



**U.S. MASTERS  
SWIMMING**  
OPEN WATER

# USMS Open Water Guide to Operations

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## *Part 2: Open Water Safety Guidelines*

*Revision Date: January 2016*

### **Addendum A: Open Water Safety Plan Application**

When applying for a USMS sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC). **All events are required to use this application to submit their safety plan (OWGTO Part 1: Sanction Guidelines, Article OW-102.4).**

Maps shall be uploaded using the additional documents upload capability of the sanction system or by attaching them at the end of this safety plan, including a Google Earth Map (or equivalent) of race course. Indicate on the map the locations of the start/finish, turn buoys, intermediate buoys, all safety craft, Lifeguard/First Responders, onsite medical care, feeding stations, evacuation points, etc.

## **Event Information**

### **Basic Information**

Name of Host: Madison Area Masters (Madison Swim Club, Inc.)  
Name of Event: Madison Open Water Swim  
Event Location: Law Park, 355 John Nolen Dr. Madison WI 53703  
Event Dates: 8/20/2016 through 8/20/2016  
City: Madison State: WI LMSC: Wisconsin  
Length of Race(s): 1.2 miles & 2.4 miles

### **Key Event Personnel**

Director(s): Suzi Green 608-576-8215 & Mark Schreiber 847-323-4089  
Phone: Green: 608-576-8215/ Schreiber 847-323-4089 E-mail: [greensuzi@ameritech.net](mailto:greensuzi@ameritech.net) / [mschreiber58@gmail.com](mailto:mschreiber58@gmail.com)  
Referee: Cathie Marty Phone: 608-220-0152 E-mail: [Cathie.marty@gmail.com](mailto:Cathie.marty@gmail.com)  
Safety Director: Jerry Lourigan. Phone: 608-221-8167 E-mail: [jerry53716@att.net](mailto:jerry53716@att.net)  
Ind. Safety Monitor: TBD Phone: 000-000-0000 E-mail: [Click to enter e-mail address](#)

## About U.S. Masters Swimming

U.S. Masters Swimming, founded in 1970, is a membership-operated national governing body that promotes health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults through swimming. It does so by partnering with more than 1,500 adult swim programs across the country; promoting information via the bimonthly member magazine, SWIMMER, monthly e-newsletters, STREAMLINES, and website, [usms.org](http://usms.org); and by sanctioning and promoting pool, open water and virtual events and competitions. More than 55,000 adults are registered members of U.S. Masters Swimming.

**Part 2: Open Water Safety Guidelines****Water Quality**

It is recommended that one week prior to the event, check water quality. If results returned are inconsistent with the local governing body's standards, notify swimmers who participated in the event of any known exposures post-race. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Referee or the Meet Director shall have the authority to postpone or cancel the race. It is recommended to take and retain water samples on race day and retain for reference.

The city of Madison regularly checks beaches on lake Monona and posts water quality issues on the following website: <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/environmental/water/beaches/> We will be watching the website for any concerns in water quality. The swimmer can also watch for any concerns on his/her own. If there are any concerns the week of the race, the city can be contacted at 608-266-4821

**Pre-Race Officials Meeting (required) all officials and safety personnel must attend**

Tentative date: 8/20/2016 Time: 7:45 AM

Tentative agenda: Officials, lifeguards, and kayakers will be informed of directions for the course, which is swimming counter-clockwise around the outside of the corners bouys. Safety is the primary concern. If there are concerns of a swimmer finishing safely, the water support may assist a swimmer to exit the water, most likely on to a support boat. There is a time limit on the event. If a swimmer is still on the course after 2.5 hours, officials will be instructed to remove the swimmer(s). If the race must be cancelled due to safety considerations, during the swim, the official will sound an air horn with three long three long blasts. Swimmers need to be guided to the nearest possible place to exit the water, either at the entry point or by the first turn buoy. Kayakers and emergency evacuation power boats will assist in evacuation. Kayakers and lifeguards should keep swimmers on the course for safety reasons. Kayakers and lifeguards will be spaced evenly on the course based on where the swimmers are on the course, and adjusting as needed. Kayakers and lifeguards should also be watching each other to help provide overlapping coverage. The course will not be dismantled until all swimmers are accounted for.

**Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required) all swimmers must attend to participate in race**

Tentative date: 8/20/2016 Time: 8:15 AM.

Tentative agenda: Swimmers will be informed of water temperature and directions for the course, which is swimming counter-clockwise around the outside of the corners bouys. Safety is the primary concern. If there are concerns of a swimmer finishing safely, the water support may request the swimmer to exit the water, most likely on to a support boat. There is a time limit on the event. Any swimmer still on the course after 2.5 hours after the start of the event will be removed. Swimmers will be informed of the procedure and order of entering the water and finishing. Swimmers are required to return their timing chips. If chip is lost or the swimmer voluntarily leaves the water early, he/she must and report the chip number. If the race must be cancelled due to safety considerations during the swim, the official will sound an air horn with three long three long blasts. Swimmers need to immediately swim to the nearest possible place to exit the water, either at the entry point or by the first turn buoy. Kayakers and emergency evacuation power boats will assist in evacuation. Kayakers and lifeguards should keep swimmers on the course for safety reasons. Kayakers and lifeguards will be spaced evenly on the course based on where the swimmers are on the course, and adjusting as needed. Kayakers and lifeguards should also be watching each other to help provide overlapping coverage. The course will not be dismantled until all swimmers are accounted for.

**Event Conditions**

**If water temperature is potentially less than 64° F, complete the Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims section of this form.**

**Race Day conditions**

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Expected air temp: 68 to 80 deg F. Expected water temp: 72 to 78 deg F. Wetsuits: Optional based on race day conditions

Body of water: Lake Water type: Fresh Water Water depth from: 0 feet to: 40 feet

Course: Closed-only event watercraft allowed

If open course, please indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.

