lead Official depending ratio of water-to-air temperature.

**Are three-person relay teams allowed to compete?** No. All participants must do the swim, bike and run.

**Why are race numbers assigned randomly and not according to national ranking?** The purpose of the Junior Elite Series is to provide developing athletes with as much relevant race experience as possible. This will better prepare them for the realities of international competition – both as juniors and as elites. At international championships, U.S. athletes most likely will be assigned race numbers randomly. Sometimes an athlete will be called to the line early, sometimes last. As junior athletes transition into elite racing, they most likely will be the lowest ranked and will be called to the start line last. U.S. athletes need to be mentally and skillfully prepared for any circumstance and be confident and capable of making tactical adjustments in the moment.

**May parents assist their children in the transition area?** No. Parents and coaches are never allowed inside the transition area before, during, or after the event.

**Where can I watch video of this style of racing?** The ITU offers a collection of recent event videos on its Multimedia page at [www.triathlon.org](http://www.triathlon.org).

**Where can I get coaching for this type of racing?** One of the best places to learn the art of draft-legal triathlon is at USAT Junior Camp. Camp dates and locations are posted on the Junior Elite page of the USAT website. Another option is to join a USAT High Performance Team.

**Will competing as an “elite” affect my NCAA eligibility?** No. While USAT uses the designations “Youth Elite” and “Junior Elite” to signify that the event is draft-legal, participants are not required to get an elite license, nor are they competing for prize money. These races should not impact your NCAA eligibility. That said, USAT always cautions athletes to consult their school’s compliance officer or the NCAA By-Laws with specific questions. This advice applies to state high school athletic associations as well, which sometimes have rules about participating in multiple sports in the same season.

**Is there financial assistance available from USA Triathlon?** USAT supports juniors who are competitive at the international level through the **Junior Performance Plan**. Support comes in the form of reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses associated with travel to events. Information about this program is available on the “Junior Elite” page of the USAT website. Your USAT Regional Council may also offer travel grants to support your participation in the Series.

**THIS DOCUMENT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Appendix A

**Junior Elite Series Points Table for Calculating  
Individual and Team Series Standings**

Place	Nationals	Junior Elite Cup
1	1250	1000
2	1188	950
3	1128	903
4	1072	857
5	1018	815
6	967	774
7	919	735
8	873	698
9	829	663
10	788	630
11	748	599
12	711	569
13	675	540
14	642	513
15	610	488
16	579	463
17	550	440
18	523	418
19	497	397
20	472	377
21	448	358
22	426	341
23	404	324
24	384	307
25	365	292
26	347	277
27	329	264
28	313	250
29	297	238
30	282	226
31	268	215
32	255	204
33	242	194
34	230	184
35	219	175
36	208	166
37	197	158

Place	Nationals	Junior Elite Cup
38	187	150
39	178	142
40	169	135
41	161	129
42	153	122
43	145	116
44	138	110
45	131	105
46	124	99
47	118	94
48	112	90
49	107	85
50	101	81
51	96	77
52	91	73
53	87	69
54	82	66
55	78	63
56	74	60
57	71	57
58	67	54
59	64	51
60	61	48
61	58	46
62	55	44
63	52	42
64	49	39
65	47	38
66	45	36
67	42	34
68	40	32
69	38	31
70	36	29
71	34	28
72	33	26
73	31	25
74	30	24
75	28	22

5% drop off

Appendix B

**Youth Elite/Junior Elite National Rankings Points Table**

Finish Place	ITU World Championship	CAMTRI Junior Championship	USAT National Championship / CAMTRI North American Championship	Youth Elite / Junior Elite Cup / ITU Junior Continental Cup	USAT U25 Elite Development Race
1	1000	750	500	400	200
2	925	694	463	370	185
3	856	642	428	342	171
4	791	594	396	317	158
5	732	549	366	293	146
6	677	508	339	271	135
7	626	470	313	251	125
8	579	435	290	232	116
9	536	402	268	214	107
10	496	372	248	198	99
11	459	344	229	183	92
12	424	318	212	170	85
13	392	294	196	157	78
14	363	272	181	145	73
15	336	252	168	134	67
16	311	233	155	124	62
17	287	215	144	115	58
18	266	199	133	106	53
19	246	184	123	98	49
20	227	171	114	91	46
21	210	158	105	84	43
22	195	146	97	78	39
23	180	135	90	72	36
24	166	125	83	68	34
25	154	116	77	62	31
26	142	107	71	57	29
27	132	99	66	53	27
28	122	92	61	49	25
29	113	85	56	45	23
30	105	79	52	42	21
31	97	73			
32	89	68			
33	83	63			
34	77	58			
35	71	54			

7.5% drop off