



USA TRIATHLON

RACE DIRECTOR RESOURCE GUIDE:

**NON-TRADITIONAL EVENTS
WITHIN MULTISPORT**



INTRODUCTION:

Multisport events are competitions that combine two or more athletic disciplines. USA Triathlon is the national governing body of triathlon, which involves the traditional sequence of swimming, biking, and running. It also governs other multisport disciplines including, but not limited to, duathlon, aquathlon, aquabike, off-road triathlon, winter triathlon, and paratriathlon.

Each year, USA Triathlon sanctions numerous types of multisport events that have non-traditional distances and unique formats. USA Triathlon encourages Race Directors to be creative and think outside the box to develop events that their community will find engaging and fun. For more information about whether your event can be sanctioned with USA Triathlon, reach out to eventservices@usatriathlon.org.

In this section, we will explore reasons to host non-traditional multisport events. We will outline some of these race formats, their standard distances, and operational considerations to keep in mind as you determine the feasibility within your race venue:

- Why host multisport events?
- Types of non-traditional multisport events:
 - Duathlon
 - Aquabike
 - Aquathlon
 - Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP)
 - Relays
 - Individual Medley
 - Gravel
 - Winter Triathlon / Duathlon

**Note: While this guide does provide recommendations for non-traditional multisport events, all planning and decision-making regarding the event is at the discretion of the Race Director. While direction is provided on the competition rules, it is not a replacement for the [Multisport Competition Rules](#). For questions about the rules and their application at your event, please reach out to rulesandofficials@usatriathlon.org.*



WHY HOST MULTISPORT EVENTS?

The endurance market is highly saturated with traditional running, cycling, and triathlon races. Opening up your event portfolio to include non-traditional multisport events can help differentiate your brand. These events allow for creativity in course design and event structure, which creates an exciting race experience for athletes. Offering a unique race product can help draw attention to your brand and allow you to establish your own niche market for your event(s). Here are a few other reasons to consider adding non-traditional multisport races to your event portfolio:

DID YOU KNOW?

There is an annual USA Triathlon Multisport National Championship Festival that includes divisions for race formats such as: Triathlon, Duathlon, Aquabike, Aquathlon, and Mixed Relays.

- **Increasing Participation:** By incorporating multiple race types, you provide your customers with more options, which can help attract a broader audience. For example, an athlete may shy away from a triathlon because of their anxiety about swimming in open water, but they would register for a duathlon that involves only the bike and run components. An athlete with bad knees may look to avoid events that involve running, but would be open to competing in an aquabike that only includes the swim and the bike. The list goes on and on. If you have the ability to add race offerings without diminishing the quality of your overall event, this puts you in a good position to drive participation numbers, and in turn, registration revenue.
- **“Gateway” Events:** One of the biggest challenges to building your customer base is getting athletes to take the initial plunge to register for their first event. Once they have their foot in the door, they are much more likely to register for races moving forward. For this reason, many organizations host standalone 5K runs or first-timer open water swims within their event portfolio to serve as a “gateway” event. The same holds true for some of the non-traditional multisport events, which may seem like a less intimidating starting point for athletes than a traditional, full distance triathlon. For more information on developing programs for new athletes, check out the First Timer and Pool Swims Resource Guide.
- **Bolster the Bottom Line:** On the expense side, many of your big ticket race expenses are fixed costs such as: equipment, road closures / police fees, venue rental, and staffing. Different multisport formats can positively affect the bottom line by:

MONETIZING FIXED COSTS

Find additional revenue streams to help offset the costs of fixed expenses. For example, if you are already paying police fees to close the roads for an existing triathlon, make the most of it! Increasing the number of athletes utilizing the road will not change the cost. BUT increasing the registration revenue coming in can help to offset the expense. Consider adding a duathlon to help drive registration revenue, which in turn will increase the bottom line.

MINIMIZING FIXED COSTS

Take a hard look at the largest expense line items in your event budget. Consider if an alternate race format might make the event more sustainable in the long run. For example, if road closures and police fees are weighing down your P&L, explore gravel routes that allow the bike course to stay off the roadways and save on police fees.



If you are hosting multiple standalone events throughout the year i.e. (running only event or cycling only event), it may be possible to blend the different formats into a singular event. This still provides athletes with options to be able to participate in their desired formats, but may decrease the financial and staffing resources needed to execute the events.

