

2016 Competition Rules Update

Why have the rules been updated?

2016 sees the first update to the British Triathlon rule book since May 2013, and in that period the sport has continued to grow in popularity, with the number of competitors taking part in permitted events increasing by over 10% in that time.

To keep up with the developments in the sport, it has been decided to overhaul the competition rules to ensure everyone can continue to compete in a safe and fair environment.

Who do the rules apply to?

Put simply, anyone who takes part in a permitted event! All Home Nation permitted events adhere to the British Triathlon Competition Rules and are therefore an essential read for any newcomers to the sport who are taking up the triathlon challenge for the first time; it is also advisable that Event Organisers have a clear understanding of these rules and any implications this may have on the delivery of their event.

Regular participants are also strongly advised to download and review the rules, as a good knowledge and understanding of the rules will enhance their race experience and ensure they have a safe and enjoyable race.

What are the main changes to the proposed Competition Rules 2016?

The biggest change to the competition rules is the layout - we now follow the same order as the ITU Competition Rules; other countries such as New Zealand have already done this.

The good news is that the majority of rules have not changed! Whilst it is the intention to follow the ITU Competition Rules as closely as possible, there are certain variations that have been made to ensure competitors of all ages and abilities can take part in Triathlon in Britain. Certain elite competitions held in Britain, such as Columbia Threadneedle World Triathlon Leeds, will be governed by ITU Competition Rules.

What specific rules have been changed?

Some of the key rules that have been changed for 2016 onwards are (but not limited to):

- Appeal fee increased to £30, with all proceeds going to the Triathlon Trust to support getting children into triathlon (Rule 3.7.c.v)
- Backstroke is now permitted in Open Water swim elements, but only after having informed the Event Organiser (Rule 4.1.a.i)
- Personal video recording devices are not permitted (rules 4.8.d.i, 5.2.g.i, 6.4.d)
- Draft zones in draft illegal races - a 10 metre (increased from 7m) zone must be maintained in Standard distance and shorter race, with 20 seconds allowed for one competitor to pass through the draft zone of another. For Middle and Long distance races, a 12 metre zone must be maintained, with 25 seconds allowed for a competitor to pass through. (Rule 5.5.c.iv)
- Barefoot running - this is now permitted, however the competitor remains solely responsible and must contact the Event Organiser beforehand to ascertain whether the run course is suitable to be done barefoot. (Rule 6.1.a.v). Children are not permitted to run barefoot in any race. (rule 22.5.d)
- Boxes in transition - whilst boxes can be used to bring necessary items into the transition area, only a small soft-sided bag or rucksack can remain, unless boxes are provided by the Event Organiser. It is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that any bag used in transition does not impede other competitors. (Rule 7.1.c)
- Snake-style swims can be used in pool swims, however no more than two lengths of any lane size are permitted. (rule 14.2)
- Helmets must not be worn in relay exchange zones; instead they must remain on the bike before and after relay tagging. (rule 16.10.f)
- Elite Paratriathlon - this section is for competitors that take part in events run under ITU events. This is one of the biggest sections that has changed for Elite Competitors. (Rule 17)
- Non-Elite Paratriathlon - this section is for all other competitors taking part in paratriathlon events in Britain, and are based on the previous BTF paratriathlon rules. There is no requirement for these competitors to be classified, and these rules reflect this. (Rule 21)

- Gear restrictions for certain Elite draft-legal Children's races - following the two trial events in 2015, children taking part in certain Elite draft-legal races (as determined by Talent) are now subject to gear restrictions; this is supported by the Talent team. (Rule 22.5.g)

What penalties have been changed?

Whilst the majority of penalties have stayed the same, there are some that have been updated:

- Mount/dismount line infringements - a stop and go penalty will be awarded where possible, if however this cannot be given a one-minute time penalty will be awarded.
- Helmet infringements - a one-minute time penalty will be awarded if helmet not attached before making contact with the bike, or removal of helmet before the bike is racked.
- Drafting in a Middle or Long distance race - first and second incidents incur a five-minute time penalty; the third incident will result in disqualification.
- Littering - a stop and go penalty will be awarded providing the infringement is corrected; if not, the competitor will be disqualified.

What rules do Event Organisers need to follow?

The Competition Rules are predominantly for competitors to follow and abide by. Whilst as an Event Organiser an understanding of these Competition Rules and their implementation, is strongly recommended, the information contained within is not exhaustive. In order to receive the appropriate Home Nation Association Event Permit, it is necessary for Event Organisers to ensure their event falls within the guidelines as laid out by British Triathlon.

Following consultation with Event Organisers, and approval from the Technical Committee, a new Event Organisers Manual is being created. This will pull together in one place all the guidelines which events must operate, including key health and safety requirements. This will include:

- Open Water Swim Safety guidelines, incorporating ratio of safety craft to competitors, temperature and water quality guidance
- Draft-Legal racing guidelines and permitting process
- Course measurement and design guidance
- Provision of suitable medical resources
- Modifications required for Children's events
- Modifications required for Paratriathlon events

A lot of the information that will be included in this manual is already available on the Event Organisers System and already being used by Event Organisers, however we see this as an opportunity to review and enhance it in line with the Competition Rule update.

What will change in the future?

Whilst we can never fully predict what direction the sport will take, there are areas which will be reviewed over the next twelve months, with an update intended to be released in early 2017. Areas already identified for further development include non-competitive paratriathlon, a review of children's racing and non-traditional multisports.

When do these rules apply?

These rules are in force from 1st January 2016.

All current Technical Officials will be sent a hard copy of the Competition Rules, however as they are a PDF file they can also be downloaded and saved to most smartphones.