

**STARTING, BUILDING AND/OR IMPROVING A COLLEGIATE CLUB
TRIATHLON PROGRAM**

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Introduction

How do you start a new collegiate club triathlon program? What can you do to expand and/or improve an existing program? The University of California at Berkeley has perhaps the oldest, largest and certainly one of the most successful Collegiate Club triathlon programs in the Country. Most of the information provided in the following pages will be specific to the Cal Berkeley triathlon team and its club structure. We have made some editorial comments about how other successful programs may differ, but this is the Cal Tri experience and hope it can be used to start, expand and/or improve existing programs.

History of Collegiate Club Triathlon

The Cal Berkeley triathlon club was first formed in 1989. The sport was still very young, even in one of the first hotbeds of triathlon, Northern California. Although two or three triathlons had taken place in Northern California before 1981, that year the sport began to emerge in Northern California. In fact, Northern California may have been triathlon's first mecca. (See Trihistory.com, Chill Factor, January 15, 2017.) It is not surprising then that a triathlon soon emerged at Cal Berkeley.

Cal Berkeley may have founded, in 1989, the first collegiate triathlon club in the United States. But by 1992, there were teams emerging all around the Country. Wildflower founder and director, Terry Davis, sought and received permission from USAT (then TriFed) to hold the first Collegiate Club National Championships in 1992, in connection with the popular Wildflower Triathlon. 59 men and 29 women competed in that first championship. Clark Campbell from Kansas University was the first male finisher and Kip Freytag from University of California, Berkeley, was the first female finisher. In recent years, collegiate club nationals have had over 1400 participants, and now have three separate races: a draft legal sprint, an Olympic distance race, and a mixed team relay event. It has become one of the most exciting multi-sport events on the planet.

Becoming a Registered Club

USAT

In order to compete at Club nationals, a collegiate club must be registered with USAT. Since Cal Tri is currently a USAT registered club, to maintain the USAT affiliation, they re-register the club every summer on the USAT website for a \$50 fee. The President is registered as the "Manager" of the Club. Through the Manager's portal a club can apply for USAT grants. To start a new club, clubs must follow the steps laid out in the "Starting a Collegiate Triathlon Club Doc" found on the USAT website.

University Relations – Becoming a Sports Club Recognized by your College

Cal Triathlon is a club sport sponsored by the Department of Recreational Sports at UC Berkeley. The Recreational Sports department determines which sports will be officially recognized by the University. Cal Tri must adhere to the rules and policies of the Department of Recreational Sports. All the specific policies are laid out in the Club Sports Handbook. The sports club affiliation gives the club access to Cal licensing, Under Armour apparel (the University sponsor), practice locations around the University campus, and some limited funding. The club bank account is also part of the University system.

The process to become a registered Sports Club at UC Berkeley is laid out in the Sports Club Officer Handbook. This varies per university.

Membership Philosophy

Cal Tri attempts to make Collegiate Club Triathlon at Cal fun, competitive and as inclusive as possible for all genders, ages and income levels. They welcome people from all athletic backgrounds, or no athletic background at all. Age and fitness levels are not limiting factors for one to join triathlon. The primary goal at UC Berkeley is to introduce a multi-sport lifestyle to anyone interested in being healthy and fit. One of their missions as a club is to foster inclusivity. They believe that everyone should be able to set goals, challenge themselves, and feel rewarded for striving for and/or accomplishing those goals. The past few years they have had over 165 members on the team. They do not have tryouts. The coaching staff is available to any athlete. Their financial resources are made available to assist each athlete, regardless of ability.

Cal Triathlon is one of the largest, most competitive, student-run club sports teams not just at UC Berkeley, but in the nation. Cal Tri has brought as many as 80 of its 165 members to race in triathlons around California and had 52 members compete at Collegiate Club Nationals in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 2018. The board, the athletes and the coaches of Cal Tri work hard to achieve excellence in all competitions without sacrificing the inclusiveness that makes Cal Tri special. Athletes of all levels are encouraged to attend practices and races, and with “consistent hard work over time,” the motto of the head coach, Dean Harper, personal growth and athletic improvement can be achieved by each and every athlete. They celebrate that each and every day as a team, as part of the larger community, and as a family.

