



2025 USA Triathlon General Rules Briefing

Presented to
Tri CLE Rock Roll Run &
The Cleveland Triathlon Club
April 9, 2025



The applicable USA Triathlon 2025 Multisport Competition Rules with related Amendments, Checklists, and other procedural documents govern USAT Races

These documents can be found at

<https://www.teamusa.org/usa-triathlon/usat-for-me/officiating>

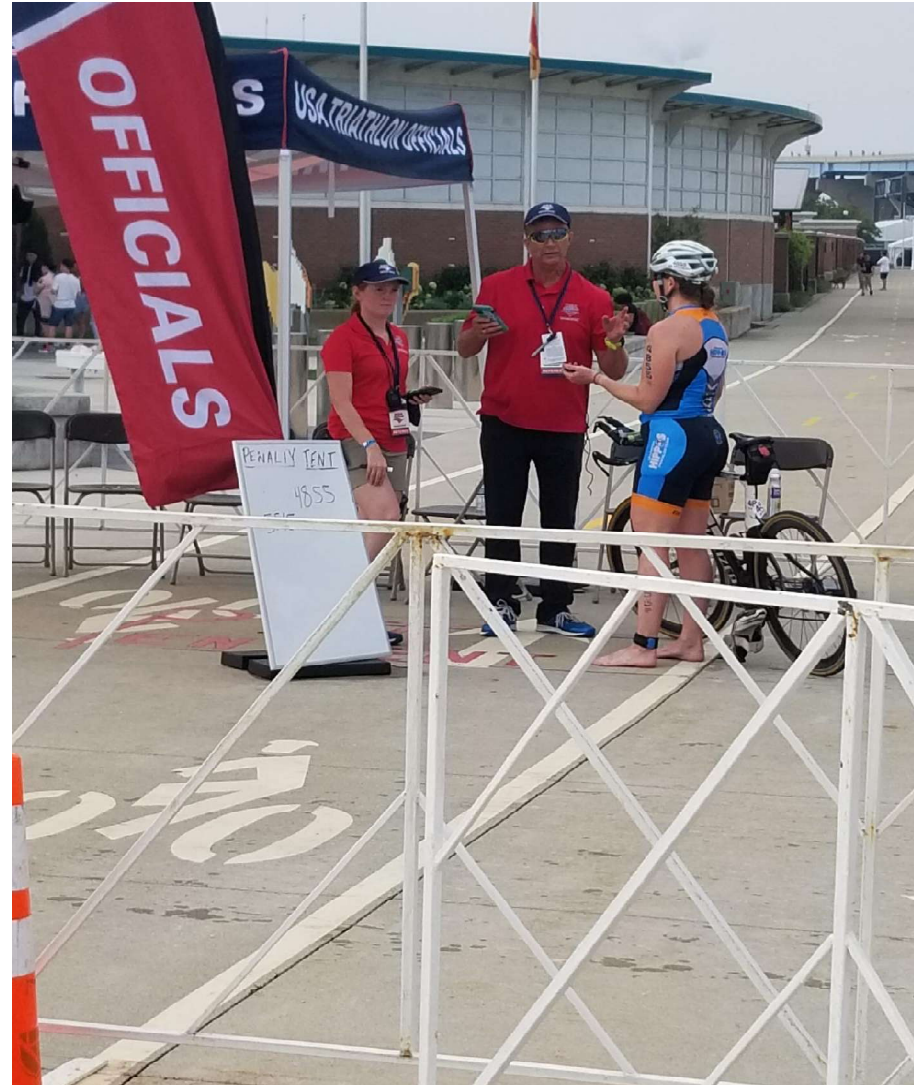


New in 2025

- Changes to the draft zone and time to pass in all distances for draft illegal races
- Changes to the time penalties for most race distances
- Emphasis on Warn & Amend for minor violations, where possible
- Clarification on littering penalties
- Interference with another athlete or their equipment in transition addressed
- Clarification of Fairings provisions
- Explanation of uniform (zipper) requirements at races
- Swimskins allowed



As of 2023, all penalties are given On Course and served prior to finishing the race



General Conduct

Competitors must:

