

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

NiceTri Triathlon Club, St Neots Social Media Policy

Introduction

Members of NiceTri Triathlon Club enjoy the opportunities and rewards of a community-based sports club combined with affiliation to national triathlon, cycling and running associations. It is subsequently expected that members will uphold the ethos of the Club in all social media interactions. Members will not act in such a way that the image of NiceTri is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms it's immediate and wider triathlon community.

Purpose

Social media is a prominent method of communication for the Club, where we can express opinions, and is a key way we engage with the members of our club, along with the wider community. It is important for us to have a policy to demonstrate how we ensure we are represented in a suitable way and can take action should the need arise. We are taking this opportunity to remind our members of the importance of ensuring that all our social networking streams should be used thoughtfully and responsibly.

Defining Social Media

We have a number of social media sources which we take advantage of: these are examples of what we currently use and does not constitute an exhaustive list:

- Facebook groups
- Facebook page
- Instagram
- WhatsApp groups

There are a number of others which are not named here, but these should be considered to be any electronic communication where individuals can interact online, be it within applications or on web pages, where the banner includes the Club's name or branding, in part or in full.

Content

While the Club positively encourages social networking among members, we are mindful of the need to ensure that all content is suitable for publication and does not breach any laws or common decency. It is not acceptable to post, amongst others, items that may include reference to a person's ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, faith, gender, sexual orientation or disability, and any member found to have posted such items will be subject to disciplinary action. Comments of this nature may attract civil or criminal action against the author(s). In addition, any abuse of other clubs, associations or volunteers may bring the sport into disrepute and lead to disciplinary sanctions against both the author and/or the Club. Participants should be aware that comments which bring the sport into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, may lead to disciplinary action. Comments can also attract civil and criminal action.

Cyber Bullying

All reports of cyber-bullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully and may result in notification to the police where NiceTri is obliged to do so. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension, or banning from membership of NiceTri. Members must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by the police over which NiceTri will have no control.

General Guidance

NiceTri platforms are public forums, so treat them as such.

- Members are expected to show respect to others, including other members of NiceTri and the wider triathlon community, and to act at all times within the core values of the sport.
- Individuals and organisations are strictly responsible for any posting on their account(s).
- Individuals must respect the rights and confidentiality of others.
- Re-posting or re-tweeting inappropriate content represents an endorsement of that content and can be actionable.
- Do not use abusive, derogatory, vulgar or sexual language.
- Do not criticise or imply bias in officials or volunteers.
- At all times, exercise discretion and respect for teams, athletes, supporters and volunteers.
- Deleting or apologising publicly for an improper posting does not prevent disciplinary action being taken.
- Consider “protecting” Tweets and changing security/visibility of Facebook accounts.

Do's and Don'ts

Follow the general guidelines above and:

- Do show your personality and be approachable.
- Do share your achievements.
- Do let people know what it is like to be a member of the club.
- Do post regular comments to grow and engage with an audience.
- Do report any content that you encounter that is in breach of this policy.
- Don't comment if you have any concerns about the consequences.
- Don't link to unsuitable content.
- Don't get into disputes with audience.
- Don't share or elicit personal detail.

Take down policy

Clubs can be liable for third party comments and postings made on any of their social media platforms.

We insist that:

- Participants clearly identify themselves.
- Participants follow standards mentioned above and align to Triathlon England's core values

- Should an administrator deem an article, post or comment contradicts the guidelines above it will be taken down at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The club will hold members to account for any breaches.

Reporting

Any grievance, criticism or resentment should be directed in person to the individual. Matters of a more serious or contentious nature should be discussed with the Club's Committee, via the Club secretary, by emailing crowleytracy@gmail.com

Safeguarding

Nicetri Triathlon Club offers adult-only membership. Despite this, it must also ensure that there is nothing on its website nor social media, which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. The club is responsible for the content of its website. Social media content, which can be posted by all members, will be moderated to ensure inappropriate content is removed.

When posting on social media there are two key risks to guard against:

1. **Disclosing personal information about a child on social media:** this could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.
2. **Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on social media:** this includes material which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information which places undue pressure on the child to participate in some aspect of a clubs' activities.

Online Photos and video

Photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child (name, address, activities or interests) is also disclosed. Furthermore, posting an image on social media carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.

Guidance for club members:

- Use group images, rather than individual images.
- For images of individual children (such as in action shots) where possible use models or illustrations.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress, to minimise the risk of inappropriate adaptation of the image.
- If a child is named on the site, do not include an image (individual or group). If a child features in an image on the site, do not use the child's first name or last name, either in text on the site or in the image file name.

Nicetri Triathlon Club will obtain consent from the appropriate responsible person(s) before using any images of children or vulnerable adults on its website.

Webcams and Live Image Streams

NiceTri Triathlon Club will not use webcams to stream live images of children or vulnerable adults without the express permission of their parent or carer.

Mobile and Online Communication with Children

Technology is moving very fast in this area. There are now many different ways for people to communicate. In addition to landlines, there are mobile phones for voice and text, and almost all new phones incorporate cameras that take still shots and video. Two-way video calling is commonplace. Online communication can be by email, instant messaging and social networking sites.

The risks posed by such methods of communication arise from:

- The privacy. It is often one-to-one.
- The wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature.
- The ease with which images can be forwarded onto others.
- The difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with. Where grooming happens, it often involves this type of communication.

In sport, there are additional risks:

- Inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children (such as to participate when injured).
- There can be inappropriate criticism of a young athlete's performance.
- An official position or role within a club, such as Coach, can carry with it a level of authority and engender a level of trust that facilitates the control of a child.

Against this background, NiceTri Triathlon Club will not directly contact a child or vulnerable adult by mobile phone unless prior consent is given by the parent or carer.

Club Guidelines:

- As the club only offers adult membership, contact with children is unlikely to be required. Where communication is necessary, emails should only be sent using email groups comprising email addresses given by parents. An email should not be sent to a child unless the parent is also copied. Such emails should only come from a Committee Member.
- Other Online (Social Media) Services. No Club Member may initiate a social media outlet that is directly linked and intended to be used by NiceTri Club members without the express permission of the Committee. Administrators of social media outlets must ensure the content complies with the Website and Message Board policy above. Further:

Twitter can be used for broadcasting information but must not be used for 1-1 (Direct) Messaging between Adults and Young People. Content must conform to the Website and Message Board policy above

Facebook. Communication via Facebook is permitted only via public club Facebook pages where the content is public and conforms to the Website and Message Board policy above. Private, closed groups and 1-1 messaging between members and Young People must have the permission of the club.

Other online and social media services whether public or private are not permitted. Requests to add other services to the approved list should be directed to the Club Secretary.

Sanctions

Any club member failing foul of this policy could face disciplinary action from the Club, which could lead to expulsion from the Club.

Author(s):

James Wood, Jan 2022