The Cal Tri team continues to run efficiently because of a board of 15 volunteer students. On top of balancing school, training, and other clubs, these students dedicate themselves to the smooth operation of a 165 person team. Most collegiate clubs will not need 15 board members. But having a strong and dedicated board will help ensure that the team will be successful.

Dues

Every collegiate sport needs some level of funding to operate, buy equipment, fund social activities and assist members with travel expenses. At Cal Berkeley Tri the 2017-2018 dues were \$250 for the year, \$120 for just Fall Semester, \$130 for just Spring Semester. Spring dues are \$10 more because it is the race season. The team subsidizes the hotel cost for our West Coast Collegiate Triathlon Championships as well as a significant portion of the expenses to attend Nationals. They also offer an option for members to pay dues on a monthly basis, \$40 a month. Since triathlon is an expensive sport, they want to create as much financial flexibility as possible to allow people from all economic backgrounds to be members of Cal Tri. They have offered some bike scholarships and will waive dues for those in demonstrated financial need.

This past year the dues were used for various team related expenses. They covered the team hotel accommodations for NCAA Draft Legal Championships and WCCTC (Conference) Championships. Depending on location of Nationals and the financial situation of the team, the team, in the past, has covered the Nationals Registration costs, Tribike Transport, hotel costs, a team tank top for Nationals (spirit wear); \$200 reimbursement on flight expenses and one team dinner. In 2018, the team was able to offer the \$200 reimbursement to the 52 athletes because of a generous donation, which supplemented the dues. They also subsidize partial costs to ensure the Fall and Winter Training Camps are affordable. They also provide some Team Apparel/Gear, including: 1 team shirt and 1 set of pull buoy and paddles.

Recruitment

The recruitment process is essential to the development and growth of a successful collegiate triathlon team. At the beginning of each semester, Cal Tri holds a "Recruitment Week" to attract new members. They advertise this Recruitment Week to members of UC Berkeley through the team's social media sites and by "flyering" on campus. "Flyering" is when clubs set up a table in a central part of campus and hand out flyers and answer questions to those passing by. The flyers that Cal Tri passes out have their Recruitment Week schedule listed out as well as links to their social media platforms. At the Cal Tri table, they display triathlon gear, team awards and banners. They also have an email sign-up sheet, where people can sign up to receive daily updates about Cal Tri Recruitment Activities.

On their social media sites and their team website, they advertise a Facebook event with Recruitment Week details. This also includes a link to direct people to a place for people to sign up for our Recruitment and General listservs.

The following are examples of 2017's Recruitment Week Facebook Description/Schedule:

ALL LEVELS WELCOME!

*All events meet at Kroeber fountain across from Cafe Strada

Watch our Recruitment Video! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cCt-p9WCS4>

Thursday, Sep 1st Sharks and Minnows

8:00 PM Hearst pool

Like swimming, don't like swimming? Well if you're either one come check out Sharks and Minnows!! Where fish are friends not food :)

Friday, Sep 2nd Ice Cream Run

5:00 PM Fenton's (Bring \$ for ice cream!)

Run to Fenton's Creamery for Ice Cream, and if you're up for it the Fenton's Ice Cream Challenge!

Saturday, Sep 3rd What is Triathlon?

2:00 PM Faculty Glade

Don't know much about triathlon? Neither do a lot of people. Get to know the sport with our awesome team! #sports

Sunday, Sep 4th Tricycle Races

2:00 PM Faculty Glade

Miss riding your trike? Don't we all? Well you're in luck! Come join us for Tricycle races!

Monday, Labor Day Sep 5th SF Run

12:00 PM Golden Gate

Head to SF to hang out with the team and go on a beautiful run through the city or over the Golden Gate!

Bring \$ for BART and Ghirardelli Ice Cream!

Tuesday, Sep 6th Track n' Treats

5:30 PM Edwards Stadium

Race around the track and eat some sweet treats!