- Always practice good sports conduct
- Be responsible for their own safety, the safety of their own equipment and be considerate of the safety of others
- Be responsible for understanding and following the multisport competition rules and race management requirements
- Treat all others with respect and courtesy



General Conduct

Competitors must:

- Not use abusive language
- Not wear, use or carry items deemed to be a hazard to self or other
- Hard casts, glass/metal containers, personal audio devices (including bone conductive headphones) 2-way radios or anything of this nature
- Not use any unauthorized equipment as defined in the USA Triathlon Multisport Competition Rules
- Be responsible for keeping on the designated course and if leaving the course for any reason they must re-enter at the point the competitor exited the course



General Conduct

Competitors must:

- Not obstruct or interfere with the forward progress or jeopardize the safety and welfare of another competitor, race official, spectator or member of the public
- **New:** if an athlete interferes with the equipment of another athlete so that the other athlete cannot continue the race, the interfering athlete can be disqualified.
- Not accept assistance from anyone other than an authorized technical official or member of the race staff/volunteers. **New:** if the assistance is refused or avoided by the athlete, they will not be DSQ.



General Conduct

Competitors must:

- Not leave equipment or discarded articles of equipment anywhere on the course, except in the approved locations
- Withdraw immediately from the event if deemed by the event medical personnel that they present to the health or welfare or either him/herself or another person



General Conduct

Competitors must:

- Must not offend community standards through deliberate acts of nudity which might be seen or noticed in public
- Must report to the Penalty Area to serve a time penalty for a Rule Violation after being issued with a Blue or Yellow Card and instructed to do so by a Technical Official



General Conduct

- Failure to comply with any of the General Rules will result in the competitor receiving one of the forms of Penalties described
- It is not mandatory for an official to indicate that a rule violation will be reported or give a warning prior to issuing a penalty or reporting a rule violation in some situations. However, it is a best practice in most cases where a warning may be safely issued.
- A competitor may complete the event except where instructed to withdraw by a medical officer
- You may be removed from the course and not allowed to continue if you miss any race specific time cutoffs



Swimwear: General

Due to swimwear products entering and leaving the market over time, it is no longer feasible to have a predetermined “Approved” list.

The information provided on the USAT website is meant to help the athlete determine if the swimwear in question would be legal for use at USA Triathlon sanctioned events and to provide them with the appropriate contact information point if they need further assistance.



Swim Conduct

Snorkels & Power Breathers are NOT allowed in Competitive Races and Waves.

Non-Competitive (NC) Example:

NC 4.1 Swimming Conduct

Allowing the use of a snorkel, swim vest, deployed buoyancy device, or buoyancy pants at any temperature in a final and separate wave



Wetsuit Basics

If wetsuits permitted: You can wear a neoprene wetsuit, it can cover everything except face, hands and feet. Feet can be covered with non-propulsive socks/boots.

If wetsuits mandatory: You have to cover at least the torso and back. Hands can be covered with non-propulsive gloves.

If wetsuits prohibited: You must wear something(s) 100% textile (and could have a zipper), it can cover only things above the knees and elbows and below the neck.

Once you leave the water, these restrictions do not apply to the remainder of the race



Swimming Conduct

- A competitor may use any stroke for propulsion through the water, tread water or float
- A competitor may stand on the bottom or rest by holding an inanimate object
- In an emergency the competitor should raise an arm overhead and call for assistance. Once assistance is rendered in an emergency the competitor must retire from the competition



Swimming Conduct

- A competitor must wear the swim cap if provided.
- Any artificial propulsion device is prohibited
- Any wetsuit with a thickness greater than 5mm is prohibited



Cycling Conduct



Photo: Archi Trujillo

Cycling Conduct

- A competitor must obey traffic rules unless otherwise directed by a race official
- A competitor is not permitted to make any forward progress without the bicycle and all of its component parts



Cycling Conduct

- Bike helmets are compulsory and must be approved by a national testing authority recognized by a national federation that is an affiliate of World Triathlon
- Any alteration/addition/omission to any part of the helmet is prohibited



Cycling Conduct

- The helmet must remain securely fastened at all times before the bicycle is removed from the rack, while on the cycle course, and until the bicycle is racked again
- A competitor must clearly display the race identification number(s) at all times if provided by the Race Director. Those not complying may incur a Stop/Start penalty



