

USA★TRI

C U P S E R I E S

Welcome to the USA TRI Cup Series

The USA TRI Cup Series is designed to strengthen draft-legal racing across the United States by creating a structured developmental environment for athletes at every level.

The Series aims to:

- Create a bridge between developmental and elite racing
- Provide additional domestic draft-legal racing opportunities
- Build awareness and popularity to the Olympic triathlon pipeline
- Support athlete retention
- Build a pathway toward elite [World Triathlon](#) competition
- Add points opportunities for athletes to improve their domestic ranking

Why the Series Matters

The series addresses historical fragmentation between:

- Youth racing
- Junior racing
- NCAA racing
- Collegiate Club racing
- Age Group racing
- Elite racing

The USA TRI Cup Series creates clear developmental benchmarks and domestic competition opportunities while improving athlete progression through the Olympic development pathway.

USA TRI Olympic Pathway

The Cup Series serves as the central bridge in the American draft-legal system.

Development Pathway

Youth National Series -> Junior National Series -> NCAA Triathlon / Collegiate Club -> USA TRI Cup Series -> World Triathlon Continental Cups -> World Triathlon World Cups -> World Triathlon Championship Series -> Olympic Games

Competition Tiers

USA TRI Community Cup

Purpose: Introduction to draft-legal racing

- Super Sprint Triathlon (~350m swim, 10k bike, 2.5k run)
- Ages 13+
- Co-ed competition allowed. Results will be separated by gender, but all athletes race together.
- Participation-focused

USA TRI Cup

Purpose: Skill development

- Sprint Distance (or super sprint)
- Ages 16+
- Co-ed competition allowed
- Intermediate and advanced athletes

USA TRI Premium Cup

Purpose: Performance racing

- Sprint Distance
- Advanced athletes
- Highest domestic competition tier
- Enhanced ranking opportunities

2027 Race Schedule

Event	Date	Location
Alpha Win Sarasota Triathlon	Jan. 10	Sarasota, Fla.
Tritonman	Feb. 13	San Diego, Calif.
Treeathlon	March 7	Stanford/San Mateo, Calif.
Clermont Draft Legal Challenge*	March 6–7	Clermont, Fla.
East Coast Triathlon Festival	May 1–2	Glen Allen/Richmond, Va.
Supertri Austin*	May 31	Austin, Texas
Triangle Sprint	June 5	New Hill/Cary, N.C.
Jenny Lee Tri Cup	TBD	Beaver Falls, Pa.
Big Apple Triathlon	October 9	New York City, NY
USA Triathlon Draft-Legal National Championships*	Aug. 6	Des Moines, Iowa
Southern Hills Tri	TBD	Hot Springs, S.D.
Beaver County Tri Cup	TBD	Beaver Falls, Pa.
Bearathlon	TBD	Berkeley, Calif.

*Premium Cup Event

Eligibility & Participation

Community Cup

- Age 13+

USA TRI Open Cup

- Age 16+

Premium Cup

- Age 16+
- Priority entry in order of: World Triathlon Points, Domestic Ranking Points, date/time of registration.
- Athletes can select at registration if they do not want to be considered for the premium cup wave

International athletes are welcome to participate in all tiers of racing.

Registration & Field Limits

Premium Cup entry priority:

1. World Triathlon Ranking
2. USA TRI Domestic Ranking
3. Registration timestamp

All other Cup events use registration timestamp for order of entry.

Field limits are generally 90 athletes.

Domestic Rankings

Athletes earn domestic ranking points throughout the season.

- Best two points scoring performances in a 12-month rolling period count towards athlete's ranking.
- Athlete's ranking influences priority entry into higher level Draft-Legal events.
- Rankings determine CAT classification.

CAT System

The **CAT system** (short for **category system**) is a way of classifying amateur racers by experience and results.

- **Category 5** = Novice
- **Category 4** = Developing racer
- **Category 3** = Experienced amateur racer
- **Category 2** = Advanced national-level racer
- **Category 1** = Elite amateur racer, just below the professional ranks

Riders earn upgrades by accumulating points based on race results. Your top two results added together = your CAT. The better results and the higher level of racing you do, you move up the categories

Amateur Categories

Category	Points	Description
CAT 5	0-4	Novice/Beginner
CAT 4	5-10	Beginner / Intermediate
CAT 3	11-20	Intermediate / Advanced
CAT 2	21-30	Advanced
CAT 1	31-40	Pre-Elite

Elite Categories

Category	Qualification
Elite	Top 5 Continental Cup (Not considered Professional)
Funded Elite	Bridge & Mallow Qualifier (not considered Professional)

Professional	World Cup Top 10
World Tour Pro	Senior National Team Qualifier
World Medalist	WTCS Podium

International Participation

International athletes are welcome to race throughout the series and contribute to overall competition quality. The only race international athletes will not be allowed is USA Triathlon Nationals.

Rules & Equipment

All events are conducted under USA Triathlon competition rules.

Equipment requirements:

- Traditional road bikes only
- No aerobars
- Draft-legal racing format
- USA Triathlon rules apply, not World Triathlon Rules

Frequently Asked Questions

What is draft-legal racing?

Draft-legal racing allows athletes to ride in groups and draft legally on the bike segment.

What bike do I need?

A traditional road bike.

Can I use aerobars?

No.

Is this a replacement for the Junior Nationals Series?

No. This is in *addition* to the Junior Nationals Series. The Junior Nationals Series remains unchanged.

How do rankings work?

Athletes accumulate domestic ranking points from approved events. Their top two scores determine their ranking and Category (CAT). This ranking is what prioritizes athlete entry into higher level Draft-Legal events like premium cups, and World Triathlon Continental Cups.

How does CAT progression work?

Your best two results from Jan. 1 2025, to current determine athlete's CAT.

What is a Premium Cup?

The highest domestic race tier within the series.

Do I need an Elite License to race a USA TRI Cup Series event?

No.

Can I earn an Elite License at a USA TRI Cup Series event?

No. Draft-Legal elite licenses can only be earned at World Triathlon Continental Cup events. (Please see the [Continental Cup selection criteria and Elite License Criteria](#), for all the details)

Can I earn Junior National Rankings Points at USA TRI Cup Series Races?

Only Premium Cup races offer [Junior Nationals Rankings](#) points.

Can international athletes participate?

Yes.

Does the USA TRI Cup Series help me get into World Triathlon races?

Yes. USA TRI Cup series races offer domestic ranking points which are used to prioritize unranked athletes into world triathlon continental cup events.

USA TRI Cup Series Olympic Pathway (This graphic does not include Jr Series, NCAA, or Collegiate Club, but those are all integral parts of the US Olympic Pathway)

