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2021 Multisport Committee Report

Mission

The mission of the USA Triathlon Multisport Committee is to help grow and connect the community of athletes, inspire new audiences and support the full spectrum of disciplines including Aquabike, Aquathlon, Duathlon, Long Distance Triathlon, Off-Road Duathlon, Off-Road Triathlon, Winter Duathlon and Winter Triathlon.

Starting in 2021, meetings via videoconference were held every other month, for a total of 6 meetings. Multiple meetings on select subjects were held throughout the year, as well as almost daily email; exchanges.

2020 Accomplishments

Although the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to impact our sports, the Committee has made significant contributions to promoting, educating and connecting the athletes involved in multisport, including the following:

1. **Shift to the Multisport Committee.** The transformation from the former Duathlon Committee was begun in late 2020 and completed in 2021. This involved a new Mission Statement, a guiding Overview document and addition/retirement of some members. The new membership is designed to greater reflect the disciplines under multisport.
 - a. **Master Plan.** A draft version of the Multisport Master Plan was completed in February 2021 and was submitted to USAT for review. This 23-page plan expands on the goals outlined in the Overview document.
2. **Promoting Multisport through mainstream social media, primarily Facebook.**
 - a. The “**All Things Duathlon**” FB page administered by Patty Peoples, remains popular, and an important outlet for news and discussion related to Duathlon-specific topics.
 - i. The site had 1,002 Likes, 1,068 Followers. From Jan. 1-Dec. 15: 5,223 Reaches.
 - ii. Demographics: 51.3% Women, 48.7% Men. Ages 35-64 make up 80.6% of audience
 - b. The “**USAT Multisport Committee**” FB page was launched May 12, 2021. This new site, administered by Judi Carbary, is dedicated to all the multisport disciplines.
 - i. The site currently has 700 members. From 5/12-12/10 the site had 31,861 views, 524 posts. In October, the site had 152 posts and comments (50% increase), and 4377 views (117% increase).



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Both sites are great resources that athletes are turning to for accurate and responsive questions, recognizing performances, and receiving up-to-date multisport information. Of particular use in 2021 was disseminating news related to the various Nationals events: Duathlon, Aquathlon, Aquabike, Cross-Triathlon, LC Duathlon, LC Aquabike, LD Triathlon and Winter Triathlon. Equally important was news related to the rearrangement of the 2021 Worlds Multisport Championship – Almere, and the various replacement sites to host Aquabike, LC Triathlon, Aquathlon, Cross-Triathlon, LC Duathlon (Zofingen) and Duathlon events. In this respect, both FB sites, especially the Multisport Committee FB page, played an important role in broadcasting news about USAT Town Halls, and various plans related to qualifications and slot distribution. This was a complex year for athletes to follow, as events (and subsequent qualifications) were continuously revised, resulting in a constant stream of questions from athletes. Both FB sites did an outstanding job of getting answers via USAT, and/or directing athletes to the appropriate USAT resources. These sites are not only easing some of the burden on USAT, but are helping to grow multisport with USAT support.

3. **Multisport Athlete of the Year Award.** A new category of award was proposed, criteria formed, and accepted by USAT. This award will recognize those athletes who excel in a number of multisport events, with the requirement to compete in at least 3 of the 4 following events: Aquabike, Aquathlon, Duathlon and Cross Triathlon. The award will be based on 2022 results, and be first awarded in 2023, along with Athlete of the Year awards.
4. **World Games Birmingham 2022.** A major effort was undertaken to recruit athletes for the Duathlon events at the World Triathlon World Games, to be held on July 2022 in Birmingham, AL. As the host country, the U.S. automatically allocated 2 slots, as long as athletes meet minimum World Tri criteria. Although originally targeted for elites, non-elites may qualify as well. The effort involved multiple mailings to top U.S. elites on the World Tri Duathlon Rankings, as well as top finishers from the 2021 Duathlon Nationals in Tuscaloosa. An article in Elite Beat was also published. It is hoped that the event will elevate and showcase Duathlon in the U.S. and potentially encourage more U.S. elite participation at World events.
5. **Endurance Exchange.** Several members have been working with the AGC/NCC/RDC to provide input for topics for the Endurance Exchange to be held March, 2022.
6. **World Triathlon Strategy for the Americas.** Dave Lasorsa has been working with counterparts from Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean to develop an Americas Continent strategy, with the goal of increasing Age-Group participation at World Triathlon events.
7. **Duathlete of the Year Awards.** Members have worked to refine criteria (dropping the “Open” category) and make selection recommendations to USAT. This remains a difficult task, given the



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need for accurate rankings data before all race results have been sent to USAT and limited time for selections.