Cycling Conduct

- A competitor observed to have a helmet not securely fastened will receive a Stop and Start penalty, if/when safe to do so, to be served either on the spot or at the Penalty Area



The Following Applies to Bike
Segment of the Non-Draft Legal
Races



**New:
For all race
distances**

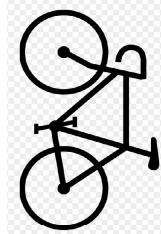
6 Bike lengths of
clear space

12
Meters
from
the
front of
Bike 1
to the
front of
Bike 2



8 Bike lengths of
clear space

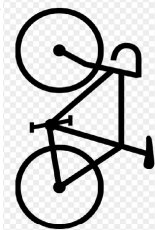
#1



BLOCKING



#2



2 Bike lengths of
clear space

#1



#2



Gap has closed
no clear space:
15 seconds has
expired.

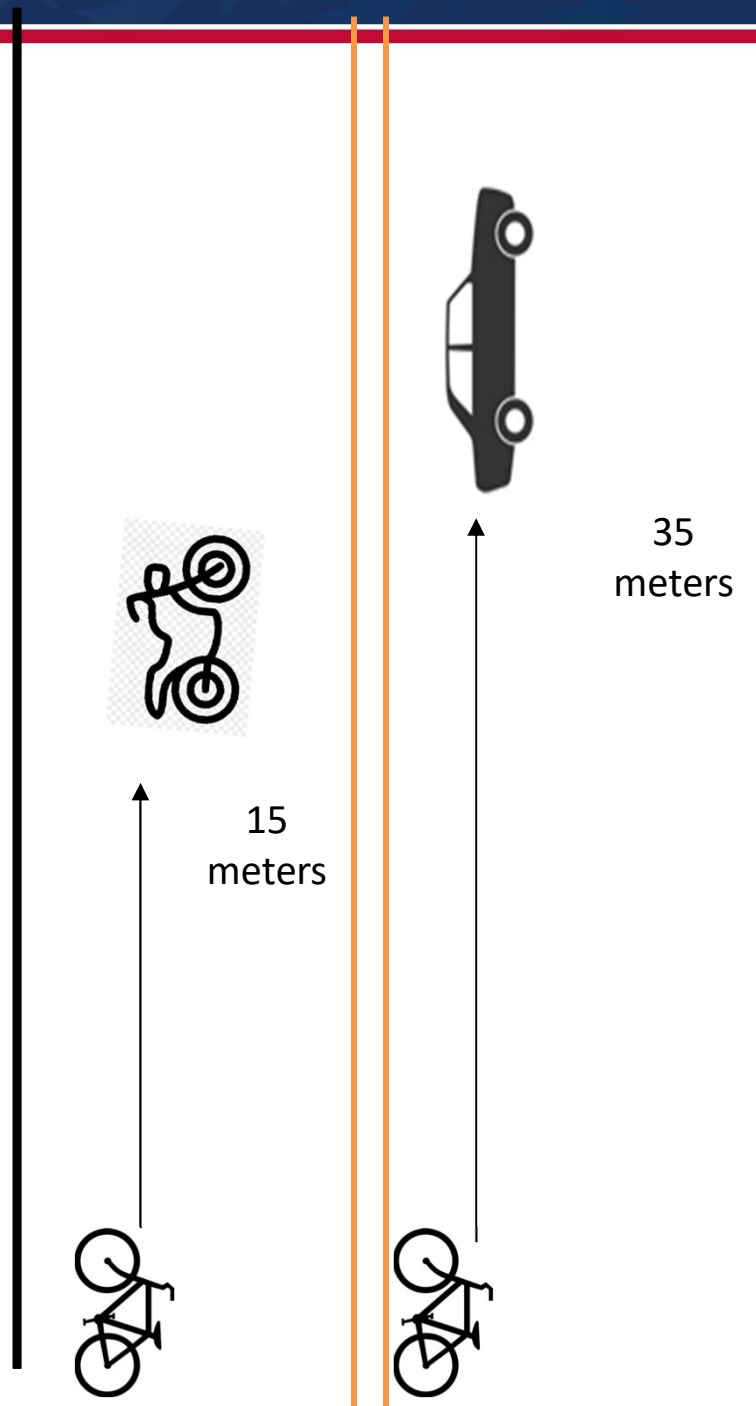


Pass completed:
19 seconds has
expired.



