

TTT Triathlon Handbook

I. Welcome to Triple Threat Tough Junior Triathlon Club

a. Purpose of Triple Threat Tough Juniors

The purpose of the Triple Threat Tough Junior Triathlon Club is to introduce and develop youth triathletes in the DFW area. Further, the club strives for the development of the junior triathletes' physical, cognitive and emotional abilities. These goals are accomplished in a healthy and structured program focused on a long-term athlete development model.

b. Philosophy of the team

Triple Threat Tough Junior is a youth triathlon development program located in The Colony, Plano, and Frisco, Texas area. Our certified triathlon coaches apply a long-term athlete development model. This concept is based on the use of opportunity windows of the children's biological development to optimize training, competition, and recovery for each stage of athletic development.

Our club emphasizes camaraderie, teamwork, and sportsmanship in a positive environment allowing kids to gain self-confidence while having fun training towards their goals.

We encourage our youth triathletes to learn the skills, concepts and values intrinsic to triathlon and apply them in their everyday life. Every parent should feel proud of their kids exhibiting the right attitude, confidence, discipline and self-control toward the challenges imposed by triathlon training and competition.

c. Membership

- Weekly group swim practice
- Weekly group run workout
- Weekly group bike/run brick workout
- Training schedule leading up to a specific youth triathlon race
- Team shirt and swim cap
- Fun intra-squad competitions and socials
- Benchmark evaluations (1st week of every month)
- 10% discount at Richardson Bike Mart and Tri Shop

- Discounted private coaching
- Monthly transition clinic and practice
- Coaching support at ALL team races
- \$95/month
- The membership fee is NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-TRANSFERABLE.
- Group workouts run 2nd Sunday in January through the Sunday before Thanksgiving.
- USA Triathlon youth membership required (additional cost)
- Triple Threat Tough team tri suits/uniform (additional cost)

II. Mission, Goals and Objectives

a. Mission

Our mission is to educate and empower all athletes with the necessary tools to build a healthy lifestyle in an uplifting atmosphere and to support those athletes demonstrating talent and desire to pursue the highest level of expertise in the sport.

Triathlon is a lifestyle and we want to welcome kids, ages 9 to 17 years old, no matter their skill level, to come and be part of this life changing journey.

b. Goals and Objectives

Our goal is to provide athletes with the opportunity to develop the physical, cognitive and emotional abilities through adequate training and competition at all ages and ability levels. Through the training and teaching the athletes will have opportunities to learn good health habits, discipline and dedication.

The focus is on:

- Fun and enjoyment first and foremost
- Challenge each athlete to meet personal goals
- Technical development of triathlon skills
- Positive reinforcement

The aim is consistency, the learning of skills, staying injury free and gaining a wide range of positive experiences in training and racing in triathlon and the related disciplines.

III. General Information

a. History

Triple Threat Tough is an endurance sports coaching company and club focused on the beginner and intermediate athlete. All programs are designed to help an individual discover the pleasures and benefits that endurance sports can offer.

Our goal is to show that triathlon is possible for any age or ability. The Triple Threat Tough triathlon lifestyle is about health, fun, and friends.

The Texas Triple Threat triathlon training company was established in 2004. Later, the name was changed to Triple Threat Tough. The ultimate mission was to create a welcoming environment for new people to try endurance sports. Since the beginning, Triple Threat has offered individual coaching, group training programs, endurance training camps, fitness testing, and one of the longest running triathlon teams in the Carrollton, Addison, Plano, The Colony, Frisco, and Little Elm, TX area. Individual client locations have ranged from Germany, to China, to New York, to Colorado and in addition to the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

The one common denominator for all Triple Threat Tough athletes is that they have a desire to enhance their overall fitness levels and their endurance sport skills in a challenging, but social and unintimidating environment. By focusing on the beginner and intermediate athlete, Triple Threat attracts a vast array of people. Pure swimmers, cyclists, runners, new general fitness enthusiasts, and your local couch potatoes wanting to change their lifestyle or check an endurance event off their bucket list, all attend group workouts and/or get individualized coaching. The target market is anyone between the ages of 9 to 89 who is interested in reaching personal fitness goals with the guidance of a professional coach.