- **Community Building:** As your organization grows, it is important to establish roots within the endurance community that extend beyond the couple of days of the year you hold races. Become an active member in the training journey of your athletes. By hosting different types of events at different times of the year, the relationship between your organization and your athletes strengthens. Offering a diverse set of race options provides participants with cross-training opportunities that help them become more well-rounded athletes. It also helps create a community among your athletes to engage with our like-minded individuals throughout the year.

TYPES OF NON-TRADITIONAL MULTISPORT EVENTS:

Duathlon: An event that combines cycling and running events in continuum. These races are typically designed as a run-bike-run format. The first run course commences at the start line and finishes at the Transition Area, where the bike course begins and ends. After the bike, the second run course begins from Transition and concludes at the finish line.

DUATHLON DISTANCES			
CLASSIFICATION*	RUN	BIKE	RUN
Sprint Distance	5km	20km	2.5km
Standard Distance	5km	30km	5km
	10km	40km	5km
Middle Distance	10km	60km	10km
Long Distance	10km	120km	20km
	20km	150km	30km

**Classifications are typically named by the distance of the bike portion of the event.*

Operational Considerations:

- **Start Time:** If a duathlon is being held in conjunction with a triathlon, selecting the proper start time can be critical to avoid collisions and congestion. Have a firm grasp on the athlete course timelines to know when the first, last, and the pack athletes of each race distance are hitting key points along the course. Conduct risk assessments to determine if there are areas where you

- **Start Type:** Determine how duathletes will begin the race, depending on the number of athletes, the venue and course layouts, and the desired race timeline:
 - **Mass Start:** Athletes of all age groups are lined up at a start location and released to begin the run event. As your participant field grows, additional structure may need to be added to the start to facilitate a safe, organized sendoff:

PACE SIGNAGE

Add pace signage in the staging area at the start to help athletes line up in order of their expected pace. Athletes self-select their location in the staging area with the goal that the fastest athletes are at the front and slower athletes at the back.

CORRALS

A more formal approach, where barricades or equipment is used to build out physical corrals in the start staging area. Athletes are pre-assigned to corrals based on their expected pace and released in order.


WAVES

With larger events, it may be safest to stagger the release of runners to prevent congestion. Waves can be organized by gender, age group, expected finish time, etc. They can be used independently or in conjunction with corrals.

- **Time Trial Start:** Athletes can start the duathlon from their rack within the Transition Area in a time trial format. In this case, athletes line up alongside their bike at their assigned rack number. A staff member walks down the aisles of Transition and starts athletes according to a timed release (i.e. two athletes are started every five seconds)

This staggered release may be more desirable than a mass start in instances where the first run has potential pinch points. By nature, a time trial start helps to facilitate spacing between athletes which can also be useful for larger events, especially when the first run distance is on the shorter side. If athletes don't have an opportunity to space out during this first run leg, there may be a higher risk of congestion during the bike course.

Pro Tip:



The location of your run start will dictate where you will need to position your timing mat. A mass start outside of Transition will require a unique mat placement. For a time trial release within Transition, it may be possible to utilize an existing mat at a Transition exit point. Consult with your race timer for recommendations and feedback.

- **Transition Access:** Depending on when and how the duathlon starts, there may be a need for duathletes to be allowed in Transition at different time frames than triathletes (if races are held in tandem). Consider using color-coded wristbands for the different race types so it is clear to on-site security, staff, and officials, which groups should be allowed access at which times.



- **Aid Station(s):** If the first run leg of your duathlon course differs from the second leg, this may necessitate adding aid stations to support athletes during both run portions of the event. If both run legs share the same route, the same aid stations can be used, but this may bump up the timeline for set up and staff / volunteer shifts to begin earlier.
- **Baggage:** For duathletes, their start venue is wherever the first leg of the run course begins. If other race groups are beginning their event with a swim portion of the race, this may mean you have multiple start venues. This can create an additional layer of logistics if your event has a baggage program, which transports athlete baggage from the race start to the race finish. Keep in mind that you may need to coordinate staffing and transportation for each start venue to ensure all race groups receive the same level of service.

