

WHAT ARE RACE OFFICIALS FOR?

How do they differ from race organisers & marshals?

The role of the race official is integral to the success of events and the growth of the sport. They help to create positive race experiences for all athletes by ensuring that races are safe and fair.

The...rules are intended for the purpose of creating equal opportunity and fair play for all competitors, providing a basis for reasonable safety and protection in an atmosphere of sportsmanship and fair play.

The above statements are taken from the Triathlon England web site and the BTF Rule Book and are a neat summation of the role, but need expansion.

- **Any activity with a set of RULES needs an arbiter of these rules during the activity.**
Imagine a football (let alone Ice Hockey) match without a Referee – chaos is likely to ensue. Same goes for individual sports – think boxing without a Referee! Cricket and Tennis have Umpires, but they do the same job of interpreting and upholding the rules of the game.
- **What are rules for?** Everyone is subject to the same rules to engender
 - a. The opportunity for “fair play”
 - b. Safety
 - c. Guidelines on behaviour
 - d. Principles of achievement, aspiration.
- **How does a RACE ORGANISER differ from a RACE OFFICIAL?**
 - a. Your race is likely to be organised by a Club, company, association or charity, sometimes an individual.
 - b. ORGANISERS are responsible for designing the event, providing safety and first aid cover, liaison with Police and other local authorities. They also organise marshals.
 - c. Races are registered with TRIATHLON ENGLAND and Organisers provide information which enables a PERMIT to be issued and athlete insurance put in place for members of the BTF as well as provision of day licences for non-members.
 - d. Organisers register athletes and provide race information; and post race results.
 - e. Race OFFICIALS are volunteers who have been trained, assessed and passed an examination. They offer technical advice to the Race Organisers and competing athletes, based on the BTF rules; **they are NOT part of the Race Organising team.**
 - f. Race OFFICIALS wear a Triathlon England Uniform (red gillet, black cap) so that they can be easily recognised. Marshals for the event will wear hi-vis vests, usually yellow or orange.
- **What is the RACE OFFICIAL there for?**
 - a. A RO should be present from registration to prize giving so that they can oversee
 - i. Safety of all aspects of the event, from security of transition to safety in the water (including measuring water temperature for open water events), signage of courses, hazard management, marshal allocation etc. etc.

- ii. Behaviour of athletes, from adherence to rules re: equipment, to monitoring respect of fellow athletes and marshals.
- b. An RO will answer any technical questions about equipment, the course etc.
- c. They are there to encourage you! (and spectators).
- d. They will penalise where necessary but caution in preference.

- **What will you gain from the experience?**

- a. A safe event, enjoyed by all participants and spectators, treated fairly under the same consistently applied rules.
- b. Advice and guidance on how to achieve your best!
- c. A better understanding of the rules and why they are in place.

A RACE OFFICIAL'S ADVICE PRIOR TO RACING:

- **It is every individual athlete's responsibility to**

- a. Ensure they are able to comfortably complete the specific race distance entered.
- b. Know the rules [CLICK this LINK](#)
- c. Know the routes you will be using during the race; obey the "rules of the road" and follow any instructions provided by the police. You should not rely on directions from marshals, but you should carry out all their reasonable instructions.
- d. Check equipment; your bike should be roadworthy, with plugs in bar ends and brakes that work. Helmets should be to ANSI Z90.4, SNELL B90, EN 1078 or an equivalent national standard (not just a CE mark). Tri-suits should NOT show more than 10cm of midriff and front zips should remain fully fastened at all times.
- e. Wear race numbers to the back when cycling and to the front when running. A race belt which can be spun around with just one number, is an excellent cost-effective purchase; it saves making holes with safety pins.
- f. Ensure that your helmet is well adjusted so that straps can do their job! During the race, you must fasten your helmet BEFORE you take your bike from the rack and keep it fastened until you return your bike to the rack after the cycle course.
- g. Treat everyone including fellow athletes with respect and courtesy – swearing at marshals, officials or spectators will also result in a DQ.

- **Misdemeanours which can result in a penalties (see rules for clarification)**

You can only be penalised by readily identifiable race officials, although infringements may be reported to the official by marshals and other race personnel. A Race Official can impose the following types of penalty:

1. verbal warning - preferred

2. time penalty – usually when a) is ignored! 3.

disqualification (see below)

- a. Helmet violations (1 or 2b)
- b. Zip violations (1 or 3)
- c. Riding over the Dismount Line (1 or 2)
- d. Riding in transition (1 or 2)
- e. Drafting during the bike section (2 or 3)

- **Misdemeanours for which you will be DISQUALIFIED**
 - a. Threatening, abusive or insulting words or conduct.
 - b. Breaking road-traffic regulations or dangerous conduct/riding.
 - c. Failing to obey Officials, marshals or the police.
 - d. Outside assistance; including help with punctures, mechanical problems etc. unless by someone approved by the race organiser
 - e. Tampering with equipment of other athletes OR unsporting impedence which can include incorrectly racked bikes, using marking devices etc.
 - f. multiple drafting violations.
 - g. Course irregularities e.g. course cutting – even if unintended, disregarding specific instructions for traffic lights and junctions.
 - h. (after verbal warning) using banned equipment Mobile phones, MP3s etc. as these prevent you hearing any instructions, information provided by organisers and officials.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TRIATHLON EXPERIENCE

- Know the rules as they apply to you.
- Prepare well by training for the distance you will be racing and know your course.
- Read all race instructions including time of race briefing – not just the course notes.
- Get to the venue in good time to register, rack your bike and prepare yourself.
- Take only what you will need for transition into transition – leave the rest behind in your car.
- Don't take enormous bags and boxes into transition as they will just get in the way. If a Race Organiser provides a secure bag zone – use it.
- Rack your bike by the saddle if possible. If racks are numbered, your bars should point away from the number.
- Don't try to mark your spot with talc, balloons etc.
- LISTEN to the Race Briefing – it may contain revised information about road works etc.
- If in doubt about anything ask the Organiser, your Race Official, a marshal.
- Discard your wetsuit carefully - don't just fling it somewhere near your racking point.
- Race safely and fairly – respect other athletes, other road users and spectators.
- Say “thank you” to marshals – they are volunteers - without them, you would not be racing!
- SMILE and ENJOY.