



www.team-magic.com Team Magic Beginner Participant Notes

Greetings from Team Magic! If you are registered for one of our races in the Beginner Category, you must have raced in three or less triathlons. If you are unsure if you are registered in the proper category, please notify us immediately so we can make necessary changes. We are glad you have decided to give "our" sport a try. It is one of the most rewarding sports you will find....and you can participate as long as you are able! The following are tips for participating in your first (or second or third) race.

Please note that we always hold a pre-race meeting for Beginners before our triathlons. We will cover some of tips and answer any of your questions. You are encouraged to come out to registration the day before the race so you can get a feel for the race site and ask us any questions. If you do not make it the day before, **make sure you are there for the meeting on race day!** There is always a pre-race overview 30 minutes before race start. Also, please review the race information booklet you receive in your race packet...this will have great course information that will make your experience go much more smoothly.

USA Triathlon is the governing body for the sport of triathlon. They provide the rules that keep us in line. Since we are sanctioned by USA Triathlon, they provide our insurance for athletes that are members of USA Triathlon. Participants that are not members must pay a one-day insurance fee. If you are interested in becoming a member, ask someone at registration or call USAT at 719.597.9090 or visit them at www.usatriathlon.org. They will explain the benefits of being a member and will sign you up if you are interested. If you are planning on participating in at least three events, you should consider joining.

What to Wear

You will see quite a variety of attire at the race, but in general the following will be most popular:

Most racers now wear multi-sport one-piece triathlon suits and "tri-shorts" that are bike short with a smaller bike pad. The smaller pad is preferred in the swim and run portions. Men also still wear Speedo type swimsuits and women wear a two-piece or one-piece "active wear" swim suit. After the swim, participants wearing swim attire usually put on a "cool max" type sleeveless top or a "race number belt." Your race number must be worn when you cross the finish line, so most people have it pinned on their racing shirt or a race number belt that easily snaps around your waist after you get out of the swim. If you think it will not be comfortable to bike in a swim suit...it should be fine if you have been riding your bike at least 3 times per week for 3 weeks. Your fanny should be "conditioned," even if you do all of your riding in bike shorts. Maybe try it in your swim suit one day to make sure. If you can avoid cotton clothing, do it. It absorbs water and sweat and gets heavy. A "cool max" type top will wick moisture and keep you cool if you wet it with your water bottle or at a water station. Most participants **do not** change clothes. It really is not necessary. Some do put running shorts or biking shorts on after the swim, but this can be difficult and slow to do over a wet body. "Cool Max" clothing and race belts can be found at a local multi-sport, running, or biking shop. In Birmingham, try [Bike Link of Birmingham](#), [Bob's Bikes](#), [Cahaba Cycles](#), [Homewood Cycle and Fitness](#) or [Trak Shak](#). In Nashville, check with local shop, [ACME Multisports](#). If from our coastal area, [Dragon Sports](#), can provide all your needs. You should also pick up some lace locks or elastic laces like YANKZ! for your shoes while you are there. It will keep them from coming untied when you run and will make them easier to put on after the bike or swim. **The bottom line is doing what feels comfortable.** Hopefully, the above tips will help!

Tips for swimming in open water

Please see the individual race web pages for information on how our **pool swims** are conducted.

Open-water swimming:

1. Know the course. Look over the course the day before or race morning. Your course will be marked with orange buoys. See race notes for specific swim course design for each race.
2. Notice where the swim exit is also and where you run from the water to the transition area. Take note where your bike is on the rack before you head down to the swim entrance.
3. Notice the number of buoys and where to turn. The course will be marked with orange buoys. You will swim out with buoys on your right side.
4. Check for prominent land marks, buildings that stand out, the swim finish area, being parallel to land, etc... These items will help you stay on course and stay in the straightest line possible.
5. Practice swimming straight. A good test in the pool is to swim about 10 to 15 yards with your eyes closed. *Make sure you open them again long before you will come to the side of the pool.* When you open them again you should still be on the same path as you were before closing them.
6. Stay as close to the buoys as possible. This keeps you on line and forces you to swim the shortest distance possible...why swim more than you have to?
7. Spit in your goggles before you get them wet and then rinse them...this will truly help prevent fogging, even if they are anti-fog goggles you probably need to do this.
8. Learn to breath and look forward in a quick manner that does not interrupt your stroke pattern. You need to be able to look forward to stay on course.
9. Do not be afraid to stop and get your bearings. Stopping to look up, get your bearings and maybe even clean your goggles can save you from swimming too far. You lose more time swimming off course than you will stopping to check your course markings.
10. Stay calm and confident and the swim will pass quickly and with ease. If you need to do the sidestroke or the backstroke to relax and get control of your breathing, do it!
11. If you get into trouble, tread water and pump your arm so the rescue people can see you. They are there to help if needed!

