

YMCA Youth Triathlon

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

What is a triathlon?

Triathlon is an exciting, fast-paced, timed, three-sport race, which takes place in the following order: Swim, Bike, Run. It's a fun way to get fit and have fun!

Why is the Y doing this?

To promote good health and to expose you to a new sport in the Bismarck/Mandan Area.

Who are the sponsors for this race?

YMCA, Starion Bank, Scheels, and Never Quit Coaching

How long are the race course distances for the kids?

Swim 50 yards, Bike 2 miles, and run ½ mile

What is a wave Start?

All athletes are placed in groups or "waves" broken down by age category. In wave start events like the YMCA Youth Triathlon, smaller groups of athletes begin the race every few minutes. Each wave has a staggered start time to ensure that the race course is not congested and so that athletes can move safely through the course. There are 10 athletes in each wave for the triathlon.

Are the races timed?

Yes. Timing results are available after the race and will be posted at the YMCA the following week after the race.

Can you describe the race experience?

When you arrive at the race venue, you will be directed to set up your child's equipment in the Transition area, which must be done by their age categories. After you have set up your child's equipment in Transition, please move to the pool area if you want to see your athlete swim. Please keep in mind that you will not be able to go through the Family Splash Center emergency door exits to get to the transition area. The children will wait in the Family Splash Center in their wave groups 15-20 minutes in advance of their wave start time to avoid any confusion. If your child is in the 6-9 age category, you will be enjoying this exciting experience within an arm's reach of them at all times. When it's their turn, all athletes in your child's wave will be led to a marshalling area near the pool. Once on the pool deck, the athletes will be given a short briefing about the rules for the Swim portion of the race by the Pool Captain and then directed to safely enter the pool and hold on to the side before the race begins. Then, get ready for the fun as the children complete their Swim distance, then enter the Transition area to put on their running shoes and bike helmet before safely walking/running their bikes to the Bike course to complete their Bike distance before ending the race with their Run distance that ends with crossing the finish line. Family and friends are encouraged to cheer athletes along and especially as they cross the finish line and receive their participant medals.

Swim: Do I need to get in the pool with my child?

If your child is in the 6-9 age categories, you can choose to swim with your child during the Swim portion of the race and provide them with whatever assistance needed to complete

the distance. The YMCA can also provide a flotation device as needed. The 6-9 age category is the only group that allows a parent/guardian to enter the pool (optional).

What should my child wear during the swim portion?

Athletes need only wear a swimsuit.

Can my child use his or her personal flotation device?

YMCA will provide a flotation device if needed.

Bike: What type of bike can my child use?

Athletes are allowed to use road bikes, mountain bikes are recommended, as long as the equipment is in good working order. If you are unsure about the condition of your child's bike, we recommend having it inspected by a professional bike shop. SCHEELS Bike Mechanics will be on hand to work on and inspect bikes.

Run: What type of shoes should my child wear?

Closed-toe running shoes are the only footwear permitted.

Transition and Bike Drop - What is the transition area?

The Transition area is located outside and near the exit from the pool where athletes go immediately upon completing their swim. It is a secured area in which athletes set up their equipment and personal items needed for the Bike and Run portions of the race prior to the start of the race. Athletes are expected to set up their equipment and personal items in Transition on Race Day – from 7:30 to 8:30.

Who is allowed in the Transition area?

Pre-race, all athletes and parents/guardians are allowed in the Transition area during their designated set up time. During the race, for age categories age 6 and up, only athletes and Volunteers are allowed in Transition. Volunteers will assist athletes as needed during the race (i.e. tying shoe laces, buckling bike helmet chin straps, etc.).

What items should be set up in the Transition Area?

Everything needed for the Bike and Run portions of the Race should be set up in the Transition area: bike (place on rack if available), helmet, running shoes, shirt with bib number attached (as needed, unless torso fully covered by swimwear and bib already attached), shorts, towel for drying off, water bottle, etc.

What is the Bike Drop Area?

The Bike Drop area is where athletes are directed by signs and Volunteers to dismount their bikes to begin the Run portion of the race. Volunteers take the bikes from the athletes and place them on racks where they will remain until athletes pick them up after the race. We recommend that you label your child's equipment to avoid potential confusion when picking up after the race. The YMCA, Starion Bank and Scheels are not responsible for any lost equipment.

Equipment and Apparel - What kind of equipment does my child need?

The only equipment needed is a bike and helmet for the Bike portion of the race.

Helmet: Athletes must wear a bike helmet with a fully buckled chin strap.

Bike: Athletes are allowed to use road and mountain bikes or bikes with training wheels, as long as the bike is in good working order. If you are unsure about the condition of your child's bike, we recommend having it inspected by a professional bike shop.

Recommended: Water bottle, towel for Transition. Additional information will be provided at the Triathlon Clinics.

What clothing should my child wear?

Athletes start the race in their swimsuits. As their torsos must be covered for the Bike and Run portions of the race, athletes whose swimsuits don't provide full torso coverage should have a shirt ready to put on in Transition with the bib number from their Race Kits pinned on the front. Some children may wish to also put on shorts over their swimsuits in bike and run sections.

When does my child need to start wearing their bike helmet?

Athletes must put on their bike helmets with chin straps fully buckled in the Transition area and wear them when in contact with their bikes. Helmets must be worn until the moment the athletes dismount their bikes and put them back where they were originally positioned.

Weather

The race will take place rain or shine. If heavy rain causes the course to be unsafe for the Bike portion of the race, we will still proceed with the Swim and Run portions of the race.

What happens if there is a thunderstorm during the event?

If there is lightning, the race will be halted or the start delayed until 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning.

What happens if the race is cancelled due to inclement weather?

If the race is cancelled due to inclement weather, athletes will still be given the items included as part of registration, namely: the participation medal. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer refunds, rain dates or transfers to another race if the race is cancelled due to poor or unsafe weather conditions.

How much time do I have to finish the triathlon?

The finish line will close at 11 am. You should have enough time to finish the triathlon within the 2 hour time limit.

Will I be able to change out of my swim gear into my bike gear?

Yes, the aquatic locker rooms will be available for you to use for changing your clothes.

Do I have to sign in the day of the triathlon?

Yes, you must be signed in by 8:30am so you can participate in the athletes pre-briefing at 8:45am.

What will I get for completing this triathlon?

You will receive a finisher's medal and it will be presented to you when you cross the finish line.

Will this be run like a real triathlon?

Yes, it will with the exception that the focus is to have fun and to complete the triathlon.

Will there be a photographer onsite to take pictures?

No, photos should be taken by friends and family members.