



OPEN WATER

SWIMMING (OW)

OFFICIATING - LEVEL 2

June 21, 2021

PREFERRED PREREQUISITES



- Introduction to Open Water Swimming Officiating (Level 1) required
- A general interest in the sport of swimming
- An interest in the fair conduct of sport
- An up to date, Open Water Swimming rule book in hand:
<https://swimming.ca/content/uploads/2018/05/2017-Rulebook-05-03-18-12pt-1.pdf>

OFFICIATING PATHWAY



In order to complete your certification as a Level 1 Open Water official you must obtain the following experiences in an open water swimming competition:

- 1 experience as Turn Judge
- 1 experience as Timekeeper or Finish Judge

You may participate in the Open Water Level 2 Clinic, however you are not eligible for Level 2 certification until you have met both Level 1 and Level 2 certification criteria.

Note: The Level 3 Open Water Certification Clinic is only available to certified Level 2 Open Water officials.

CONTENT

- Brief Review
- Officiating (Roles)
 - Event Director / Meet Manager
 - Safety Officer
 - Recorder
 - Clerk of Course
 - Course Officer
 - Starter
 - Chief Timekeeper
 - Chief Finish Judge
- Apparel Review



TERMS/ACRONYMS



- **CMOWS** - Canadian Masters Open Water Swimming rule
- **COWS** - a Canadian Open Water Swimming rule
- **FINA** - Fédération Internationale de Natation
- **OWS** - Open Water Swimming Rule

THE COURSE

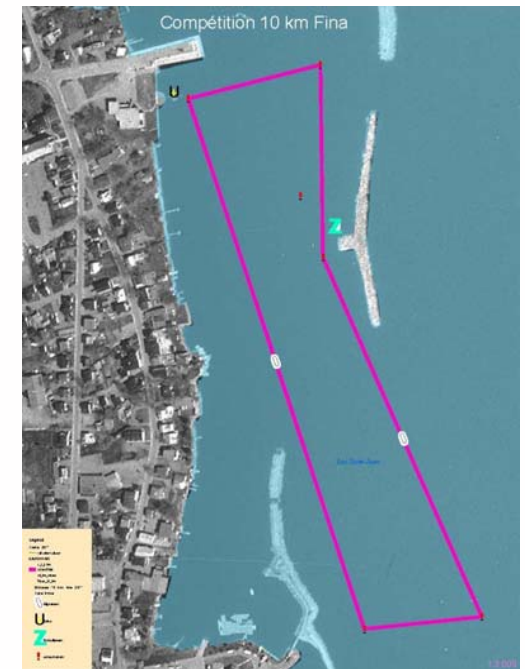


- Starting line
 - Dock start
 - In water start
- Markers
 - Turns
 - Course markers
- Finish line
 - Funnel entrance
 - Vertical plane



THE COURSE

- Parallel to a shoreline
- Point to point
- Lake and river swims
- Closed course marked by buoys
- Ocean swims
- Any combination of above



THE FINISH



- Finish Judges and Timekeepers placed in an exclusive area so they can easily observe finish (clusters of swimmers)
- Easy for swimmer representatives to get from escort safety craft to assist swimmers leaving water





EVENT DIRECTOR DUTIES

EVENT DIRECTOR (MEET MANAGER) DUTIES



The role of the Event director is not defined in the FINA Open Water Swimming Rules however the role is essential to the planning and delivery of a successful Open Water Swimming competition.

Responsibilities

- The Event director (meet manager) is responsible for coordinating the planning, organization and delivery of the competition. They centralize the communication and assures the resolution of organizational problems.
- They are also the general manager of the entire competition. They have duties before, during and after the event.

BEFORE THE EVENT



- Along with the organizing committee, prepare the operations plan for the Open Water competition
 - Venue (courses on water and land location)
 - Safety
 - Schedule, etc ...
- Receive the start lists from the Recorder
- Ensure that Officials, Technical and Safety Meetings are held
- See that set timelines are respected
- Ensure the liaison of the different groups present on the site. (Organizing committee, officials, volunteers, etc.)

Mandatory Minimum Equipment

- Radio for communication

DURING & AFTER THE EVENT



During the event

- Centralize information.
- Work with volunteers and officials (Chief Referee, Safety Officer, Clerk of Course, etc...) to ensure the smooth running of the competition and that all tasks are looked after.
- Anticipate and communicate any issues that may arise with special attention to issues concerning safety (ex: swimmer in difficulty).
- Distribute blankets or other clothing to warm boat drivers and medical personnel, and swimmers upon exiting the water.

After the event

- Co-ordinate the site breakdown.
- Ensure that everything is finalized. (i.e.: results, anti-doping)



THE OFFICIALS



SAFETY OFFICER DUTIES

BEFORE THE EVENT



- Verify the start and arrival zones are safe and free of hazards
- Verify the course with the Chief Referee, Course Officer and, at international meets, the FINA Delegate
- Confirm the safety protocol – confirm the number and role of the rescuers
- Hold a safety meeting with all those involved with event safety – doctor, land and water rescue units, water security – share all information regarding hazardous conditions, at least one hour before the start
- If necessary, distribute information signaling particular dangers (tide, currents, obstacles, etc.) to the participants

BEFORE THE EVENT (cont'd)



- Receive the start lists from the Recorder.
- Submit Safety Officer report to the Chief Referee at the least 15 minutes prior to the start of the race.
- Identify safety boats with numbers and ensure radio contact.