8. **Rankings for 2021.** Early April saw an analysis by the Committee and discussion of the required number of races needed for rankings for 2021. After looking at over 1500 scheduled events it was found that scheduled races for 2021 were only 30-40 percent of the number of races offered in 2019 for Duathlon, Aquathlon and Aquabike. It was recommended to USAT that the required number of races for these events be only 2 for the 2021 period.
9. **Race reports from past and upcoming multisport events.** In an effort to keep Committee members apprised of successes and potential issues of multisport, each meeting had a dedicated time to review major Aquabike, Aquathlon, Duathlon, Cross-Tri, and LC events. Usually this was done by members who participated in these events.
10. **Working to support the goals and efforts of USAT.** As racing ramped up from being almost non-existent in 2020, the Committee was asked by USAT to provide input and recommendations on numerous topics. The ever-changing nature of race cancellations and rescheduled events necessitated timely input on many of these topics:
 - World Tri Qualification proposal for Age-Group Mixed Relay, Super Sprint Time Trial and Standard Distance Aquabike
 - USAT 8-Year Strategic Plan
 - Xterra and Motus Off-Road Series
 - Zwift Duathlon Series
 - All-American honors at Nationals races
 - Vaccination-only racing (racing for only athletes who are vaccinated)
 - Elite wave at Duathlon Nationals
 - Almere Multisport Worlds cancellation/reschedule. This was a major impact on the year and led to a number of changes to World qualifications for 2022 and slot allocations. Committee members provided input on the following Worlds qualification plans:
 - Duathlon (Sprint and Standard)
 - Aquathlon
 - Long-course Triathlon and Aquabike
 - Town Halls. Members participated in every multisport Town Hall organized by USAT. These were critical in getting the word out on upcoming Nationals and Worlds events
 - Rules Harmonization with World Tri
 - Covid Travel Information
 - Athena/Clydesdale awards
 - Cold-weather Team USA uniform options
 - Cross-Participation with the Age Group and Race Directors Committees



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2022 Objectives

1. Work with USAT to further the short-term goals outlined in the Multisport Overview document, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Continue to expand the “All Things Duathlon” Facebook and the USAT Multisport Committee Facebook Pages by being responsive to USAT news, upcoming events and athlete’s issues.
 - b. Continue to support the national office’s needs to grow the number of multisport events and/or push consideration for new formats (races held on multiple days, relays, sprint distances, multiple loop courses, etc.) as a way to increase participation numbers.
 - c. Support USAT’s efforts to increase awareness of the various multisport disciplines by marketing and promoting multisport opportunities to race organizations, local communities and multisport coaches. Special attention should be given to Aquathlon, Cross Triathlon, and Winter Triathlon since these are events that are underrepresented at present
 - d. Work closely with the chair of the Collegiate Club to support the recommendation for a strategy for the sport of Duathlon.
 - e. Increase the incentives for Elites across all platforms to compete in the multisport disciplines.
2. Continue with D.O.Y. honor recommendations and selection criteria refinement
3. Continue to work with USAT on how the Committee’s goals and efforts can support the goals and priorities of the organization.
4. Continuing to improve communication with athletes and the community, by being quickly responsive with accurate information.
5. Need for specific multisport training and race support, and recognizing exceptional performance.
6. Diversify Committee membership to be more representative of all multisport disciplines

Conclusion

2021 was the first year of the newly organized Multisport Committee and a true test of how this Committee can support the efforts of USA Triathlon. While still dealing with the effects of Covid-19, the Committee was able to engage with athletes, provide meaningful input to USAT’s programs and help keep the multisport community informed, involved and enthusiastic. With 6+ active disciplines under the Committee’s umbrella, keeping track of a year of changing race schedules was daunting. A special recognition should be made to Judi Carbary, and the work she has done in creating and administering the Multisport Committee FB page. In just the first year of existence, this site became a “go-to” location for the latest multisport news and a conduit for questions back to USAT. During a year of so much complexity, this undoubtedly eased some of the burden on USAT staff.





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With the hopes that 2022 will see a return to a more “normal” race schedule, the Committee is looking forward to working with USAT to further some of the objectives that could not be attempted in 2021. We will continue in our role as sounding board for USAT initiatives and programs, and to grow connect, and inspire athletes engaged in the full spectrum of the multisport disciplines.

Roster

The current Multisport Committee roster is:

- Tonya Armstrong
- Judi Carbary
- May-li Cuypers
- Kevin Elmore
- Ashley Forsyth (Elite)
- Wade Gunter
- Jennifer Janowski
- Dave Lasorsa (Chair)
- Patrick Parish (Elite)
- Patty Peoples
- Anne Curi Preisig (Elite)
- Thomas Struzzieri
- Tim Yount (Staff Liaison)
- Chuck Graziano (Board Liaison).

Committee meetings (via Zoom) were done, at a minimum, on the third Thursday of every other month. Six meetings were held in 2021. Additional calls were done on an as needed basis to address timely issues. Communication with the Committee is done on a continual basis via emails, usually every week, and often daily.

Submitted by: David Lasorsa, Multisport Committee Chair