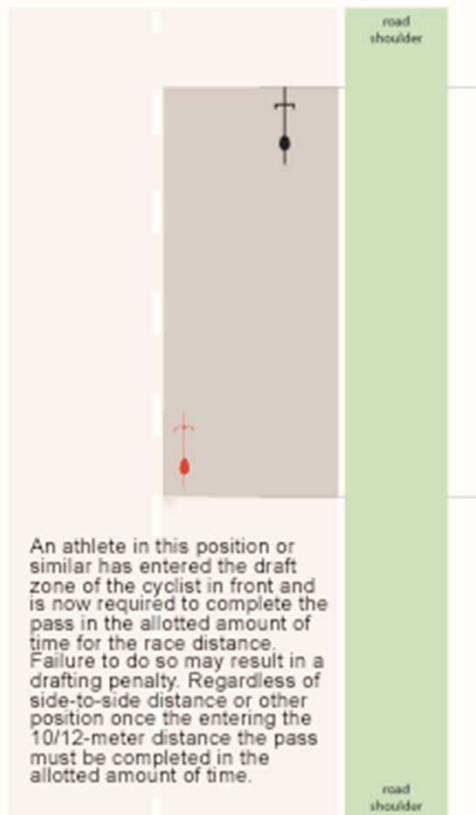
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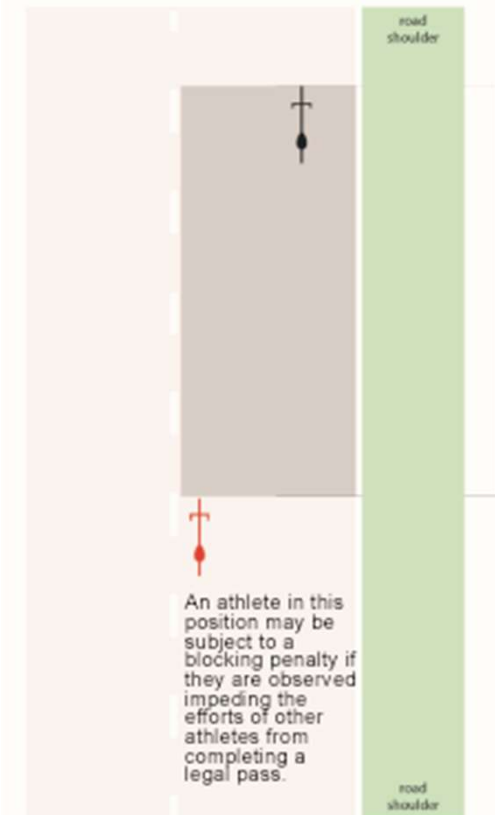
Drafting, Blocking, and Position

Drafting

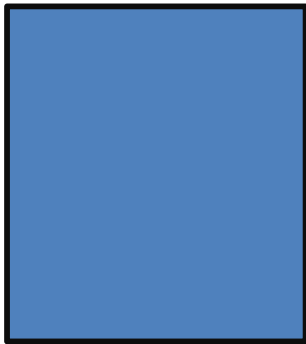


For all distances:
The draft zone is 12 meters of space between the bikes

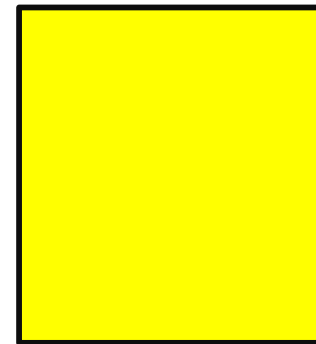
Blocking



NEW: Major Changes starting in 2025



Sprint or shorter = :30 seconds
Olympic = 1:00 minutes
Middle Distance = 2:00 minutes
Long Distance = 3:00 minutes



Shorter than Sprint = :05 seconds
Sprint = :10 seconds
Olympic = :15 seconds
Middle Distance = :30 seconds
Long Distance = 1:00 minute

General Procedures

- Athletes penalized on the course must stop on the course as required.
- Every effort will be made to notify all athletes subject to possible disqualification on site and prior to awards.
- Athletes facing disqualification will have a full opportunity to discuss the circumstances with the Head Referee for the event prior to a final determination of the penalty.

