



## Yorkshire and Humberside Frequently Asked Questions



The following questions have been collated by Michael Burch, the Yorkshire and Humberside RDO, and are based on frequent e-mail, phone and face to face questions he is asked. If you have a question that does not appear below please feel free to contact Michael on 07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org) Michael will either answer your question directly or obtain an answer from a suitably qualified person.

The answers below have been given by Michael or better positioned personnel within British Triathlon dependant upon the question area.

### **What is a triathlon?**

Triathlon is an exciting multi-discipline sport involving a continuous race over various distances in the three disciplines of swimming, cycling and running. A standard triathlon is made up of a swim, followed by a cycle ride, followed by a run.

Competitors race against the clock, which starts as they enter the swim and stops as they cross the finish line after the run.

For this reason, triathlon is often reported as having a 'fourth discipline' known as the transition.

The transition is the point in the race when competitors change from swimming to cycling (commonly referred to as T1), and from cycling to running (commonly referred to as T2).

Triathlon has come a long way since its beginnings in 1974 when a group of friends began to train together. The group consisted of swimmers, cyclists and runners, and before long they were organising competitions combining the three sports.

Getting started in the world of triathlon can appear to be complicated. British Triathlon, the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Committee and Michael Burch, the Regional Development Officer for Yorkshire and Humberside, all have plenty of advice, assistance and information on a whole bundle of benefits to get you going.

### **What are the distances covered in Triathlon events:**

Distances of individual events may vary from race to race, but there are some standard triathlon distances, quoted in terms of swim/bike/run:

Super sprint - 400m/10km/2.5km

Sprint distance - 750m/20km/5km

Standard distance - 1500m/40km/10km

Middle distance - 2.5km/80km/20k

Ironman distance - 3.8km/80km/42km

### **Other Related Multi-discipline events:**

**Aquathlon:** a swim followed immediately by a run.

**Duathlon:** a run, bike, run continuous event.

### **What is the role of British Triathlon?**

British Triathlon is the national governing body for the sport of Triathlon in Great Britain. British Triathlon is a limited company (Company # 02995438). Various legal documents are available that define how it operates and conducts business. The Articles of Association, Memorandum of Association and Standing Orders of General Meetings can all be found on the website [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org) in the about section. In the capacity of the National Governing Body for Triathlon and related multi-discipline events, British Triathlon acts as the strategic lead for future development. Creating and putting into place a sustainable model for growth with adequately qualified staff and resources to empower an increase in participants, clubs, safe events, qualified coaches, referees and volunteers. This also includes overseeing the new management structure outlined through the transformation agenda. This agenda will see a new body, Triathlon England, created and the regions playing a greater role in the development of their area.

### **What does the Regional Development Officer do?**

The Regional Development Officer (RDO), Michael Burch is a full time, paid member of staff that works alongside the voluntary Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Committee to develop Triathlon in the region. The work programme of Michael mirrors that of the regional section of the One Stop Plan. He has Key Performance Indicators to meet in increasing the number of participants, the number of quality assured clubs, the number of members in clubs, the number of qualified coaches and registered volunteers. Delivery of an effective talent ID structure and meeting regional governance criteria are also areas of the Yorkshire and Humberside RDO's work programme. Strategies to achieve the aforementioned KPI's are outlined in the regional One Stop Plan which appears on the regional website. These strategies are not exhaustive and are likely to change over time to accommodate new areas of opportunity. Should you have any opinions or information about new initiatives or strategies which could benefit Triathlon in the region Michael, or any member of the

Regional Committee, would be glad to hear from you. You can contact Michael on 07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)