These goals can include anything from losing weight, learning to swim, completing a 5k run, finishing a 100k bike ride, fulfilling a triathlon goal of any distance, becoming an Ironman, or just becoming faster, stronger, better at any or all of the disciplines involved in triathlon (swim, bike, run).

b. Facilities

Office:

- 6105 Windcom Ct. Suite 300, Plano, TX 75093

Swim:

- The Colony Aquatic Park - 5580 N Colony Blvd, The Colony, TX 75056
- Open Water Swim - Stewart Creek Park, 3700 Sparks Rd, The Colony, TX 75056

Bike:

- Shoreline Trail Head, Stewart Creek Park, 3700 Spark Rd, The Colony, Texas 75056

Run:

- Pearson Middle School, 2323 Stonebrook Parkway, Frisco, TX 75034

c. Governing Body

Triple Threat Tough Tri Club is governed by:

Owner / Head Coach:

Kristen Codish - kristen@triplethreattough.com

Accounting / Finances:

Cynthia Warner - billing@triplethreattough.com

Administration:

Nicole Thirasant-Meyer - adminstaff@triplethreattough.com

Program Manager:

Mary McDonald - program manager@triplethreattough.com

Assistant Coaches:

Tommy Johnson - tommy@triplethreattough.com

Lawrence Arnold – lawrence@triplethreattough.com

Gerald Jackson – gerald@triplethreattough.com

Deb Bailey – debra@triplethreattough.com

Denise Whitson – denise@triplethreattough.com

Sport Governing Body:

USA Triathlon - <https://www.teamusa.org/usatriathlon>

IV. Team Structure

a. Group Practices (places and schedule)

*Refer to Triple Threat Though Juniors web page for updated information.

b. Group Practice Requirements

All athletes should arrive 10 minutes early for setting the equipment required for the practice.

If the practice is cancelled due to weather, the team will attempt to notify you by Race Reach, e- mail, and Facebook. Please be sure you are registered on Race Reach.

c. Forms required before practice participation

Each athlete must provide:

- Completed *Registration* form
- Completed *Code-of-Conduct* form
- Completed *Waiver*, which includes Authorization to Consent to Treatment & Release of Liability form
- Current *USA Triathlon membership*

No athlete may participate in practices or team competitions without these forms on file.

d. Communication

All communications will be done through the team RaceReach.com website.

- Specific workout messages: If an announcement for a specific workout needs to be communicated to the team (e.g. cancellation, requested equipment, etc), it will be posted on the workout under messages on the team calendar. This will automatically send an email and will be saved under messages for that workout on the calendar.
- Overall general team messages: Can be assessed by logging into your RaceReach.com Triple Threat Tough Junior webpage. You can look on the left-hand column and click on messages. When a message is posted here by the staff, it will automatically send the team an email, a text message (if subscribed to text communications), and be saved in the above described location.

Parents may communicate to all of the coaching staff at any time by sending an email to juniorcoaches@triplethreattough.com. Or if communication with a specific coach is requested, you can send an email to "[coaches first name](mailto:coaches first name@triplethreattough.com)"@triplethreattough.com (e.g. kristen@triplethreattough.com).

e. Triathlon Equipment (* required):

The athlete should bring a pair of running shoes, shorts, a T-shirt and a bottle with water or sports drink to **ALL practices.*

Swimming:

- Swim cap*
- Swim snorkel
- Fins
- Kickboard
- Paddles
- Pull buoy
- Goggle*
- Swim suit*
- Mesh bag

Cycling:

- Bicycle*
- Helmet*
- Sun Glasses
- Bike pump
- Tube repair kit
- Cycling shoes
- Roller / trainer
- Speed/cadence sensor
- Cycling jersey
- Cycling jammers

Running:

- Running shoes*
- Cap
- Heart Rate monitor
- Shirt*
- Running shorts*

The equipment can be acquired in one of the suggested stores:

- Richardson Bike Mart - <http://www.bikemart.com>
- Tri Shop - <http://www.trishop.com>
- XtremeSwim - <https://xtremeswim.com>
- SwimOutlet - <http://www.swimoutlet.com>

V. Responsibilities

a. Coaches' Responsibilities

The Coaches' job is to supervise the triathlon program. Triple Threat Tough staff is dedicated to providing a program for athletes that will enable them to learn the values of striving to improve themselves. The coaches must be in absolute control in matters affecting training and competition.