Penalties and Procedures

Race Segment	Penalty Served
Start	T1 – spot of infraction
Swim	T1 – spot of infraction
Transition 1	Warning at T1 – spot of infraction
Bike	Bike Penalty Tent
Transition 2	Warning at T2 – spot of infraction
Run	Warning/Time Penalty on the Spot

Entire Course

“Athletes must complete the entire course as prescribed, including all segments in the correct segment order as prescribed by race management. Any failure to so complete the entire course shall be deemed to constitute an unfair time advantage, regardless of overall timing data for the individual athlete, and may result in disqualification. Athletes who depart from the course must reenter at the point of departure before continuing. Athletes who cross the finish line prior to completing all segments of the course who can safely reenter the course at their point of departure in the judgment of the Head Official and in concurrence with the Lead Timer may be allowed to complete the course as prescribed. Failure to complete the entire course as stated in this section at USA Triathlon Events may result in disqualification or the assignment of DNF in the race results at the discretion of the Head Official for the event.”



Running Conduct



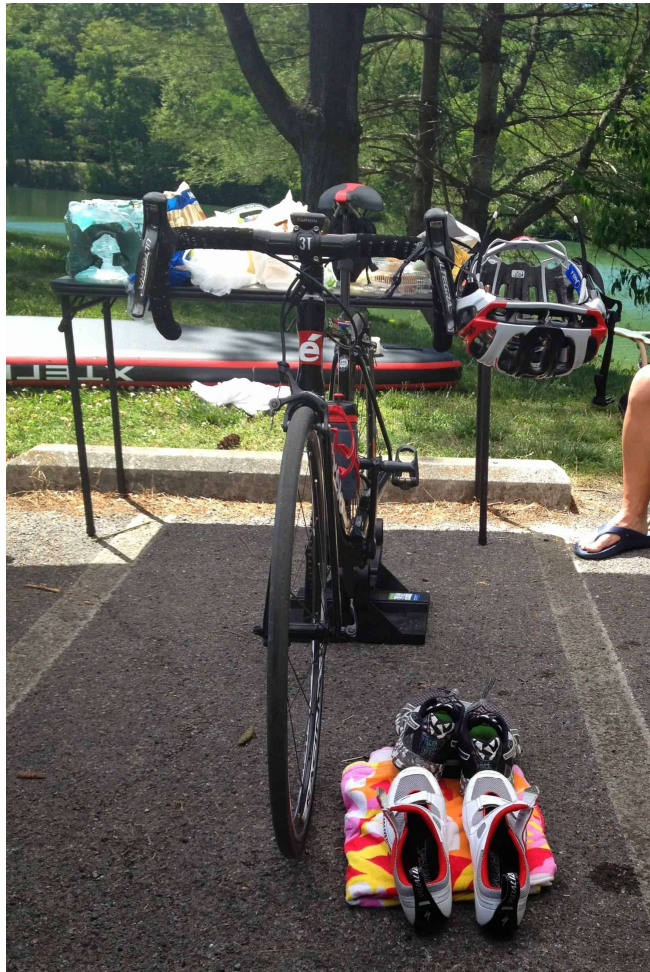
Archi Trujillo

Running Conduct

- A competitor may not crawl
- A competitor must clearly display the race identification number on their front at all times on the run course if provided by the Race Director. Those not complying may incur a Stop/Start penalty



Transition Basics



Transition Conduct

- A competitor must mount and dismount the bicycle at the respective designated mounting and dismounting zones
- A competitor must at all times rack his/her own bicycle only at their designated bicycle rack location and leave it in a stable position



Transition Conduct

- A competitor must at all times place all their equipment at their designated bicycle rack location
- A competitor must not interfere with another competitor's equipment but where accidental interference occurs the offending competitor must replace the equipment to its former position and state



For further information or questions, please contact:

rulesandofficials@usatriathlon.org