Wednesday, Sep 7th Kickoff Meeting

8:00 PM Pauley Ballroom

Get to know about the team and get all sorts of fun swag!!!!

@@All events meet at Kroeber Fountain@@

At the end of the Recruitment Week they hold a Kickoff Meeting. At this meeting they show a presentation to the new recruits where they discuss what it means to join Cal Tri. They introduce the Coaches and Board members as well as discuss the practice schedule, race schedule, and other social events. They also show the Kickoff Video, made by the PR chair. To see an example of the kickoff meeting document see the Cal Tri Kickoff Meeting Powerpoint. The team generates a lot of excitement at this event, which is very important to their social recruitment efforts.

Camps

At Cal Tri they have 2 official camps, open to all members on a first come basis. The first is a Fall Camp, in which spend 3 days in Tahoe, CA. The main purpose of the camp is: Meet new members, get out of Berkeley for great altitude training and set the tone for the upcoming year.

While on the winter break, the team has the very popular Winter Camp, when they spend seven days in Oceanside, CA. The purpose is to kick off the Spring Semester strong, to bond as a team and to provide a high quality training environment. In addition to one or two of our coaches, we have had a pro athlete spend the week and train with the team. Our head coach has also brought in guest speakers including Joe Maloy, Scott Tinley, Julie Moss and Bob Babbitt. Over the past four years there has also been an unofficial spring break camp in Hawaii to help prepare for Nationals.

Races

The Cal Tri team targets two races in the Fall as well as NCAA Women's Draft Legal Nationals, as long as club teams are permitted to participate in NCAA Nationals. In the Spring they target four races as a team as well as Collegiate Club Nationals. For each race, the Racing VP (see below) coordinates carpools, accommodations, rental cars, and wetsuits and race kit loaners for new members. For most races they either travel to them the morning of, or stay at team members' parents houses. They do book hotels for the team for NCAA Draft Legal Nationals, West Coast Collegiate Triathlon Championships, and USAT Collegiate Nationals. This cost is covered by the team. For each race they need to submit a travel application to the University (a week in advance for instate travel and two weeks in advance for out of state travel).

New Members

As part of the mission of inclusivity, Cal Tri attempts to provide as many resources as possible to welcome new triathletes to the sport. They have an Education Chair who puts on workshops throughout the year, ranging from nutrition talks to bike buying and safety clinics to transition clinics. They also have a mentor-mentee program put on by the social and recruitment chairs. This program pairs new members with older members with similar backgrounds and interests to help new members navigate this

new and complex sport. The sponsorship chairs negotiate deals with companies on gear to help reduce the costs of starting out in this sport. They also have a loaner system where old members can lend out their old race kits and wetsuits to newer members for races.

Board

Cal Triathlon is a club sport, run by a Board comprised of 15 student athletes. The Board works with our coaching staff and the University Sports Club Office to coordinate practice facilities and schedule, race entries, camps, sponsorship deals, team apparel, public relations and more.

Within the Board, they have an executive team composed of the president, treasurer, training vice president and racing vice president. These members must be upperclassmen or have at least one year of experience on board. Ideally these members have student coaching experience, or other leadership on the team (for VP's especially). In addition, executive board members should:

- Be able to develop a thorough understanding of the budget
- Make decisions in the interest of the team
- Attend as many team events as possible, including practices, races, and volunteer events, to ensure that there is a leadership presence
- Take initiative on larger projects and events.
- Maintain consistent and direct communication with the coaches

Executive Board is also responsible for discussing sensitive, private, emergency and/or financial matters as they arise in a timely manner. At Cal Tri, the Board meets once a week.

President

The president of the team is responsible for acting as the liaison between the ASUC, Recreational Sports Facility, and Cal Athletics in the interest of the team. The President calls all meetings of the board and maintains the calendar of events for the team and board. The team president ensures that every board member is fulfilling their role as outlined by the constitution and makes decisions that foster the growth of the team. The team president and the head coach work together and communicate regularly.