Agency name: Dane County Sheriff How to contact during event: 608-284-6878, Channel 16

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards) **smooth to minor waves**

How is the course marked?

Turn buoy - Height(s) 5 feet Color(s) Orange Shape(s) Round

Guide buoy - Height(s) 2 feet Color(s) Orange Shape(s) Round

Approximate distance between Guide buoys: about a 100 yards

**Feeding Stations**

Designated area that nourishment may be passed on to swimmers. It is recommended that the feeding station be a boat, series of boats, or barge.

Number of Feeding Stations: 0

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): No feeding stations, if for some reason needs food for medical reasons on the course a designated kayak will be used for the swimmer

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: 0

**Event Safety**

**Medical Personnel**

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Ryan Bros., EMT

Experience in extreme events (Marathon, Triathlon, Open water swim, etc.): Yes

Will medical personnel be located on the course? No

The number of medical personnel will be dependent on the course layout, number of swimmers in the water, expected conditions, etc. How many medical personnel do you plan to have on site? 2

**First Responders/Lifeguards**

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: ARC Lifeguards

Number on course: 10, 8 shown on the map; 2 on boats placement TBD Number on land: 0

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

**Ambulance/Emergency Transportation**

Ambulance(s) onsite: Phone # or radio channel On Call: 911

Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies? Yes



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**Warm-up/Warm-down Plan**

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down. There is no scheduled supervised warm up for the event.

**Communications**

Primary method between Meet Officials: Radio Secondary method: Cell Phone

Primary method for communicating between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft: Radio (separate channel from Meet Officials) Secondary method: Cell Phone

**Swimmer Management**

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 500

If more swimmers show up on race day, what is the procedure for adjusting the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries? Race day entries will not be allowed.

How are the lifeguard staff and safety crafts distributed to supervise this event to maximize the recognition, rescue and treatment of any swimmer? Evenly on the course, and adjusting positions as required depending where the swimmers are on the course

How is the safety staff deployed to maximize the rapid response to a troubled swimmer? Boat, with the prop guard, will be called over to the kayak or lifeguard on the water to transport the swimmer to the start/finish of the race where medical attention will be given

How will the event be altered if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available race day? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Describe your missing swimmer plan: At the conclusion of the race, all chips will be accounted for. If a swimmer is thought to be missing, a phone call will be place to both the swimmer and the listed emergency contact. If it is determined that a swimmer is indeed missing, Madison Search and Rescue will be summoned.

**Severe Weather**

Is a lightning detector or weather radio available on site? No

Describe your severe weather plan: The event may be delayed up to an hour. If the event cannot start after an hour, the event will be cancelled.

Describe your course and site evacuation plan: Notify swimmer to swim directly to shore where it is possible to exit the water. All swimmers will be instructed to return to the staging area to return timing chips.

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**Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims**

General Information
Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state: (1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 60° F. (15.6° C.), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place. (2) A swim in which heat retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 57° F. (13.9° C.), unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.
Remember the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to cold water, so even a small drop in water temperature—especially in the colder ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues (1 Cold Shock Response, 2 Cold Incapacitation, 3 Hypothermia and 4 Circum-rescue Collapse) and hypothermia. Be Prepared!
If your swim has a remote chance of having water temperature less than 60° F., you are <b>REQUIRED</b> to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.
If your swim has a chance of having water temperature on the course less than 64° F., you are <b>URGED STRONGLY</b> to complete the thermal plan.

**To increase swimmer preparation before the event, we will...**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Emphasize & stress cold water swim conditions. | No |
| 2. Require prior cold water swim experience.      | No |
| 3. Require swimmer cold water preparation plan.   | No |

Specify details for the above responses: We do not except the temperature of the water to be unreasonable for this swim. We do post the water temperature and if the water temperature is extreme swimmer will be given notice before entering the water.

**To reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues, we will...**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Cancel the swim(s).                  | Yes |
| 2. Shorten swim(s).                     | Yes |
| 3. Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers. | No  |
| 4. Require wetsuits for all swimmers.   | No  |

Specify details for the above responses: Currently do not except and issue with cold related temperatures. We plan for any individual issue with the cold by having blankets and towels available to dry and cover the swimmers. There is the potential for overheating and cramping for swimmer wearing wetsuits. Swimmers will be removed from the water and wetsuit removed along with providing water to swimmer.

**To mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues, we will...**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.   | No  |
| 2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.  | No  |
| 3. Bring in more emergency craft & first responders on the course.  | No  |
| 4. Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations.   | No  |
| 5. Have special procedures for removing swimmers from the water and venue (different than normal trauma rescues). | No  |
| 6. Increase warm beverages after the swim.  | No  |
| 7. Increase thermal treatment gear (e.g. blankets, hot water bottles, etc.)                                       | Yes |

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- 8. Make hot showers available on-site. No
- 9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site. Yes
- 10. Other #1: Specify
- 11. Other #2: Specify

Specify details for the above responses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**To understand event thermal issues we will...**

Complete recommended thermometer readings as follows: Yes

Using an accurate thermometer, the event host should take three to five measurements at various places on the course—12 to 18 inches below the water surface and no closer to the shore than 25 meters (if possible)—within one hour before the start of an open water swim. The host should average these measurements, post and/or announce the resulting average temperature at least 30 minutes before the start of the swim, and announce it during the pre-race staff safety and swimmers’ meetings.

If you answered No above, describe how and where water temperature will be measured: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Attach course map below**