1. Coaches have the sole responsibility for technique instruction and training programs.
2. Coaches make the final decision concerning which races the athletes will attend.
3. At the races, coaches supervise warm-ups for the team.
4. After each race, coaches offer constructive criticism and motivation regarding athlete's performance.

b. Parents' Responsibilities

Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of presenting skills. Skills development may not translate into performance improvement immediately, but sets the foundation for later improvement.

As training proceeds, muscle development is stressed more. At first the muscles will break down under the increased workload creating more fatigue. This will result in decreased improvement initially. Gradually, the muscles will strengthen and the athlete's performance will improve.

Every athlete hits a plateau at one time or another during their career. A plateau signifies that the athlete has mastered lower order skills, yet the response isn't automatic enough to leave energies and attention completely free to attach newer, higher order skills. It's important to explain to the athlete that plateaus occur in every physical level of learning. This is a transitory phase and working through this momentary delay is the key to achieve greater personal performances in the long run.

With all of the above in mind, the parents' role is one of support in many ways:

- Remain in the spectator area.
- Let the coach be the coach. If you need to address something to the coach do it at the end of the practice away from the kids.
- Provide only supportive comments to coaches, officials, and athletes. Avoid derogatory comments. The coach reserves the right to ask you to leave a practice or

competition.

- Do not coach your son or daughter during the contest or training session.
- Do not drink alcohol at practices or contest.
- Do not come to the practice or contest if under influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Cheer for all athletes, part of the Triple Threat Tough Junior team or not.
- Show interest, enthusiasm, and support for your athlete
- Control your emotions
- Help when asked by coaches or officials

c. Athlete's Responsibilities

1. Arrive ten minutes before the scheduled start of practice to get ready for the practice.
2. Be properly attired when arriving at the practice and have proper equipment ready to use. Proper attire includes modest (one piece) practice suit of any brand or style for swimming and adequate clothes for biking and running, taking in consideration the weather. It is very strongly recommended that the athlete's name be placed on all items, as they can then be returned to the athlete directly.
3. Athletes are encouraged to support their teammates at practice as well as in competition. This is very important to build bonds and a unit around the team.
4. All athletes are expected to follow the oral direction of the coaching staff. At no time will disrespectful attitudes be tolerated from any athlete.
5. Abusive language, lying, stealing, and vandalism are not acceptable. These behaviors are detrimental enough to the group to warrant strict disciplinary action. Such action may range from "time out" to dismissal from the team.
6. There should be no inappropriate physical contact between athletes or between athletes and coaches during practices or races, regardless of the personal relationship of those involved.
7. Athletes may leave practice only with the coach's permission and then must remain within the training area confines until accompanied by a parent or authorized guardian.

VI. Long - Term Athlete Development Stages used by TTT Juniors

a. Ability to Train

- a. The athlete will be constantly evaluated by the coaches regarding their development and their ability to cope with the training load.
- b. Practice sessions will be designed to allow for adequate rest periods proportionate to the child's age and abilities.
- c. If your child is even mildly sick, refrain from bringing him/her to practice. This is for the safety of your child and other teammates. If in doubt of what to do, consult a coach.

b. Attendance

Consistency is a corner stone for long-term improvement. It is very important that children and parents understand the benefits of consistent practice for optimal development of the physical abilities required for triathlon. Attendance is not a requirement of this team, but it is HIGHLY recommended to make all practice sessions. This will create team cohesion and allow for the biggest athletic gains.

c. Stages of LTAD – Key Training and Performance characteristics

1. FUNDamentals (6 yrs to onset of growth spurt) – 6 - 12 yrs old

Skill Development:

- FUN
- Development of fundamental skills
- Use of small sided games to teach how to play sports, develop their games sense and help them problem solve

Psychology:

- The use of small sided games provides adequate stimulus to develop the fundamentals of tactics (finding free space, working as a team) and fundamental mental skills (goal setting, motivation, communication)
- Creative games ensure children have fun while respecting their opponents and learning the rules of play

Recovery and Regeneration:

- Show children how to check the color of their urine
- Introducing refueling and rehydration strategies
- Introducing light stretching after exercise
- Encouraging a shower or a bath after exercise

Character:

- Having fun
- Building the foundation of the basic values of fairness and respect
- Teaching the basic rules of the game

Healthy Habits:

- Teaching positive eating habits
- Modeling positive eating habits (parents)

Competition:

- Making sure activities are fun
- Remembering that children are not mini-adults; designing competition formats and rules to ensure that they are developing the necessary fundamental skills

Role of parents:

- Limiting screen time
- Encouraging and modeling healthy eating habits (for proper nutrition)
- Ensuring a good amount and quality of sleep
- Providing opportunities for physical activity

2. **LEARN TO TRAIN (onset of growth spurt) – 6 - 12 yrs. old**

Skill Development:

- Developing fundamental movement and skills
- Having an increased emphasis on fundamental sport skills
- Applying fundamental skills to small sided games

- Developing decision making skills
- Igniting passion for physical activity and sport (fun)

Psychology:

- Setting goals
- Using imagery
- Being relaxed and focused
- Focusing on motivation
- Practicing good communication

Recovery and Regeneration:

- Using smiley faces or a rating scale after training to monitor fatigue, self-esteem, quality of sleep, illness and injury
- Using active recovery exercises such as light jogging and easy stretching

Character:

- Having fun individually, in a group, and/or both
- Learning through good times and bad times
- Respecting others (coaches, teammates, opponents, and officials)

Healthy Habits:

- Reinforcing positive eating habits
- Teaching positive refueling practices before, during and after training
- Explaining the connections among energy intake, positive growth and development.

Competition:

- It is about athlete development, not results
- Emphasis on competition should be on personal bests, challenging oneself and having fun

Role of parents:

- Involving children in a variety of sports and activities
- Encouraging skill development
- Avoid early specialization on late specialization sports (triathlon)
- Avoid instructing from the sidelines

- Balancing school work and extracurricular activities
- Measuring height every three months to determine onset of the growth spurt (this will be asked during Benchmark weeks)
- Communicate to the coaches when child hits puberty so training can be changed as necessary (this will be asked during Benchmark weeks)

3. **TRAIN TO TRAIN (Growth spurt to slow deceleration) – 12 - 15 yrs old**

Skill Development:

- Strengthening and refining basic skills
- Developing alternatives to basic skills while acquiring new ones
- Consolidating and refining basic practical tactical knowledge
- Tailoring new tactical knowledge to match the performance
- Continuing to develop decision making skills
- Developing a solid general foundation of speed, strength, endurance and flexibility

Psychology:

- Using more specific goal setting
- Using relaxation techniques
- Using positive self-talk and thought stopping
- Maintaining concentration and refocusing with cue words
- Refining imagery
- Understanding personal skills

Recovery and Regeneration:

- Keeping records of training loads, performances, responses to stress, fatigue, self-esteem, soreness, appetite, stress, illness or injury
- Increasing the use of recovery strategies
- Seeking nutritional advice

Character:

- Providing more autonomy as trusts builds
- Acknowledging athletes' increased sense of responsibility to teammates and respect for themselves and their sport
- Learning to become a good leader

Healthy Habits:

- Reinforcing positive eating habits
- Teaching positive refueling practices before, during and after training
- Explaining the connections among energy intake, positive growth and development.
- For females, learning to train through menstrual cycle changes.

Competition:

- Learn how to overcome adversity and disappointment
- Meaningful competitions to motivate athletes

Role of parents:

- Monitor fitness levels
- Body alignment and symmetrical development
- Social skills
- Cognitive abilities
- Emotions and behaviors
- Physical and technical abilities
- Iron levels in female athletes
- Emotional development (girls are at an increased risk for low moods, which can increase the risk of depression, eating disorders and low self-esteem)
- Doping (athletes should be educated at the end of this stage)
- Measurements (watch for PHV)
- Menarche
- School work
- Social life

4. **TRAIN TO COMPETE (Slow deceleration to cessation of growth) – 15 – 19 yrs. old**

Skill Development:

- Refining skill execution
- Training with game pressure and pace
- Adapting skills to the athlete's characteristics
- Building on tactical awareness
- Increasing the level of competition

Psychology:

- Refining all basic skills
- Tracking performance
- Developing consistency
- Using personal mental training techniques

Recovery and Regeneration:

- Periodizing main recovery routines into the athlete's training program
- Managing fatigue effectively with the help of yoga, meditation and biweekly massages

Character:

- Competing in a healthy competitive environment
- Avoiding unethical behaviors
- Questioning values in the face of contrasting values

Healthy Habits:

- Relearning positive eating habits and monitoring eating habits
- For female athletes: Reinforcing proper technique
- For female athletes: Addressing delayed menarche (> 15 yrs old) or other types of reproductive irregularities (amenorrhea) with a doctor

Competition:

- Shifting training to competition ratios
- Optimizing training and competition environments to develop top performers

Role of parents:

- Having an increasingly more passive role
- Acknowledging that the dynamics of the family are centered around the athlete's striving for excellence
- Recognizing the all-consuming nature of advanced sport for themselves and their other children
- Dealing with significantly increased costs
- Helping athletes in the stressful transition from high school to other opportunities (college?)

5. **TRAIN TO WIN STAGE (Cessation of growth) – > 19 yrs. old (Transition to Adult Team)**

Skill Development:

- Developing further skills
- Maximizing fitness preparation
- Maximizing taper and peak performance

Psychology:

- Being mentally prepared to perform in all conditions
- Embracing the stress of performing for a living

Recovery and Regeneration:

- Periodizing recovery strategies and tailoring them to suit the competition schedule
- Avoiding testing new recovery strategies at major competitions
- Communicating with home coaches when traveling

Character:

- Striving to win, not at all costs, but in an ethical manner
- Be the best one can be; that's real excellence
- Being proud for having done one's best regardless of the result
- Staying healthy, respecting others, and starting to give back to younger participants

Healthy Habits:

- Practicing positive eating habits.
- Nutrition as basis for enhanced performance

Competition:

- Recognizing that one's chosen sport encompasses all aspects of one's life

Additional Information

Recommended Competition Distance for Youth and Juniors (USA Triathlon)

RACING AGE ¹	CATEGORY	DISTANCES		
		SWIM	BIKE	RUN
7-8	Youth	50m to 100m ²	2k	1k
9 - 10	Youth	100m ²	3k	1k
11 - 12	Youth	200m	5k to 7k	2k
13 - 15	Youth	200m to 400m	8k to 10k	2k to 3k
16 - 19	Junior	400m to 750m	15k to 20k	5k
13 - 15	Youth Elite ³	400m	10k	2.5k
16 - 19	Junior Elite ³	750m	20k	5k

¹ Racing Age is determined as of December 31st of the year in which the event takes place

² Pool swims recommended

³ Youth Elite and Junior Elite races are draft:legal, typically staged on multi-lap, closed courses, and are officiated using International Triathlon Union Competition Rules. The recommended minimum age for Olympic/Intermediate Distance events is 16. The recommended minimum age for Long Course/Half Iron/Ultra Distance events is 18.

****Typical youth triathlon race distances in the DFW metroplex are as follows:**

Age 6:10: 100 yards swim · 3 miles bike · 1k run

Age 11:15: 200 yards swim · 6 miles bike · 2k run

Athletes' Character Code

Moral Values	Actions in Life	Actions in Sport
Be respectful	Be respectful of other people. Be respectful of others' property. Be respectful of the environment. Be respectful of yourself.	Be respectful of the game and to its rules and traditions. Be respectful of your opponents. Be respectful of the officials. Be respectful in victory and defeat.
Be responsible	Fulfill your obligations. Be dependable. Be in control of yourself. Be persistent.	Prepare yourself to do your best. Be punctual for practices and games. Be self-disciplined. Be cooperative with your teammates.
Be caring	Be compassionate and have empathy. Be forgiving. Be generous and kind. Avoid being selfish or mean.	Help your teammates play better. Support teammates in trouble. Be generous with praise, stingy with criticism. Play for the team, not yourself.
Be honest	Be truthful and forthright. Act with integrity. Be trustworthy.	Play by the spirit of the rules. Be loyal to the team. Play drug free.
Be fair	Follow the Golden Rule. Be tolerant of others. Be willing to share. Avoid taking advantage of others.	Treat other athletes as you wish to be treated. Be fair to all athletes, including those who are different. Give other players an opportunity. Play to win within the rules.
Be a good citizen	Obey the laws and rules. Be educated and stay informed. Contribute to the community. Protect others.	Be a good role model. Strive for excellence. Give back to the sport. Encourage teammates to be good