Treasurer

The treasurer is in charge and maintains records of all financial transactions carried out by the team. The treasurer is responsible for updating the head coach and board on the budget and ensures that the team is financially healthy by ensuring that team projects are financially

feasible. The treasurer works with the RSF for setup of payments and fills out reimbursement forms. Further, the treasurer is responsible for the collection of fees, calculation of reasonable prices for dues, sponsorship items, and travel fees and determines when reimbursements or subsidies are necessary.

Vice President – Training

The Vice President of Training is in charge of permits, carpools, and car rentals for training camps, and coordination with the head coach and president for facilities and scheduling of practices. In addition, the training vice president:

- Works with the head coach to establish training plan/schedules with coaches and student coaches;
- Maintains constant contact with the head coach about the changes in the training schedule;
- Plans Training Days (Del Valle, Aquatic park/Golden Gate Park, Santa Cruz, watching Tri races, Tilden and Lake Anza, 3 Bears TTs);
- Plans at least 2 Tri Camps (Fall and Winter);
- Communicates with RSF about training schedule (when we need facilities, travel forms for all training camps and days, other miscellaneous events)

Vice President – Racing

The Vice President of Racing organizes travel arrangements for all race weekends: carpools, bikes, rental vans/trucks, hotels and ideally attends all target races of the team. In addition, the racing VP is responsible for:

- Working with the VP of Training to finalize schedule for Tri Camp and training days;
- Working with the Treasurer to budget for gas reimbursements and rental cars;
- Help the president organize Nationals;
- Find team discounts for non-WCCTC races (Wildflowers, USA Productions races, etc);
- = Coordinate with the head coach regarding accommodations for the coaches.

Apparel Chair(s)

The Apparel Director(s) are responsible for ordering team shirts and gear and distributing these items to the team. In addition, the apparel director is responsible for:

- Ordering and Distributing pull gear and team shirts to new members

- Designing new apparel in accordance to RSF brand guidelines
- Submitting all new apparel designs to the RSF for approval before purchase
- Working with Sponsorship to find suppliers for all team shirts and apparel
- Coordinating with the Treasurer to order team shirts and gear
- Safely storing all Cal Tri Apparel at a home or in an established location that team members can access during designated weekly hours
- Update inventory and “catalogue” of available gear

The apparel chairs are responsible for designing the new Bearathlon 2018 logo and making the race apparel order (typically t-shirts). This process starts in the summer so the chairs must be willing to commit some time during the summer.

Education Director

The Education Director is in charge of putting on regular team meetings to ensure members are well informed on topics regarding triathlon, health and safety. These include:

- Surveying topics of interest from entire team
- At minimum, hosting a flat changing, transition and bike safety workshop
- Organizing talks by guest speakers, preferably local Professional Triathletes

In addition, the education director is responsible for ensuring that one male and one female are chosen each month for “Athlete of the Month,” a method of recognizing team members for contributing to the team.

Fundraising and Volunteer Chair

The Fundraising and Volunteer Chair organizes fundraisers and volunteer opportunities for the team. These can include working with outside organizations such as local races or Cal sporting events, or hosting Cal Tri specific fundraisers such as the annual 5K. The Fundraising and Volunteer Chair is responsible for ensuring that members meet their minimum volunteer requirements. (Each member is responsible to give 4 volunteer hours a year.) They are also responsible for organizing volunteers (both on Cal Tri and community members) for the Berkeley Bearathlon. Finally, the Fundraising and Volunteer Chair organizes the end-of-year banquet for the team.

The Fundraising Chair is responsible for handling the volunteering aspect of the home Bearathlon race. This includes sign-ups leading up to the race as well as organization of volunteers on race day. The race directors work closely with this chair to convey the roles of the volunteers and to coordinate transportation to/from the marina. This chair is the point of contact between the race directors and the team volunteers.

Secretary

The Secretary's primary role is to keep an updated roster (including e-mail list) of all team members, ensure that all drivers have turned in the RSF requested paperwork, and to fill out forms as requested by the executive board. In addition, the secretary is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all members of the team have paid their dues;
- Taking notes during board meetings;
- Reserving rooms for board meetings and workshops well in advance;
- Documenting statistics such as attendance at team events, items bought for training camps, etc

The Secretary is also responsible for taking on the duties of Safety Officer. The Safety Officer must complete CPR training, hold onto the team first aid kit, and report accidents that occur during practices to the RSF.

