

## Triathlon

Triathlon is a multi-discipline sport, one in which New Zealand enjoys a rich and successful history. It is comprised of three endurance-based disciplines – swimming, biking and running – which occur in that sequence.

Triathlon races can differ in distances. The ‘Olympic’ or ‘standard’ distance triathlon involves a 1500m swim, 40km bike and 10km run. Triathlon races can also vary in that they can be both drafting and non-drafting, with drafting being the style raced at the Olympic Games and throughout the International Triathlon Union (ITU).

### Qualifying – the road to Rio

The qualification period for countries to secure spots at Rio began on 15 May 2014 and will go until 15 May 2016. Qualification points can be obtained at ITU WTS and ITU World Cup races held in this period, as well as the Olympic Qualification Event.

A maximum of three athletes (in each gender) can be sent from the top eight countries that qualify for positions. All remaining countries have the opportunity to qualify up to two athletes.

New Zealand is currently tracking for three women’s and two men’s spots at Rio – this will be confirmed by 15 May 2016. Andrea Hewitt has already been selected (the first athlete announced across all sports by the NZOC). The remainder will be nominated around 15 May 2016.



## Competition at Rio

Both the women's and men's triathlons will take place at Fort Copacabana, with 55 athletes in each event.

Men's triathlon: Thursday 18 August 2016, 11am local start time.

Women's triathlon: Saturday 20 August 2016, 11am local start time.

The triathlon event is a one-off race, incorporating a 1.5km swim, 40km cycle and 10km run, and the medals will go to the three fastest triathletes on the day.

*"We have a very clear focus on our Olympic goals – both in Rio and in Tokyo – and having centralised the programme to the National High Performance Centre in Cambridge, we have built relationships into a very tight team. For Rio, we have a goal of one medal and top eight's, and are leveraging those relationships for intensive coaching and team racing. In 2015 we have had an opportunity to rehearse the whole preparation on the way to the Test Event in Rio, including home base, altitude and details around arrival." – Graeme Maw, High Performance Director, TriNZ*

## What's new at Rio?

The triathlon will be held at Fort Copacabana at the 2016 Olympic Games. This will be the first Olympic Games where the triathlon involves a beach start and potentially a proper surf swim.

In early August 2015, the 'test events' for the Olympic triathlons took place. The course is challenging and a real test of all three disciplines.

## Olympic Medals

1 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze

### **GOLD**

2004 Athens Hamish Carter

### **SILVER**

2004 Athens Bevan Docherty

### **BRONZE**

2008 Beijing Bevan Docherty

## The Stars of Triathlon

Men's triathlon has been dominated by three competitors over the past few years – British brothers, Alistair (the older brother) and Jonathan Brownlee, and Spain's Javier Gomez Noya. At the 2012 London Olympic Games, Alistair Brownlee won the gold, with Gomez and Jonathan Brownlee finishing second and third, respectively. Since its start in 2009, Gomez has won the ITU World Series (WTS) four times (2014, 2013, 2011 and 2010), and Alistair and Jonathan once each, 2009 and 2012, respectively.

Other male triathlete stars of note are Spain's Mario Mola, who finished second in last year's ITU WTS, and South African Richard Murray, who placed third at the 2014 Commonwealth Games. The Athens Olympic Games bronze medallist, Sven Riederer, is also noteworthy.

The American women are currently dominating the women's race. Gwen Jorgensen has led women's triathlon since 2014, with a run leg few (if any others) currently in the sport can match. She won the 2014 ITU WTS and has been unbeaten since April 2014. Sarah True finished second to Jorgensen in last year's series, and Katie Zaferes is also having a strong showing with several second-place finishes to Jorgensen in 2015.

New Zealand's own Andrea Hewitt is also a top performer. She finished second overall in the World Championship in 2015, which is her fifth World Championship medal in seven years. She has finished in the top three in the ITU WTS end year rankings four times since 2009, in 2014 finishing third in the series and second at the WTS Grand Final Edmonton. Fellow kiwi, Nicky Samuels, also had a strong showing in 2014, finishing the series in fifth and placing third at the WTS Grand Final Edmonton. The British females are also worth a mention – Non Stanford (ITU WTS winner 2013 and second in the Olympic Test Event and in the Grand Final), Helen Jenkins (ITU WTS winner 2011), Vicky Holland (Commonwealth Games bronze medalist) and Jodie Stimpson (Commonwealth Games champion).

## Did you know?

The women's race at the 2012 London Olympic Games took 1:58.48 for Nicola Spirig and Lisa Norden who finished first and second, respectively. Their sprint finish saw the margin between the two smaller than the gap between gold and silver in both the women's and men's 100m sprint finals!



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# Olympic Sport Information



## Triathlon terminology

<b>Transition</b>	This is the change over from one discipline to the next. The 'transition' from swim to bike is known as T1, and from the bike to run as T2.
<b>Olympic or standard distance</b>	A triathlon which involves a 1500m swim, 40km bike and 10km run.
<b>Drafting</b>	This can occur both in the swim and the bike. In the swim, it means swimming directly behind or beside a swimmer in front of you, which makes it easier for you to swim at that same pace. Similarly, when biking, it means riding close behind the cyclist in front of you. This will make it easier for the cyclist behind as the wind resistance is lessened for them. Triathlon races can be either 'draft-legal' or 'non-drafting' on the bike. The style raced at Rio de Janeiro will be 'draft-legal', as is the case throughout the ITU.
<b>Wetsuit legal</b>	A triathlon in which the water temperature is below 20 degrees Celcius, allowing for wetsuits to be worn. The water temperature is recorded by event technical officials in accordance with ITU guidelines.
<b>Brick</b>	A bike-run training session, in which the run session immediately follows the end of the bike session.
<b>Beach start</b>	When a triathlon race is started on the beach and athletes have to run into the water to begin the swim, as opposed to diving off a pontoon, which is commonly done. The swim at Rio de Janeiro will be a 'beach start'.
<b>Wheel stop</b>	In the event of a competitor puncturing during the race, there are official zones where spare wheels can be placed prior and used by them if required.
<b>Discard</b>	A competitor is not allowed to discard or 'litter' anything on the course other than in the official discard zones. Bottles, gel and food packaging must not be discarded on course, except in these areas.
<b>Penalty</b>	A transgression of race rules as seen by the technical officials can result in an athlete serving a time penalty. This is notified on a penalty board next to the course and is served in an official penalty box on the run leg. Some penalties can be applied in transition.
<b>Mount/dismount line</b>	The mount line is where an athlete must wait until crossing before mounting their bike coming out of T1. The dismount line similarly is the line at which they must be off their bike before entering T2.



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## Timeline

- 1974** First recorded triathlon held in San Diego, California.
- 1984** Triathlon NZ established as the national governing body in New Zealand.
- 1989** ITU was established and held the first World Champs in Avignon, France.
- 1991** World Cup series began involving 11 races in eight countries.
- 1994** Triathlon was officially added to the Olympic programme to debut at the 2000 Sydney Games.
- 2000** Debut of triathlon at the Sydney Olympic Games.
- 2004** Hamish Carter and Bevan Docherty won gold and silver medals at the Athens Games.
- 2008** Bevan Docherty added a silver medal to his tally of Olympic medals at the Beijing Games.
- 2009** ITU World Championship series was created as the top tier race series.
- 2014** Andrea Hewitt and Nicky Samuels won silver and bronze medals at the World Series Grand Final.