

Resolution for Board Action

Subject: Elite Triathlon Membership Qualification Criteria

Background: USA Triathlon's elite triathlon qualification criterion was last updated in January 2005 in an effort to raise the bar of US elite performances and professionalism. While the criterion does meet this objective, it focuses too heavily on field size and does not account for field quality. For example, if an athlete is the overall winner at Amateur Worlds, they are still required to finish top-8 in 2 more (or 1 more Ultra-distance) events with 500+ participants. The added travel and resources required for the additional 1-2 races could be better spent in the elite ranks.

Therefore, this resolution proposes the addition of new qualification options that are at a high enough level that they would merit an elite license.

Financial Impact: None.

Relevant & Affected By-Laws and Procedures:

Article 2 Section 2.4

Article 6 of the Bylaws

(Current) Elite Qualification Criteria:

Any athlete who chooses to compete as an elite triathlete must meet at least one of the three (3) criteria listed below:

CRITERIA A:

Finish top-eight overall and within 8 percent of the overall winner's time, according to gender, in at least three (3) USAT sanctioned events that occurred within the past 12 months and had at least 500 participants. No exceptions will be made.

CRITERIA B:

Finish within 8 percent of the overall winner's time in at least two (2) ultra- distance events that included an elite field (offering \$5k or greater in prize purse) that occurred within the past 12 months and had at least 500 participants. Ultra distance is defined as any distance equal to or greater than a 4K swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2-mile run. Events must have been sanctioned by USA Triathlon. No exceptions will be made.

CRITERIA C:

Finish within 8 percent of the overall winner's time in one (1) ultra-distance event that included an elite field (offering \$5k or greater in prize purse) that occurred within the past 12 months and had at least 500 participants AND finish top-eight and within 8 percent of the overall winner's time, according to gender, in at least one (1) USAT sanctioned event that occurred within the past 12 months and had at least 500 participants.

Whereas, the goal of USAT's elite membership criteria is to objectively and efficiently select the highest caliber athletes for elite status;

Whereas, the current criterion takes into account field size without regard for field quality;

Whereas, some performances are at such an exceptional level that they alone merit elite status;

Whereas, if an athlete has proven their ability through exceptional performances at the highest level of the sport, it is not necessary to require further proof that the athlete merits elite status;

Now therefore be it resolved that, USAT elite triathlon qualification criterion is changed to the following:

In order to apply for USAT's elite triathlon membership, an athlete must meet at least ONE of the following criteria in the past 12 months:

1. Finish within 8% of the winning elite time (on the same course as elites) in 3 USAT sanctioned events that offered an elite/pro prize purse.
2. Finish top-10 overall and within 8% of the winner's time at ITU Age Group World Championships.
3. Finish top-10 overall in the amateur field at Ironman World Championships.
4. Finish top-5 overall and within 8% of the winner's time at USAT Age Group National Championships.
5. Finish top-5 overall and within 8% of the winner's time at USAT Collegiate National Championships.
6. Finish top-3 overall in the amateur field at an Elite Qualifying Race. The list of Elite Qualifying Races is determined by the AAC each year and published on USAT's website.

All race results from 2007 will be required to meet the 2007 elite membership criteria. If any 2008 results are submitted as part of an athlete's elite membership application, the athlete will be required to qualify via the 2008 criteria outlined above.

This criterion will take effect January 1, 2008.

Submitted by:

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