



2026 SLAP High Performance Squad (HPS) - Team Outline -

Mission & Vision:

The SLAP High Performance Squad (HPS) exists to identify, develop, and support youth athletes who aspire to compete at the highest levels of triathlon. Our mission is to provide world-class coaching and a training environment that prepares athletes for national championships, NCAA opportunities, international competition, World Championships, and ultimately, the Olympic Games. We value discipline, sportsmanship, and personal growth as much as performance.

Overview:

The SLAP HPS Team is designed for athletes ages 12–19 who are competitive in the sport of triathlon and wish to pursue the draft-legal racing pathway.

Staff:

- **Head Coach: Sara McLarty** – Former USA Triathlon National Team member, multiple World Championship swimming medalist, Olympic team leader/coach. Background as an NCAA swimmer (University of Florida) and youth & junior triathlete.
- **Coach: Jodie Stimpson** – Commonwealth Games Champion, WTS podium finisher, and professional triathlete across short- and middle-distance racing. Specialist in running performance.
- **Assistant Coach: Todd Shellenberger** – Parent of a professional athlete (Drew Shellenberger), age-group draft-legal racer, and multi-time Team USA World Championships qualifier.
- **Assistant Coach: Omar Rodriguez** – USAT Certified Coach with a long history of athlete development in Puerto Rico. Father of SLAP HPS athlete.
- **Team Manager: Amanda McKnatt** – Oversees operations, logistics, and athlete-family communication. Triathlete and passionate supporter of the SLAP Tri Team.

(Full bios available upon request or on website for families who want deeper detail.)

Qualifications:

SLAP HPS athletes must meet all the following benchmarks:

- train with a year-round competitive swimming team
- a 5k run time under 26:30 (or under 17 minutes for 2 miles)
- have a competitive road bike with clipless pedals and triathlon-specific bike shoes
- be between race-age 12-19

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info@slaptriteam.com

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Season:

The 2026 SLAP HPS season runs from January through August, with the program culminating at the USA Triathlon Youth & Junior National Championships. This eight-month block serves as the primary training and racing season, where athletes receive full coaching support, structured training, and targeted race preparation. From September through December, athletes may either continue in the HPS program under the same fee structure or take a break to focus on school and club sports such as swimming, cross country, and track. Those who pause are expected to maintain fitness independently in all three sports to be prepared to restart in January.

During the off-season, athletes are strongly encouraged to join drop-in sessions with the HPS group (such as Sunday Spins or Super Saturdays) and schedule one-on-one coaching to address weaknesses identified during the season and set goals for the year ahead.

Training:

The SLAP HP Squad is \$250 per month and must be paid monthly for 8 months (from January to August) or in a lump sum (\$2000) at the start of the year. The monthly fee includes the following:

- daily personalized coaching and workouts using Training Peaks to provide specific workouts for each athlete
- biweekly video chats scheduled with Coach Sara, Coach Jodie, the athlete, and at least one parent to review training, discuss issues, and make recommendations for the future
- weekly communication check-in texts to see how training is progressing and if there are any changes necessary to the schedule
- unlimited communication for questions, confusion, clarification and to discuss any potential or current injuries (a video chat can also be scheduled as soon as possible by the request of the athlete or family)
- designing a successful race plan for the season and specify the importance of each race (A, B, C, etc) as well as setting short term and long-term goals for the athlete
- in-person group training opportunities including weekend workouts, destination camps/clinics, pre-race course familiarizations, etc
- one monthly private session with a coach to work on a specific skill or sport that needs improvement (additional monthly sessions will have a small coaching fee, all pool sessions will have a \$25 lane rental fee)
- race-specific training sessions ahead of "A" races designed to prepare the athletes for the demands of each specific race course
- general nutrition and race-day nutrition oversight for training, pre training, post training, race days, as well as preparing through the school day for PM training
- additional fees for camps to cover costs of food, Airbnb, rentals, etc.

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Racing:

The SLAP High Performance Squad is focused on preparing athletes for the USA Triathlon Youth & Junior Development Cup Series and the National Championships. The season typically begins in March with the Clermont Draft-Legal Races at Lake Louisa State Park, which provide valuable local opportunities to practice draft-legal racing before the Cup races begin. For younger athletes, race-age 12 competitors get their first experience with draft-legal racing in Clermont and may also choose to compete in the non-draft division at Nationals in August.

Throughout the year, athletes will also participate in local youth triathlons, short sprint events, swim meets, running races, and cycling competitions to build confidence in competitive environments.

Coaches Sara and Jodie will travel with the team to all Cup races and Nationals, providing on-course coaching, organized course previews, warm-ups, pre-race meetings, team dinners, and race-day motivation. At these events, the team will set up a dedicated area under the SLAP tent to give athletes a professional and supportive environment for preparation and recovery.

Gear:

We will place an order for new team gear in Nov/Dec before the season starts. Pricing will be posted ASAP. In 2026, each HPS athlete will be outfitted in (this list is not final, to be modified when we determine pricing, etc):

- 1 – polo shirt
- 1 – casual/run shirt
- 1 – cycling kit (jersey and shorts or bibs)
- 2 – racing kits (only 1 needed if you already have one from 2025)
- 2 – SLAP Tri Team swim caps (possibly personalized)
- 1 – Nationals shirt (provided by team)

See HPS Expectations for gear usage guidelines.