The Secretary's responsibility includes helping to alleviate the workload for race directors by answering emails from Bearathlon racers in the month of September. This may be time consuming, historically many racers ask plenty of questions via email – be prepared to commit 3-5 hours/week leading up to the race.

Social Chairs (2)

The Social and Recruitment chairs will work together to actively recruit new members to the triathlon team. They will also work throughout the year to bring the team together through various social events such as welcome back events, icebreakers, and other events to connect new and old members. The social chairs are also responsible for:

- Coming up with innovative recruitment ideas for welcome week (Fall and Spring);
- Organizing a Mentor-Mentee Program in the Fall Semester;
- Communicating with other teams to set up inter-team activities;
- Enhancing overall team atmosphere and promoting inclusivity.

Sponsorship Chairs (2)

Sponsorship Chairs are responsible for maintaining existing sponsorships and looking for prospective sponsorship deals. The sponsorship chairs should work to promote sponsors in conjunction with the PR Chair. In addition, the sponsorship chairs should:

- Coordinate group orders with apparel to distribute;

- Design team bike/race kits;
- Identify, solicit, and establish new sponsors when needs arise;
- Collect prizes for the team to use at Bearathlon, 5Ks, TTs or other events;
- Collect and distribute food and other nutrition for team events/ camps;
- Organize shopping days (ie Sports Basement, Lululemon, etc);

Help coordinate with sponsors to acquire nutrition for racers, prizes for race winners, donations, and post-race sponsor booths. The Sponsorship Chair is the point of contact between the race directors and the sponsors. This process starts early—these need to be able to start making connections by the end of this semester and continue the process throughout the summer.

Public Relations Coordinator

The Public Relations Coordinator is in charge of the public image of the team. This includes going to as many team events as possible to take photos and videos for team documentation. In the event that the PR Coordinator is unable to attend a event, they should find a replacement photographer. The PR Coordinator must update the team’s social media sites, especially Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. In addition, the PR Coordinator is responsible for:

- Collecting written reports of races and training camps for our online platforms;
- Working with the Webmaster to publish the Cal Tri website;
- Working with Education and Social to make videos for kickoff and education meetings;
- Working with Sponsorship to promote all team sponsors through social media exposure.

Alumni Chair

The role of the Alumni Chair is to be the liaison between the alumni of the team and the current board. The Alumni Chair is in charge of maintaining an updated listserv of interested alumni, organizing an Alumni Targeted race, and sharing team updates with the listserv.

Bearathlon Race Directors

The Race Directors head the Bearathlon race committee. This position is decided through an application process in the late Fall and is evaluated by executive board, past Bearathlon race directors, and coach. The race director may not hold other positions on the board.

The Bearathlon Race Directors are in charge of all communications with the city, the University, and USAT regarding the race. They can use the help of board members to pursue sponsorship and marketing opportunities for the race.

Webmaster

The Webmaster heads the development of caltriathlon.com. This position, unlike the other board positions that are elected, is decided through an application process. The Webmaster has the liberty to develop the website how they see fit, but must get all major changes approved by the President and PR Chair. Any major website development must be completed before August of the upcoming school year to ensure that the team's online presence is ready for Recruitment.

Coaches

Cal Triathlon has a very active and involved coaching staff. The team is led by the head coach, as well as a team of assistant coaches who specialize in each triathlon discipline. Our head coach has thirty-seven years of experience in the sport, is a USAT level 1 coach, as well as a USAT level 1 certified race director. All of our coaches went through a hiring process with the university. This process is laid out in our Constitution as well as the Sports Club Handbook.

Our head coach develops a year-round training plan for the team. He shares the yearly plan with the executive committee before the beginning of the school year. Each month he sends out to the entire team the scheduled workouts for the month. He also sends out the weekly e-mail called Tri-Haps, which outlines all of the activities of the week and includes inspiring quotes. The coaching staff also leads six of our weekly "core practices" and holds our monthly time trials. Our head coach personally attends five to six workouts a week. Our coaching staff leads three of our swim workouts, our trainer workout, our track workout, and some Sunday morning track workouts. The remaining practices are lead by student coaches, Cal triathletes who have a particular knowledge or passion for a sport.