### **How do I get into Triathlon?**

#### **Where do I start?**

Much of the work done by the Y&H Regional Development Officer, the Y&H Regional Committee and British Triathlon is aimed at making Triathlon more inclusive and accessible to everyone who has an interest in taking up the sport. Regional information on Triathlon, Duathlon and Aquathlon events can be found on the regional website; [www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk) along with information and contact details for registered clubs within the Yorkshire and Humberside area. Specific questions can also be directed to Michael Burch, the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Development Officer who can be contacted on 07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org). The British Triathlon website, [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org), also has a detailed, comprehensive newcomers guide. The guide gives advice and information on what a Triathlon involves, what to wear/ what equipment might be required, how to devise a training programme, what measures need to be taken to adequately fuel for training and performance and how to stay hydrated along with specific race and transition tips. The newcomers guide can be viewed at the following link <http://www.britishtriathlon.org/about/index.php?pid=9> or by clicking on the relevant word link in the about section of the British Triathlon website.

### **How do I find out information on joining a club?**

#### **Where is my nearest Club?**

Affiliated club details appear on both the national and regional websites; [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org), [www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk) and individual affiliated members to British Triathlon will also receive details of clubs who registered before the end of the year in their handbooks. Both websites have a specific club section which outlines the sessions run and whether they are coached plus the contact details of the secretary/ chair. Information on whether the club has a development plan whether they are going towards STAR and, or Clubmark and additional useful information is displayed in an easy to use key format at these sources. Many of the clubs also have their own websites which can provide up to date specific club information. These can be found on the links page of the regional website. Should you have problems contacting your nearest club the Y&H RDO may be able to provide you with another contact. There are many benefits to joining your local triathlon club. See the club member benefits form for further details.

### **I want to set up a Triathlon/ Multi-sports club, how do I go about it?**

Firstly, it is great that you want to provide an opportunity for people within your community to train together in a club environment. This will provide your community/ members with many of the additional health, social, development and economic benefits that being a member of a club can provide. Whether you are a club of 4 or 204 people, novice or elite athletes the step you are taking in forming a club is one that could see your club develop and become established for many years to come. It is important to note that setting up a club, in the initial stages, is not as difficult as it

seems if a small, core group of people are already training together for sessions. A guide has been produced to help and can be viewed on the regional website in the Resources section of the regional website ([www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk)). Further information and support can also be obtained from the Y&H RDO Michael Burch; 07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org).

### **Why should I affiliate my club to British Triathlon?**

Without supporting your sports National Governing Body the ability for Triathlon, Duathlon and Aquathlon to move forward in Great Britain is limited. Issues such as having the necessary insurance and legal cover for club training sessions/ events to be able to take place, through providing the relevant personnel with the correct templates and information to be safe and within the law, make up just one small part of the work done by British Triathlon.

Specific reasons for clubs to affiliate to British Triathlon include:

Club training session insurance,

Reduced individual British Triathlon membership fees for club members,

Cover for committee members acting within their duties,

The ability to enter club teams in the annual National Relays Championships,

Publicity in British Triathlon materials including the annual handbook, the Regional and National Websites and Tri-news the bi-monthly membership magazine,

Regional Development Officer time and support along with additional support from a dedicated British Triathlon workforce.

### **Where can I buy equipment from?**

### **What kind of equipment do I need to take part in Triathlon?**

Apparel for Triathlon can be bought from a wide range of sources and many previously athletics or cycling specific shops are now stocking a range of triathlon equipment given the increasing market in the sport. Many clubs have a classified section on their websites where members sell and buy 2<sup>nd</sup> hand equipment and goods. This is also true for other internet auction sites such as e-bay. The internet is also a good reference to use to find out about the prices and the range of equipment available on the market. You can also, if you wish to, purchase your equipment on-line in the majority of cases now. The regional website ([www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk)) has within the links section the web address and details of some stores you might want to try. The newcomers guide which can be found on the website, [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org) (in the about section), outlines the kind of equipment you need to take part in Triathlon. Equipment for taking part in a Triathlon event includes: suitable running clothing and trainers, a swimming costume or wetsuit if open water swimming, goggles, swim cap, a bike, cycle helmet and suitable cycling clothing. If you are a newcomer it is important to note that a second hand bike\*/ mountain bike\*/ less expensive make of bike\*/ hired or borrowed wetsuit\*\* are sensible options to take for training and, or racing in until you have taken part in your first few races and know that Triathlon is for you.