Family Involvement & Obligations:

The success of the SLAP High Performance Squad depends heavily on the commitment and involvement of parents and families. Beyond transporting athletes to training sessions and races, families play an active role in creating a safe, organized, and professional environment for the team. Parents are often needed to help with transporting and setting up equipment such as transition racks, trainers, tents, and team flags, as well as volunteering at training sessions, races, and camps. Parents may also be asked to assist with driving athletes, providing support vehicles on long rides, guarding intersections during workouts, or helping prepare group meals after training. This support ensures that the athletes and coaches can focus on performance while knowing that safety and logistics are fully covered.

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In 2026, every family is expected to contribute at least five hours of volunteer time throughout the season and participate in fundraising efforts with the SLAP HPS Boosters (contact Mike Baril), which help maintain and update team equipment for future seasons.

Finally, because athlete safety is our highest priority, parents are strongly encouraged to complete USA Triathlon's SafeSport training as an additional safeguard alongside the certified coaching staff. By working together, families and coaches create a team culture where athletes feel supported, protected, and empowered to thrive. Take the [online course HERE](#).

Wellness & Academic Balance:

At SLAP, we recognize that our HPS athletes are also students with academic, social, and personal responsibilities. Our goal is to help athletes achieve excellence in sport without sacrificing their long-term health or education. HPS athletes are encouraged to prioritize recovery, nutrition, and sleep to support consistent training and competition results.

Just as importantly, they are expected to maintain strong academic performance, communicate school or scheduling conflicts in advance, and develop healthy routines that balance sport with family, friends, and education. Mental well-being is considered just as vital as physical preparation, and athletes are urged to speak openly with coaches if they are experiencing stress, burnout, or challenges that affect their training. By promoting this balance, we try to prepare our athletes not only for success in triathlons, but also for a lifetime of healthy habits and resilience.

Disciplinary Policy

Failure to meet the SLAP HPS Athlete Expectations (below) may result in:

1. Verbal/written warning (parents informed).
2. Probationary period with performance/behavior goals.
3. Removal from the HPS program if issues remain unresolved.

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Athlete Expectations:

- I will always be respectful to the SLAP coaching staff, parent volunteers, and towards all my teammates and competitors. I understand that disrespect or lack of sportsmanship may result in my removal from the team.
- I will respond in a timely manner to all communications from the coaching staff. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. I will respond to text messages within 4 hours.
- I understand the SLAP HPS Team Gear Guidelines:
 - I will always wear a cycling kit (jersey and bibs or cycling shorts) for bike workouts (unless it is a specific multi-brick or transition practice and then I can wear a tri kit).
 - I will wear my SLAP HPS team cycling kit on all group rides.
 - I will wear my SLAP HPS team run shirt on all group run sessions. I understand this shirt does not have to remain ON for the whole training session, but I will show up to practice IN the team shirt.
 - I will always wear a SLAP swim cap for group swim workouts and pre-race swim course previews.
 - I will wear my SLAP HPS team polo shirt in these situations and any other situations where I choose to proudly represent my team:
 - At the race venue when I'm not training or racing.
 - At team meals/gatherings before or after races.
 - Before/during/after any SLAP group training session to look professional.
 - I will always strive to be in SLAP team gear when I am with the team. I will bring all my SLAP gear from this year and past years and wear it until I run out of clean SLAP team gear.
- I will be responsible for my own equipment. I will check it over regularly, I will notice when items need to be replaced, and I will clean and maintain my gear for performance:
 - I will always have an unscratched and working pair of clear and metallic goggles for races and practice sessions.
 - I will always have a backup SLAP tri kit in case I forget mine, if it gets damaged, if it gets lost, or if a teammate needs to borrow one.
 - I will keep my bike in clean and working condition. I will schedule regular tune ups at the bike shop. I will clean my bike and check my cleats and tires for wear every 2 weeks (or immediately after a rainy/wet ride). I will lube my chain after I clean my bike.
 - I will always bring 2 pairs of running shoes to workouts and races. One pair of "trainers" for warm up & long runs. One pair of "racing carbons" for racing & speed sessions.
- If I (or a SLAP Coach) notices that something is wrong or needs to be fixed/adjusted with ANY of my gear...I will get it remedied before the next training session. I understand that being repetitively reminded to fix/replace gear is unacceptable.

Athlete's Signature

Date

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Athlete Mindset & Conduct:

- Control what you can control. Concentrate on yourself and do what you need to do to achieve goals.
- Focus on making progress. Do not aim for perfection...it is unattainable. Aim to do better than yesterday.
- Have fun. Enjoy the whole journey or stop doing it. A happy athlete is a committed athlete.
- Arrive at all training sessions and events with a positive outlook.
 - Understand that you will be working hard to reach your goals.
 - Realize that you will be pushed outside of your comfort zone.
 - Accept the challenges presented to you with passion.
- NO EXCUSES!! Do not blame anyone or anything for your performance. Learn from a bad experience and figure out how to prevent it or improve on it next time.
- Be self-reliant. Take care of yourself. Do ALL things for yourself...if you don't know how, ask for help and learn for next time.
- Take ownership. Remember the 5Ps: Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance
- Display good sportsmanship in public and in private. Say positive things about other people or don't say anything at all.
- Be on time! Early = on time & on time = late.
- Always have team spirit and support your teammates and friends during their events. This includes events, training, and anything outside of sport.
- Be inclusive. Welcome new people to the group, be friendly, don't exclude anyone for any reason.
- Be honest with yourself.
 - Declare your intentions, state your goals, and acknowledge the path required to achieve them.
 - Don't lie, make excuses, or lay blame.
 - Most importantly, be honest with yourself and the people on this journey with you.

Athlete's Signature

Date

*Please keep a copy of these signed forms in a prominent location.