Aquabike: An event offering a swim and bike only competition. An aquabike may be included as a race group of an event, which includes a triathlon. In this case, the aquabike will have the same swim and bike distances as the triathlon. An standalone aquabike may happen with the standard distances outlined below:

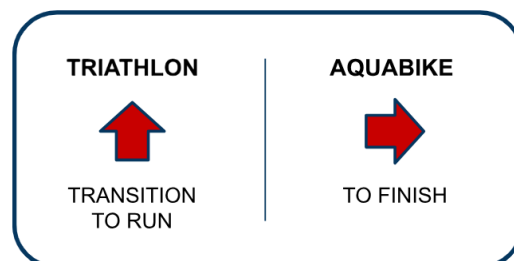
AQUABIKE DISTANCES		
CLASSIFICATION*	SWIM	BIKE
Standard Distance	1500m	40km
Middle Distance	1900m - 2999m	80km - 90km
Long Distance	3000m - 4000m	91km - 200km

**Classifications are typically named by the distance of the bike portion of the event.*

Operational Considerations:

- **Finish Line:** One of the largest considerations with an aquabike event is the placement of the Finish Line. USA Triathlon rules dictate that athletes are still on their bikes as they cross the finish line of an aquabike event. In other words, the timing mat marking the end of the bike course must be positioned prior to the dismount area. If the aquabike is held in conjunction with a triathlon, the finish line for the bike course is located at the Transition area. If the aquabike is a standalone event, there is a bit more flexibility in how and where this finish is laid out:

- **Finish Line @ Transition:** If the triathlon and aquabike are happening simultaneously, it is important to anticipate and recognize that athletes completing the bike course will have two different objectives as



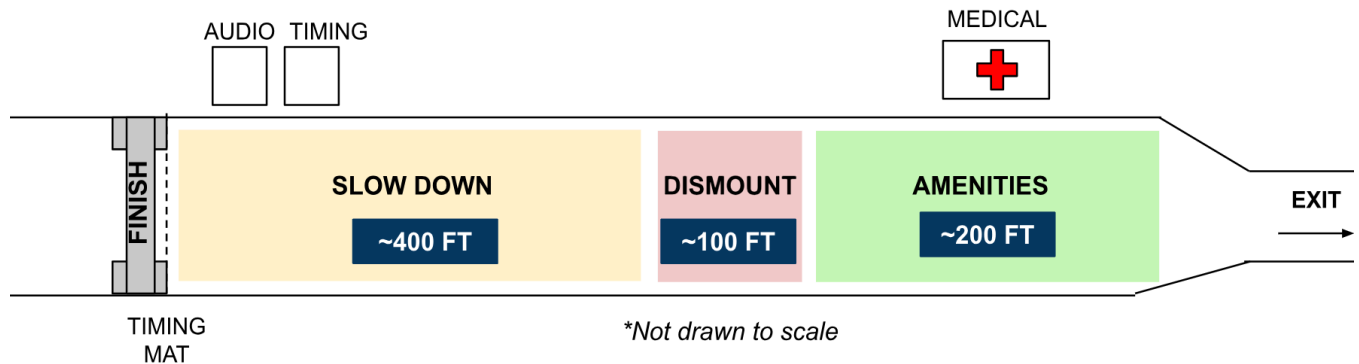
and back-ups it may be beneficial to separate the flow of athletes at the bike finish via delineation and/or clear directional signage for each race group:

- **Triathletes:** Athletes will be looking to dismount their bikes and immediately continue running toward their assigned bike rack with an unobstructed path so they can re-rack their bikes and begin the run course.
- **Aquabike Athletes:** Once they cross the timing mat, Aquabike athletes will have completed their race. They will no longer have the same sense of urgency to dismount and move through the space as the triathletes who are continuing onward. In your pre-race communication, clearly outline the expectations for Aquabike athletes once they complete the race. Here are some frequently asked questions to address:



- *After I finish the bike, should I re-rack my bike in Transition or should I take my bike with me? Can I take the rest of my race gear with me at this time as well?*
- *Where should I exit Transition? How do I get to the Finish Line from here?*
- *Will I be allowed into the finish chute to pick up my medal, post-race food, etc.?*

- **Standalone Finish Line:** Map out the footprint of the finish line (pre and post) under the assumption that athletes will proceed through the chute at high rates of speed. They will need ample space after the finish gantry to slow down and dismount their bikes. For the safety of staff, volunteers, and medical personnel, post-finish amenities should be set back a significant distance from the finish line. Also take steps to prevent athletes from trying to dismount their bikes at the immediate finish line as this can cause a back-up. They should be encouraged to stay on their bikes, slowing down, for a stretch beyond the line before they are instructed to dismount.





Aquathlon: Events which involve a combination of the swim and the run. These are typically structured as run-swim-run or swim-run events.