Our head coach has decided not to take a salary in order to free up more funds for team travel to races, particularly to enable the team to take at least 50 members to Nationals. Prior to 2013, the team paid \$10,000 and expenses to the head coach, which is probably on the low side currently for a team of 165. In deciding on a head coach, it is helpful to have someone who is experienced, passionate about the sport, and is not looking to club triathlon as their primary source of income. The majority of teams that come to Nationals do not have a coach, so it is not essential. Some teams pay as much as \$40,000 for their coach. The top placing teams at Nationals do have coaches, but some of the head coaches do volunteer their time.

Practices

All of the practices are completely voluntary. The student athletes are first and foremost students. Cal Tri does not take attendance or require a certain attendance to retain membership. They try to put fun twists on their practices. Their head coach started a “My Top 10” playlist challenge for the weekly trainer sessions. Every week, team members submit their Top 10 trainer appropriate favorite songs in a playlist to the coach. Some weeks the playlists will be themed, such as all Taylor Swift or Reggae. During the Monday Trainer sessions, the coach plays the songs and they have to guess whose playlist it is. After the practice they all vote on the favorite song from that playlist. This is the “Best of Set.” At the end of 10 weeks, the coach plays the top song from each of the playlists and they voted on the “Best of the Best” song of the semester.

Their Tuesday Tempo run takes the team all across the Berkeley Hills in a fun scavenger hunt format. They also hold a weekly Pastry Run on Friday where members stop at some of Berkeley’s best bakeries in the middle of their run.

The team has also acquired access to an old parking lot where they store 50 bike trainers in a shipping container. These have been acquired over time and enable the team to have 50 athletes or more at trainer workouts.

Example Practice Schedule (found on our team website, social media platforms, and sent out weekly via TriHaps)

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00 AM							
6:30 AM							
7:00 AM							
7:30 AM			Trainer				
8:00 AM		Trainer, Pastry Run, Social					
8:30 AM							
9:00 AM							
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7:30 PM							
8:00 PM							
8:30 PM							
9:00 PM							

Time Trials/Test Sets

The team holds coach run time trials or test sets in each discipline to help the members measure their improvement. To measure swim improvement they hold “monthly 200s” during our swim practice. For monthly 200s, members do four 200 yard efforts on a set interval that allows for about 30-45 seconds of rest in between. To measure running improvement, we hold monthly “cruise intervals” where members run six one mile intervals with 1 minute rests in between. The cruise intervals sessions become more frequent in the weeks leading up to races. To measure bike improvement, they hold a time trial out on a local bike course called 3 Bears. Members race this 18 mile course twice a semester. The coaches record the times in all three of these time trials to allow people to track their improvement.

Fundraising

Cal Tri holds two major fundraisers during their academic year. They host their annual race, the Berkeley Bearathlon in the Fall and they hold a small 5K on campus in the Spring. Bearathlon is a USAT sponsored race. They target Bearathlon to members of the West Coast Collegiate Conference as well as the larger Bay Area community. The 5K is sponsored by the University of California. They target this race to students and members of the Berkeley community. They also participate in fundraising opportunities through the Department of Recreational Sports. Every year they apply for the USAT grant. Finally, they receive generous donations from members of the community or alumni.

Social Media

Public Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CalTriathlonTeam/>
(We also have an internal Cal Tri Group for dues paying members only)

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/cal_triathlon/

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/caltriathlon?lang=en>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3M8TBNi38r5CeY2BMzZBhw>

Strava: <https://www.strava.com/clubs/4101>

Summary

Tri Cal is ready, willing and able to share their knowledge on how to run a successful triathlon program. The success of the team is largely dependent upon the enthusiasm and dedication of the core group of dedicated members. This “how to” guide provides the skeletal framework for how to run a successful program. But you need dedicated and inspiring student athletes and coaches to create, maintain and grow a successful club triathlon program.