\* Main point with Bike selection is the need to be roadworthy and comfortable for novices a suitable bike could more than likely constitute a shopping bike.

\*\* Wetsuit needs to be fit for purpose and of suitable sizing to ensure that swimming ability is not compromised.

## How do I find out about events?

The regional and national websites have information on events ([www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk), [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)) including the name and contact details of event organisers. This information can also be found in the annual handbook for all of the events that registered before the previous year end printing deadline. Club websites also display details of events that their club members take part in and in some cases, where the club actually run an open event, entry forms and event details can be sourced from the club site. Some of the larger clubs also run a series of training events that can only be done by their club members. The Y&H RDO can assist you in finding your nearest/ most suitable Triathlon, Duathlon and Aquathlon event(s) if you are struggling (07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)).

All events should seek endorsement from British Triathlon by going through a standard event registration process. This process includes the requirement to show that measures, to ensure that the safety of event participants, are being considered and put into place i.e. a risk assessment is completed by the event organiser. Without endorsement from British Triathlon, members are not insured to take part. Day licenses for non-members will also not be available or valid for non-endorsed events. It is therefore strongly advised that competitors only look to race in endorsed events.

## How do I enter events?

Dependant upon the event you are looking to enter the process for booking your place on the start line can differ. Some event organisers operate on-line booking procedures, some require entry forms to be posted to the event organisers and for events where there are many times more entries than the race can cater for a ballot or other random selection process may be used. It is generally good practice to enter events as soon as possible.

## Why should I become a British Triathlon member?

Without supporting your sports National Governing Body the ability for Triathlon, Duathlon and Aquathlon to move forward in Great Britain is limited. Issues such as having the necessary insurance and legal cover for clubs and events to be able to function, through providing the relevant personnel with the correct templates and information to be safe and within the law, make up just one small part of the work done by British Triathlon.

Individual British Triathlon member benefits include:

- Public liability insurance to £5 million for both training and racing\*
- Personal accident cover for both training and racing\*
- Annual handbook
- x 5 copies of bimonthly magazine, Tri News
- Free legal advice if involved in an accident/incident
- Free entry into the Grand Prix National Ranking Series

- Opportunity to represent Great Britain as an Age Group athlete
- Access to the Members Only area of the website with opportunity to post news, post classified ads and take advantage of special deals on a number of products and services
- Discounted travel insurance - specifically for training and racing abroad
- Discounted bike insurance - probably the best scheme available
- Car sticker!
- Support of dedicated team of professionals.

Membership forms can be found on the national website ([www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)) and can be completed on-line or sent through the post.

\* Further details can be found in the annual handbook.

### **I want to become a coach how do I go about doing so and who do I contact to find information about British Triathlon coaching courses?**

British Triathlon is one of only six sports in the UK that is in the first phase of aligning its coaching qualifications to the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC). The UKCC aims to ensure that across all sports courses delivered by the National Governing Bodies are of a suitable fit for purpose standard. Details on the courses available, what the content is covered on each level, the price of each course and all other relevant information is available on the national website ([www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org) in the development section). To book your place on a course you should contact Judith Brand, the Coach Education Administrator ([judithbrand@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:judithbrand@britishtriathlon.org), 01509 226155). The Y&H RDO will market and send out information on courses within the regional. Regional Course information will be displayed on the regional website ([www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk)) Should you have any further queries you can direct them in the first instance to the Y&H RDO, Michael Burch or for more specific Coach Education points to the Coach Education Manager, Mark Barfield ([markbarfield@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:markbarfield@britishtriathlon.org), 07739526557).