Tips for Biking

1. Know the course. Try to drive the course or ride some of it the day before. Note how you exit the transition area and where all turns are on the course.
2. Note areas requiring extra caution, like intersections or narrow roads. A special note should be taken on turns where the bike has the stop sign but the cars do not. We will have police and volunteers on the course, but ultimately the responsibility is yours to look for oncoming traffic. **PLEASE ALWAYS SHOW EXTRA CAUTION ON TURNAROUNDS....DO NOT TRY TO WIN THE RACE HERE!!!**
3. Always stay to the right side of the road, unless you are passing. Read your USA Triathlon Most Commonly Violated Rules in your pre-race information in your race bag! Not staying to the right is called blocking and you will get a penalty when caught. Our courses are monitored by motorcycles called Draft Marshals.
4. **NEVER DRAFT!!** This is also in the list of most commonly violated rules. The zone is approximately three bike lengths. If you are this close to someone, you must pass or drop back. There is a distinct advantage to you if you draft someone else, and this is against our rules.

Tips for Biking

5. KNOW the Transition area, particularly the bike entrance and exit and where your spot is on the racks. Beginners are racked together and this is designated on the end of your bike rack. You do NOT rack by race number...only by race category.
6. Always buckle your helmet before mounting your bike.
7. Have your equipment laying out in your transition spot so it is easy to get to. Put your items in the order that you will need them, such as helmet first, shirt, bike shoes or running shoes, sunglasses, etc...
8. Fill up your water bottles, reset your computer, and pump up your tires the morning of the race. If you inflate your tires the night before, they might lose air.
9. If possible, test ride your bike before the race. Leave your bike in an easy gear so you can spin when you leave the transition area after the swim. This will help loosen your muscles from the swim.
10. Drink plenty of fluid while on the bike, especially water. Powerade type products are optional for a race of this distance. Test your body during training to see what fluids work best for you.
11. When you return from the bike course, rack your bike first (in your rack location), and then remove your helmet!

Tips for the Run

1. Know the course. Try to jog or ride the run course on your bike. Know where the run start is, where you exit from the transition area, and the finish line.
2. Have your running shoes, socks, etc... lying out so they will be easy to put on.
3. Be sure to read the race notes for direction on "staying to your left or right" on each run course. If we ask you to stay in a certain direction, it is for a reason!
4. You may want to have water at your transition spot to drink before you head out on the run (remember No Glass in Transition!) There will be water on the course..always take it!
5. You may want to use lace locks or cord locks for your shoe laces. This helps keep your shoes from coming untied and makes it easier to put them on. You can find cord locks at sporting goods or back packing store.
6. A hat, sunglasses, and a *Cool Max* type tank top will keep you cooler on the run. Wet the hat and top at water stations, with water NOT Powerade!

General Tips

RACE NUMBER

You will get anywhere from one to three paper or adhesive race numbers with your packet. All of the numbers should be the same!

Bib Number:

The larger paper number is usually called your bib number. This number MUST be on your body when you finish the race. It can be worn attaching it to your racing top or shorts with safety pens. MUST be on the front. You can also attach it to a race number belt, which can be worn with the number in the back or the front, and can easily be turned from back to front. We need your race number facing forward at the finish so the race announcer can identify you, as well as the race photographer.

Helmet Number:

This number will be a small adhesive number to be placed on the front of your biking helmet. This helps race officials and the race photographer identify you.

Bike Frame Number:

This number will either be a larger adhesive number with the number printed twice so it can be read from both sides of your bike, or it could be a paper number that you affix with twist ties. Again, this helps race officials and the race photographer identify you. This is also a backup security measure for race officials to check when you retrieve your bike from transition.

MORE TIPS

1. Mentally and physically practice your transition from your swim to bike and bike to run.
2. There will be racks for your bikes. Our transition area will be marked by race number range, or by category. Your bike will be secure in the transition area. Our officials will be guarding the entrances. You cannot have outside assistance in the transition area. You can be disqualified if a friend or significant other is in there helping you!!
3. Be sure to get body marked. You should have your race number marked on both arms and legs and your category (designated with a "B" on your left leg.)
4. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after the race.
5. **ASK QUESTIONS! ANY AND ALL QUESTIONS ARE ENCOURAGED...TEAM MAGIC AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.**
6. You may need something to sit on in the transition area, like a towel, a bucket, or a milk crate. A bucket or milk crate can also be used to carry equipment. You may also want some water in your bucket to rinse your feet off after the swim. At minimum, have a towel there to wipe your feet.
7. Notice who the sponsors are for this race and thank them any time you can. Without them, this race would not be possible. We need them for the sport to survive.
8. There are several great magazines out there with GREAT information. Check out *Triathlete Magazine* or *Inside Triathlon*. They often feature articles for beginners and beginner training.
9. **MOST IMPORTANT...be safe and have fun!**

**EVENT TIMING**

All Team Magic events are timed with the latest timing technology, IPICO. Each athlete is given a timing chip on a neoprene band to put on his or her ankle. As the athlete crosses over the timing mats, a unique identification number, your unique ID is passed on to the Decoder which gives the "passing" a precise time stamp. The passing data is then handled by the timing software in a connected laptop or computer. The timing chip is programmed to coincide with your individual race number. The timing mats are set up to give you your individual event split times from the swim to bike to run.

Send us your ideas! If you have any ideas that would be helpful for other beginners from things you have learned before at other races, from other people, or at this race, please call, write, or fax us.

Remember, please read your [USA Triathlon Rules](#) and the race overview information provided in your race packet you will receive at registration. We hope you enjoy this experience.

Best of Luck and Have Fun!!

Therese Bynum & Faye Yates & George Mattison & the rest of the Team Magic gang

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