AQUATHLON DISTANCES			
CLASSIFICATION	RUN	SWIM	RUN
Sprint Distance	1.25km	500m	1.25km
	-	500m	2.5km
Standard Distance	2.5km	1000m	2.5km
	-	1000m	5km
Long Distance	5km	2000m	5km
	-	2000m	10km

Operational Considerations:

- **Wetsuits & Water Temperature:** For USA Triathlon sanctioned events, the temperature of the water will dictate whether wetsuits are permitted during the swim portion of the race. The logistics around athletes getting in and out of their wetsuits will need to be considered in your operations planning. Aquathlons with water temperatures that allow for wetsuits tend to be structured as swim-runs, as opposed to run-swim-runs. This allows athletes to start the event in their wetsuit, sparing them the tricky endeavor of getting into their wetsuit mid-race.

Below are the wetsuit thresholds set forth by the USA Triathlon Multisport Competition Rules. In circumstances where the water temperature may fluctuate until the days leading up to the race, it may be necessary to have established cutoffs and contingency plans. For example:

- If water temperature is > 84F, the event will be a 2.5km run, 1000m swim, 2.5km run
- If water temperature is < 84F, the event will be a 1000m swim, 5km run

WETSUIT THRESHOLDS*				
SWIM LENGTH	MANDATORY	PERMITTED	ALLOWED	FORBIDDEN
All Distances	60.6F and below	Up to 78F	78.1F - 83.9F**	84F and above
	"WETSUIT LEGAL"			

*Does not pertain to Elite or Development Races (inclusive of Youth, Junior, and U25), USA Triathlon National Championship and World Triathlon Qualifying Age-Group Races. These events have different



thresholds. ***Participants who choose to wear a wetsuit in a competitive non-National Event Age Group race when the water temperature exceeds 78F are not eligible to have their results submitted for rankings or Age Group Awards, unless a variance is provided by USA Triathlon.*

- **Start Type:** For multisport events where the swim component marks the beginning of the race, the swim start is a controlled environment. Race management has the ability to adjust the release of athletes in real time in response to how the swim is unfolding on the water. For run-swim-run events, the swim occurs once the race is already in full swing, limiting the flexibility that comes with a controlled release. For this reason, it will be particularly important to understand and project the flow of athletes as they move from their first leg of the run to the swim.

Consider starting your run with a time trial or wave start to create a natural spacing among athletes. The staggered start will decrease the risk of congestion for the run, which will then trickle down to the swim. The goal is for the swim start to have a manageable, continuous stream of athletes free from bottlenecks. This not only enables athletes to have safe entry into the water, but also helps each course zone maintain a reasonable number of swimmers at any given time. Limiting overcrowding is important to ensure swim safety assets are able to oversee the condition of all athletes on the water.

- **Safety Measures:** In multisport events, the swim is the race discipline that typically presents the highest risk for medical issues. It requires a great deal of physical exertion for athletes and also tends to be the part of the race they are most anxious about. If you are considering hosting a run-swim-run, here are a few additional safety considerations to keep in mind:

ATHLETE FATIGUE

If athletes complete a run before they get in the water, they will have already expended significant energy. Athletes will start the swim more fatigued than races where the swim is the first leg of the race. Be prepared that this may increase the risk of medical incidents.

MEDICAL ASSETS

When the swim is first, the full focus of on-site medical assets is on the water. With the swim happening mid-race, the attention is more fragmented between the run and the swim. Ensure you have medical assets that remain dedicated to the swim.

STAFF RESOURCES

Just as the attention of medical assets will be divided between the run and the swim, the same holds true for staff resources. Ensure there is ample staffing to cover both disciplines, particularly the process to account all swimmers have safely exited the water.



Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP): Some multisport events have created Stand Up Paddleboarding divisions where athletes can substitute the traditional swim segment with stand up paddleboarding. This caters to athletes who may not be comfortable swimming in open water, but still want to complete a triathlon.

Operational Considerations:

- **PFD Policy:** Establish a policy that outlines the requirements for athletes to wear Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) during the SUP portion of the race. Below is an outline of the different types of PFD available. Type III and Type V tend to be the most popular for SUP:

DID YOU KNOW?

In the U.S., law regarding PFDs are set by the U.S. Coast Guard. A SUP is classified as a “vessel” and as a result, federal law requires that each person on-board have a USCG-approved PFD.