### **I want to become a referee how do I go about doing so and who do I contact to find information about British Triathlon referee courses?**

The national website ([www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)) within the Development Section has information on the new referee structure. Similar to the coach education re-shape referees will have 5 levels of qualifications available to them. This works on the basis that Club events and assistant referees will be qualified to Level 1 standard and that international standard referees will be qualified to a Level 5 standard. A document outlining the method of education/ learning objectives and course content for each level can be downloaded on the page of the following link: <http://www.britishtriathlon.org/index.php?pid=18177> . It is well worth checking out what the content of each course is because most of the levels can be done by completing a home study pack in your own time. The level one referee pack can be downloaded from the national website by using the link given above (click into the development and then referee sections). Other home based modules are set to follow suit. Should you have any queries about the referee qualification programme or any

other officiating questions please feel free to contact Michael Burch, Y&H RDO on (07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)).

**My son/daughter wants to take part in a Triathlon/ Duathlon/ Aquathlon event where do I find out about events that are taking place?  
My son/daughter wants to join a club- where is the nearest?**

The regional website ([www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk](http://www.yorksandhumbertri.org.uk)) has a specific junior section within it. This includes information about children and Youth training sessions, the proposal for the format of the Yorkshire and Humberside regional academy, the junior and youth regional series of events, club contacts including a key that specifies whether juniors and youth sessions are catered for within the club. Information on Talent ID days, school Triathlon projects and Youth Games events will also appear in the news section of the regional website and on the national website ([www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)). Entry forms for Yorkshire and Humberside junior and youth events will either appear on the regional website or a link/ information of where they can be found will be displayed. For specific questions or any further information on children and youth Triathlon opportunities within the region please contact the Y&H Regional Development Officer, Michael Burch (07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)).

**My son/ daughter does x time for swimming and x time for running where do I find out if they are eligible for World Class consideration?  
How does my son/ daughter put themselves forward for World Class consideration?**

The World Class selection matrix can be found at the following link:  
<http://www.britishtriathlon.org/index.php?pid=30377>

The above link directs you to a reference table (as a download) of points that your son/ daughter will accrue from their respective swim and run times. The points accrued can then be used to calculate performances against the selection matrix. Points scored then establish eligibility for the Programme, with actual selection further dependent on commitment to the sport and access to support such as coaching. It is important to note that the final selection times will vary depending on the standard of applications received. Each year the number of points required to make the World Class team has risen. This is because there are a set number of places available which go to the applicants with the highest number of points.

Applications can be made on a form available from  
[emmagroome@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:emmagroome@britishtriathlon.org)

Selections are made twice a year in April and October. Forms normally need to be submitted by the end of the previous month but exact dates are published on the British Triathlon website in advance.

Jack Maitland.

### **What is the TASS scheme and how do I put myself forward?**

The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme provides support for Students aged 16-25 who fall just short of the standards for inclusion on the World Class Programmes. There are a limited number of Bursaries (for students at schools and colleges aged 16-19) and Scholarships (for students in higher education aged 18-25). The awards are earmarked primarily to help athletes with the provision of Coaching but Scholars also receive Medical, Sports Science and Lifestyle support plus assistance in attending nominated competitions. Applications are made on the same forms as for the World Class programmes (available from [emmagroome@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:emmagroome@britishtriathlon.org) ) and are considered in April each year to start the following September.

Jack Maitland.

### **Why is cycling performance not considered when selecting World Class programme athletes?**

Cycling Performance is considered for older athletes but at the younger ages experience has shown that it is running and swimming speed that determines eventual success at senior level. Cycling is a relatively simple sport technically and there are many examples of athletes taking it up when older and reaching World Class Standards. Too much emphasis on cycle training at an early stage can mean that the athlete is unable to properly develop as a swimmer and runner. Additionally if cycling performance was included in the selection process the pool of available talent would be much reduced due to the low number of juniors involved in competitive cycling.

Jack Maitland.