Training Zones

Zone	RPE * (intensity)	% of Max Capacity	Duration	Physical Benefit
1	1-3 > Very Easy	< 50%	30 - 45 Minutes	Recovery, especially through removal of lactate
2	3-5 > Easy	50-70%	45 Minutes	Improves ability to use oxygen and fat; improves ability to clear lactate
3	5-7 > Moderate	70-85%	5 - 45 Minutes	Improves lactate clearance and tolerance
4	7-9 > Very Hard	85-95%	1 - 5 Minutes	Increases VO ₂ max, mechanisms of oxygen transport (mitochondria, capillaries, enzymes)
5	8 - 10 > Maximum	95-100%	10- 60 Seconds	Increases lactate tolerance and removal, maximal anaerobic capacity and VO ₂ max
6	10 > Maximum	100%	0 - 10 Seconds	Increases speed, reaction on me, maximal power; includes technical and tactical

*RPE – Rate of Perceived Effort (CR 10 Borg Scale)

Glossary:

AEROBIC:

Easy pace exercise, where the athlete can comfortably talk and is not straining at all. Heart rate is quite low. Activity is continuous and at a constant pace.

ANAEROBIC:

“Threshold” training, where an athlete is working at the highest pace they can sustain for a period of 5 minutes or more. There are gradations of VO₂max, anaerobic and threshold training, but basically we are talking about “race pace”. The pace the athlete can sustain for the distance over which they race (in each of the three disciplines).

BRICKS:

As in “brick” training. Training utilizing two or more triathlon activities in combination. For example, ten minutes riding immediately followed by a two kilometers run would be an example of a bike / run brick.

CADENCE:

The rate of pedaling of a cyclist in pedal revolutions (revs) per minute. For example a cadence of 90 means that the cyclist is pedaling at a rate of 90 pedal revolutions per minute.

OVERTRAINING:

A state of fatigue and training overload which exceeds the athlete’s ability / capacity to recover. Signs of overtraining include:

- Feelings of excessive and constant fatigue
- Restlessness – even when trying to sleep
- Change in mood – feelings of fatigue, feeling cranky, feeling “down”
- Low energy levels – “I feel tired”
- Elevated resting heart rate levels
- Sore, aching muscles which don’t respond to rest
- Poor training / competition performances

RECOVERY:

A process where an athlete actively helps his / her body and mind to rest and regenerate between training sessions and after competition. Recovery techniques include getting adequate quality sleep, eating fresh nutritious foods, ensuring your body is fully hydrated and enjoying some alternate, light training activities, e.g. fun mountain biking with friends instead of hard kilometers on the road.

STRIDES:

Fast, but controlled runs over 60 - 80m in a straight line. Used as speed and skill development and also as a good warm up and neuromuscular stimulus.

SKILLS:

The way a task is performed. Optimizing movement in a range of activities from repetitive movements like running or spinning the bike pedals, to the skill of moving fast through the water (less effort, more speed!), to cornering, understanding tactics and race dynamics. Skill is producing an activity in a highly efficient but effective way.

SPEED:

Basic speed of movement. Moving as quickly as possible but with efficient, effective technique. For an athlete to have effective speed, they must also have very good skill of movement. Speed based sessions are short repetitions but with long recoveries. The ability to spin a bike at very high cadences (130rpm+) is also an example of good speed with good skill of movement.

TRANSITION:

The action of moving from one triathlon activity to the next, i.e. from swimming to cycling, from cycling to running.

REFERENCES:

Long-Term Athlete Development / Istvan Balyi, Richard Way, Colin Higgs, 2013

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USAT Complete Triathlon Guide, 2012

USAT Level 1 Coaching Manual, 2011

Triathlon Australia – National junior Development Framework, 2005

Developing Swimmers, Michael Brooks, 2011

The Youth and Teen Running Encyclopedia. Mick Grant and John Molvar, 2014

Successful Coaching. Rainer Martens, 2012