Type I:
Off-Shore Vests designed for rough or remote waters. They provide the most buoyancy and are designed to help turn unconscious persons face up in the water



Type II:
Near-Shore Vests typically used in calm water when quick rescue is likely



Type III:
Foam Vests typically used in calm water. Most commonly used by water skiers, surfers, and SUPs



Type IV:
Throwable flotation devices. These are not designed to be worn and are more common on large vessels (16ft or longer)



Type V:
PFDs that are worn in a pack around the waist and can be inflated when needed by pulling a cord



- **Paddleboard Storage Area:** Designate a paddleboard storage area near the swim exit where athletes can drop off their paddleboard and paddle before proceeding to the Transition Area. This eliminates the need for athletes to have run for extended distances with this equipment after they exit the water. Prohibiting paddleboards from entering Transition also helps to keep the aisles clear for athlete movement through the area. If you allow athletes to stage their paddleboards at their bike rack, Transition will get very congested very quickly. Take steps to ensure the Paddleboard Storage area is secured from the time the race begins until the last athletes pick up their equipment post-race.
- **Equipment Labels:** Within the athlete race packet, plan to provide numbered stickers for athletes to affix to their paddleboard and paddle. Athletes will be required to check out their items from the Paddleboard Storage Area the same way they check out their bikes after the race. Race security / volunteers / staff will need to match the number sticker on the equipment to the number on the athlete's wristband / bib number.
- **Entry / Exit:** As you lay out the SUP course, ensure that athletes will be able to safely mount and dismount their board at the designated start/exit points. If the SUP division is being held in conjunction with a triathlon, it is generally best practice for the SUPs to begin the race first and allow a time buffer before the swimmers enter the water to avoid any potential collisions. This also allows safety personnel to focus on one group of athletes at a time.
- **Skill Level:** Clearly communicate the skill levels required for the SUP portion, particularly if the water conditions may be challenging. Consider hosting clinics or other pre-event practice/acclimation sessions for athletes to familiarize themselves with the water conditions before beginning the race.

Relays: Traditional triathlon relays (also referred to as “Corporate Relays”) involve three members of the same gender, each completing one individual leg of the race. For example the first athlete covers the swim segment, the second does the bike segment, and the third one completes the run segment. In recent years, a few other types of relays have become more popular. Mixed Relay was introduced into the Olympic Games at Tokyo in 2020. The short, intense nature of relay events makes these races an exciting spectator sport.

- **4x Mixed Relay:** A team is composed of four athletes: two men and two women, who will compete in supersprint distance events in the following order: man, woman, man, woman. Each team member will complete all legs of the event.
- **2x2 Mixed Relay:** A team is composed of two athletes: one man and one woman, who will compete in the following order: man, woman, man, woman. Each of

DID YOU KNOW?

For Mixed Relays, 2x2 Mixed Relays, and 3x Relays, the total time for the team is from the start of the first team member to the finish of the fourth athlete. It is **NOT** a summation of all athlete times. Time is continuous and does not stop between athletes.



- **3x Relay:** A team is composed of three athletes of the same gender. Each athlete will complete all legs of the event one time.
- **Team Relay:** The team relay is composed of three athletes of the same gender. It differs from the 3x Relay, as the total time is the addition of the three BEST times recorded for each leg of the event. In the case of a tie, the time of the third team member will determine the team result.

RELAY DISTANCES:				
All Relay Types	Triathlon	SWIM	BIKE	RUN
		250m - 300m	5km - 8km	1.5km - 2km
All Relay Types	Duathlon	RUN	BIKE	RUN
		1.5km - 2km	5km - 8km	07.5km - 1km
All Relay Types	Aquathlon	RUN	SWIM	RUN
		1.25km	500m	1.25km
		-	500m	2.5km
WINTER		RUN	BIKE	SKI
2x2 Mixed	Triathlon	1km	2km	2km
4x Mixed & 3x (Same Gender)	Triathlon	2km - 3km	4km - 5km	3km-4km
2x2 Mixed	Duathlon	1km	-	2km

Operational Considerations:

- **Tag Zone:** The Tag Zone is the designated area where the handover or “tag” between teammates occurs. This zone is typically positioned close to both the Transition Area and the Finish Line. In the case of a Mixed Relay Triathlon, Teammates #2, 3, and 4 will all be waiting in the Tag Zone at the start of the race. Once Teammate #1 completes their swim, bike, and run, they will enter the Tag Zone and physically tag Teammate #2 to begin, and so on, until all four athletes have completed the event.



Let's take a closer look at this race flow. Below is the 2024 Mixed Relay Triathlon course at the USAT Multisport National Championships Festival held in Omaha, Nebraska:



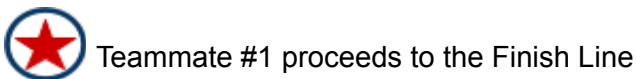
Teammate #1 completes the swim, bike & run routes



When Teammate #1 returns from the run, they enter the



In the Tag Zone, Teammate #1 and Teammate #2 physically touch. After the tag:



Teammate #2 begins the swim, bike & run routes.