### **Why are elite races draft-legal on the cycle section?**

The major reason that elite races are draft-legal is because the high standards at World Level mean that it would be impossible to hold a draft-legal race without changing the format to a time-trial. It is not uncommon to have 30+ athletes starting the bike leg within 60 seconds of each other at World Class events. Introducing draft-legal races has actually meant that standards across all 3 disciplines have been forced up. It is now much harder to compensate for a weak swim leg and much harder to win a race without being one of the strongest runners. The introduction of drafting has meant that athletes have to be much more complete cyclists with the handling, tactical and physiological skills necessary to cope with group-riding. An examination of the recent major championship races shows that the bike leg has often proved decisive - see the 2004 Men's Olympic event for just one example!

Jack Maitland.

## **Who sets the eligibility standards for the World Class programme and why are the standards as they are?**

The British Triathlon Performance Team set the standards for the World Class Programmes, with a view to Development (Start & Potential athletes) having the attributes to reach World Class Performance over the appropriate time period, and World Class Performance athletes having the ability to win medals at major international races. World Class Performance standards are agreed with UK Sport so that standards balance across different Lottery funded sports.

Graeme Maw.

## **I want to setup a Triathlon/ Duathlon/ Aquathlon event. What do I need to know and where do I find this information from?**

It is great that you want to set up your own Triathlon, Duathlon or Aquathlon event. If you are starting the planning from scratch you will have to decide where the most suitable location in your locality is and find out who the land owner(s) are. Remember that you will need to have access to facilities such as toilets, parking and changing areas. You should also consult the annual handbook and the rule book for information and guidance on the standard distances for each discipline and certain organisational requirements (Technical Rules available at [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org) in the events section). For children and youth events you will need to consider the age dependant maximum race distances allowed and associated governing rules. The national website ([www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)) in the event section has an event organiser and children's event organisers guide which take into account 'best practice' advice from race organisers who have run events over several years. Their valued experience will help you to put on a safe, fun and exciting event. You should also consider early on the date which you are planning to run the event and when the facilities you require are available. Try to avoid other regional events of the same type and consider whether big national events will have an impact on the number of entries you require. The Yorkshire and Humberside RDO can notify you of other planned events in the region and discuss the possibility of the inclusion of your event within the regional series (07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)).

It is important, as the race organiser, that you take your duty of care and responsibility for making sure that safety is not put at risk, seriously. One part of this includes the need to seek endorsement from British Triathlon. British Triathlon members, or those who purchase a day license, are only insured to take part in British Triathlon endorsed events. To have your event endorsed by British Triathlon you will need to send in an event registration form (form and instructions available from the events section of the national website [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)). At least four weeks before your event you will also need to submit your event risk assessment (a standard form and instructions can be found at [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org) in the events section). The Y&H RDO Michael Burch can forward you a risk assessment video if you would like more assistance or help with completing the risk assessment for your event. After these have been received your endorsement certificate will be posted to you so that it can be displayed at event registration. Should you experience any difficulties with the

endorsement process you can contact Michael or Nicky Jones, Participation Team Administrator ([nickyjones@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:nickyjones@britishtriathlon.org), 01509 226 153).

The process of organising a successful event can be an immensely time consuming one which, if done entirely by one individual, can cause a lot of stress. It is therefore recommended that tasks are shared amongst a group of people and where possible the expertise of others brought in to help. Event Organisers should look to give themselves as much time as possible to plan and organise your event. To help facilitate the sharing of information and best practice amongst event organisers a quarterly Running Tri newsletter is produced (the latest issue can be found in the events section at [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org)) and regional/ national event organiser meetings and conferences are run annually. Michael the Y&H RDO will be able to help you with certain aspects of running/ planning your event. He can distribute event information and entry forms to members on his mailing list, source referees and volunteers as well as help to find equipment (of which the region has certain items it loans out). Where possible Michael will be happy to help and support you.

Organising an event can be an immensely rewarding experience which not only benefits the race participants and the regional Triathlon community but also the local community in which the event is staged. If you have any questions or queries about running an event feel free to contact Michael (07739 526 560; [michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:michaelburch@britishtriathlon.org)).