The above process repeats for the remaining teammates.

At the conclusion of their run, Teammate #4 will bypass the Tag Zone and proceed directly to the Finish Line.

- **Race Start:** Mixed Relay events are typically draft-legal. As a result, they tend to start with a Mass Start, with Teammate #1 from all teams starting together. This race start location for Teammate #1 will be different from their teammates that follow, who will all be starting their race from the Tag Zone. Consequently, this also means Teammate #1 may have a different route for their first leg of the race.

Let's take a closer look at this race flow. Below is the swim course routes for the 2024 Mixed Relay Triathlon course at the USAT Multisport National Championships Festival:



Teammate #1 from all teams starts as part of a mass start. Athletes begin in-water at knee-deep depth. They follow the orange swim course route outlined, exit the water, and complete the bike and run routes.



After the tag in the Tag Zone **T** **Teammate #2** begins their swim.

Teammate #2 will follow the yellow swim route outline, exit the water, and complete the bike and run routes.

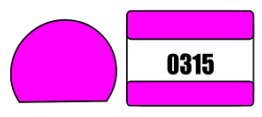


The above process repeats for Teammates #3 and 4. They will complete the yellow swim course route..
A few key notes:

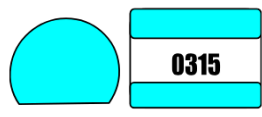
- While the orange (Teammate #1) and yellow (Teammates #2, 3, 4) routes differ, the distance is equivalent.
- The start and exit points from the water are clearly marked and delineated to prevent collisions of athletes entering and exiting the water.

Pro Tip:

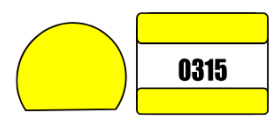
For Mixed Relay triathlons, plan to have different swim cap colors and bib numbers for each teammate to help athletes and officials keep track of which teams are in which position as the race progresses.



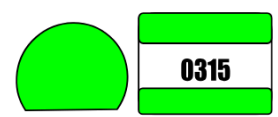
Teammate #1



Teammate #2

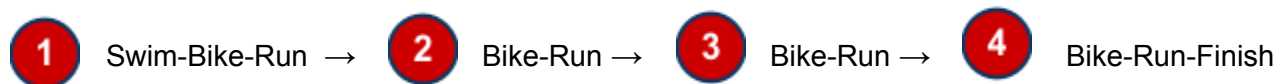


Teammate #3



Teammate #4

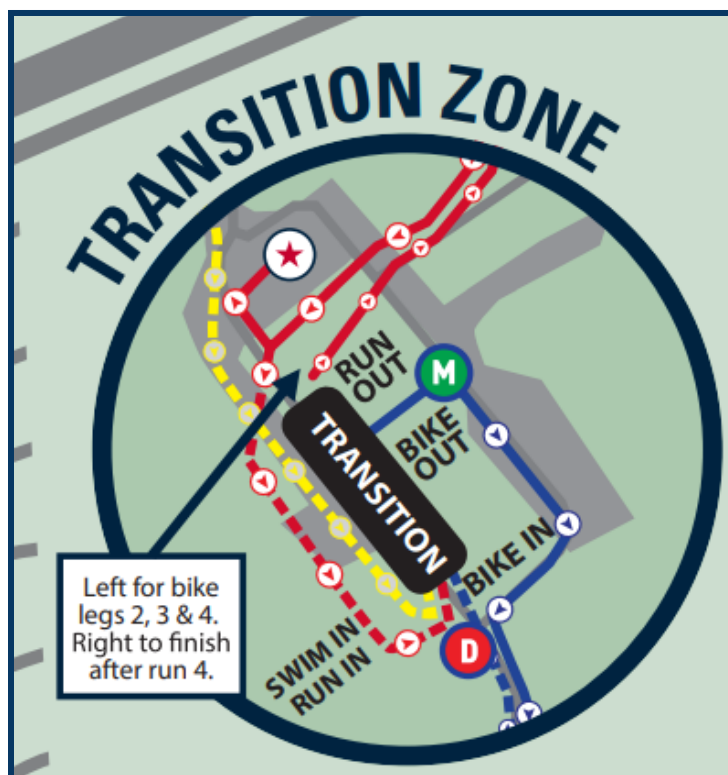
Individual Medley: The Individual Medley is a race format that mimics the flow of the relay races above, but it is completed in its entirety by one individual athlete. The athlete completes one swim leg of the race and completes the bike and the run legs four times. The flow is as follows:



INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY			
CLASSIFICATION	SWIM	BIKE	RUN
Supersprint Distance	250m	5km	1.2k

Operational Considerations:

- Run Split:** When athletes are returning from the run, there must be two clear paths delineated: one path that leads athletes back to Transition to begin their next Bike-Run cycle. This generally leads athletes back into Transition at the same entrance point where they ran in from the swim during their first lap. The second delineated path leads to the Finish Line for athletes who have just completed their fourth and final run.
- Race Timing:** Race timing and the location of the timing mats is particularly important for this event to ensure athletes have completed all legs of the course route. With so much repetition, athletes can lose track of their laps and inadvertently head to the finish line prematurely. During the pre-race briefing, encourage athletes to establish their own personal system for keeping track of their laps in Transition. Depending on the level of the race and the number of participants, some events will set up a lap board in Transition to help keep a pulse on the status of the event.



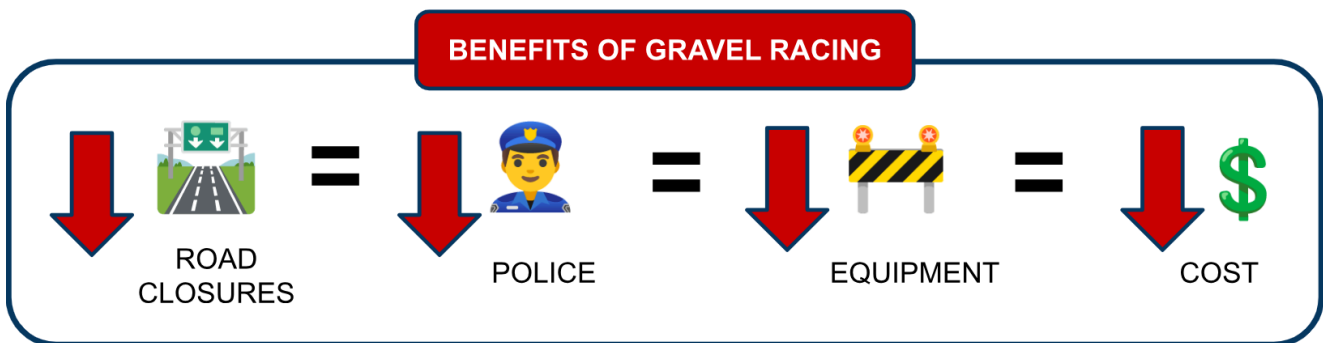
Gravel Multisport Events: Gravel riding is an increasingly popular form of cycling that combines elements of road and mountain biking. While traditional triathlons involve riding bikes on paved roads and off-road triathlons feature mountain bike trails, gravel triathlon takes place on unpaved dirt roads. Riders can use a bike designed specifically for gravel riding, but mountain bikes and road bikes are often used as well.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gravel multisport is a draft legal sport. Athletes can use drafting as a way to conserve energy and make strategic moves during the race.

Gravel triathlon consists of swimming, biking and running. Gravel duathlon consists of running, biking, and running. The distance for gravel multisport events varies. Where possible, courses should have demanding hills and challenging technical aspects. It is at the Race Director’s discretion to dictate the course distance based on the ability to create a fair, safe route for all athletes.

By shifting to gravel bike courses, races have been able to reduce the operational costs of closing roadways, which include police fees, staffing, and equipment rentals. The ability to dramatically decrease these expense line items can positively affect the bottom line in a pretty significant way.



In addition to the financial benefits, gravel races might offer a safer race environment for athletes. Since these events are typically set in rural areas on dirt roads, there tends to be less vehicular traffic. By reducing the potential opportunities for vehicular and cyclist traffic to mix, you take steps to create a safer race experience for participants.

Operational Considerations:

- **Emergency Response & SAG Planning:** The secluded nature of gravel courses has its perks, but it also brings its own set of challenges. There may be stretches of the course where athletes are out of view of race personnel, course marshals, and aid stations. There are fewer landmarks and there may be areas where cell reception is spotty. Prior to the event, take steps to identify potential problem zones. Develop response plans for emergent and non-emergency situations and bolster roving presence in these problem areas. Create a SAG plan that outlines how and when DNF athletes will be transported back to the venue. Plan for vehicular and/or rider sweeps



to tail the last athletes to make sure all athletes along the course are accounted for.

Pro Tip:

Consider creating a race hotline number that can be distributed to all staff, volunteers, and participants to be able to call-in and report any incidents along the course. The number should be printed on the runner bibs, credentials, and any other collateral that might be worn on race day. This phone line should be routed to the Race Command Center with a designated person assigned to receiving calls, logging incidents, and dispatching the appropriate response.

- **Route Marking:** For road events, a slew of cones, signage, and other delineation equipment is typically used to define the course route. As long as athletes stay on the road and pay attention to instruction, following the route is fairly intuitive. If they make a wrong turn, they can always refer to street signs and use landmarks to help orient them back on-course. Gravel rides do not have this same luxury. Race management must take steps to clearly mark the race routes to help athletes find their way along the course. Explore ways to share the GPS files of course routes with participants so they can access on their personal devices.
- **Environmental Impact:** Gravel courses may require permits and permission from multiple agencies and/or landowners, especially if they cross public and private lands. It is important to be respectful of this property and comply with any and all regulations to minimize impact. Ensure that event equipment, signage, and waste is removed from the course in a timely manner. Be cognizant of how course elements such as aid stations, route marking, and amplified sound may be received by neighboring residents. Ingratiating your event with the local community and respecting their land will go a long way when it comes to receiving approvals to host future events.

DID YOU KNOW?

When it comes to route marking, **CONSISTENCY** is key. Establish a protocol for marking turns, signaling route splits, and calling out potential hazards. Make the plan and stick to it! Educate athletes about what they should be on the lookout for.

Winter Triathlon: Winter Triathlon is a great way for multisport athletes to still train and compete during the traditional triathlon offseason. It involves running, mountain biking (most commonly with fat bikes) and cross-country skiing - all on the snow. As an alternative to mountain biking, skating can be substituted as the middle leg of the event.

WINTER TRIATHLON DISTANCES			
CLASSIFICATION*	CROSS-COUNTRY RUN	MOUNTAIN BIKE	CROSS-COUNTRY SKI
Sprint Distance	3km - 4km	5km - 6km	5km - 6km
Standard Distance	7km - 9km	12km - 14km	10km - 12km
CLASSIFICATION*	CROSS-COUNTRY RUN	SKATE	CROSS-COUNTRY SKI
Standard Distance	4km	10km - 14km	7km - 9km

*+/- 10% per leg

The middle leg of the event can also be removed altogether to make it a Winter Duathlon, involving only running and skiing:

WINTER DUATHLON DISTANCES		
CLASSIFICATION*	CROSS-COUNTRY RUN	CROSS-COUNTRY SKI
Sprint Distance	6km	9km
Standard Distance	12km	18km

*+/- 10% per leg

Operational Considerations

- Weather:** For an event that takes place on the snow, it is no surprise that the race is at the mercy of the weather. It is possible that course adjustments will need to be made up until race morning depending on the usability and safety of route areas. While it is preferable that all segments of the race take place on snow, the run and the bike can also take place on different surfaces if need be. Have equipment on standby to handle the movement of any last-minute snow accumulations.



Depending on the location of the event, daylight hours in the winter may be limited. Take this into account as you map out your operational timelines for - setup, race day, and breakdown.

- Support Measures:** The cold temperatures can be a significant health and safety risk for all involved with the event. Keep in mind that cold weather can increase caloric expenditure.



Ensure aid stations are equipped with energy bars and/or gels. Offer warm beverages like tea or broth to help athletes maintain their body temperatures. Position heated warming areas at key points where athletes, staff, and volunteers can get warm if needed. Have a plan to rotate staff and volunteers throughout the event to keep them out of the cold temperatures for extended periods of time.

- **Ski Mount & Dismount:** Athletes are not permitted to ski inside the Transition Area. Just as the bike course has a designated mount zone outside of Transition, the same type of area is needed for the start of the ski. The wider you are able to make this area, the better to be able to reduce risk of collision between athletes. The same holds true for the finish chute. The last straight (50-100m) is normally broken down into lanes to avoid athletes impeding other athletes' progress. The lanes should be clearly marked, highly visible and as long as possible. Athletes are not allowed to change from one corridor to another unless it is an overtake situation. After athletes have crossed the Finish Line, they should remain in their skis until they reach the designated dismount zone, which should be located at least 10m past the Finish Line to prevent back-ups in the chute. This distance may be longer based on the width of the chute and the number of participants.

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