Minimum Material Requirements

- Paper and pencils
- Radio contact with all first responders, safety personnel and officials on the course.



DURING THE EVENT

The Safety Officer follows the event from land.

- Co-ordinate safety
- Verify, with the withdrawal official, the return to land of all contestants who abandon the race.
- Inform safety personnel and Referees of all incidents.

SAFETY IS A LIFESTYLE



SAFETY
ON THE
SEA

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO SAFETY OFFICER ROLE



OWS 3.34 - *Be responsible to the Referee for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition.*

OWS 3.35 - *Check that the entire course, with special regard to the start and finish areas, is safe, suitable, and free of any obstruction.*

OWS 3.36 - *Be responsible for ensuring that sufficient powered safety craft are available during the competition so as to provide full safety backup to the escort safety craft.*

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO SAFETY OFFICER ROLE



(cont'd)

OWS 3.37 - *Provide prior to the competitions to all swimmers a tide/current chart clearly indicating the time of tide changes on the course and showing the effect of tides or current on a swimmer's progress along the course.*

OWS 3.38 - *In conjunction with the Medical Officer advise the Referee if, in their opinion, conditions are unsuitable for staging the competition and make recommendations for the modification of the course or the manner in which the competition is conducted.*

OWS 5.5.1 *The Safety Officer shall monitor temperature conditions periodically during the race.*



RECORDER DUTIES

BEFORE THE EVENT



- Record the scratches
- Finalize the start lists
- Distribute the start lists to all officials and the announcer

Minimum Material Requirements

- Computer
- Printer with copying capabilities
- Radio or communication system

DURING THE EVENT



- Receive and register all information from the Referees
- Communicate with all judges on the water, especially Referees
- Advise the Chief Referee every time there is an infringement
- Advise if a swimmer withdraws or is withdrawn
- Keep all the reports

AFTER THE EVENT



- Establish the results, submit them to the Chief Referee for their signature and provide them to the Awards Chair.
- The function of the Chief Recorder is generally done by the IT Manager, except for International events where a person will be assigned at this position.



FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO RECORDER ROLE



OWS 3.53 *Record withdrawals from the competition, enter results on official forms, and maintain record for team awards as appropriate.*

OWS 3.54 *Report any violation to the Chief Referee on a signed card detailing the event, and the rule infringement.*



CLERK OF COURSE DUTIES

QUALITIES OF THE CLERK OF COURSE



- Attention to detail: to avoid mistakes and complete all tasks in allotted time under a certain amount of pressure.
- Courteous: to work with a variety of people as a team and communicate effectively. Often the first contact at a competition for the coaches.
- Exact: to transfer appropriate and correct information.
- Efficient: to delegate tasks appropriately and avoid duplication of work.
- Methodical: to avoid omissions.
- Patient: to maintain a calm outward appearance.

BEFORE THE EVENT



- The Clerk of Course is responsible for gathering, preparing and organizing the swimmers to the start line
- Inform the markers, marshals and all other persons working with the Clerk of Course, the specific tasks assigned to them
- Ensure the participant's reception area is ready
- Receive the start lists from the Recorder
- Ensure that the swimmers are not wearing any jewelry including watches and piercings, and that their finger and toe nails are clipped short
- Verify the swimmer's markings and their chip bracelets if they are being used

BEFORE THE EVENT (cont'd)



- Verify that swimmer's bathing suits respect FINA rules for Open Water Swimwear. For further information, please refer to the [FINA Requirements for Swimwear Approval \(FRSA\)](#). GR5 Rules and BL8 By-Laws
- Gather the participants in the designated zone prior to the start.
- Keep swimmers informed of the time remaining before the start (30min., 15min., 5min., 4min., ...1min.)
- Record the swimmers entering the water to confirm number to Referees, Safety Officer, Chief Referee, Turn Judges, Recorder, etc.
- Take care of bags and swimmer accreditation cards during the race to return them to the swimmers at end of the race

BEFORE THE EVENT (cont'd)



Minimum Material Requirements

- Course plan with area indicated for swimmers' personal effects
- Start list
- Large black indelible felt pens (20mm) or stamps or tattoos (note: plan for coloured markers for swimmers with darker complexions)
- Nail clippers or scissors and a liquid disinfectant
- Megaphone or microphone to announce the time remaining to the start
- Access to the FINA swimwear list

DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT



During the event

- Ensure the transfer of the swimmers personal effects from the start zone to finish zone if necessary
- Ensure that all of the swimmer's requirements are available for the end of the race (snacks, blankets, hot beverages, etc.)

After the event

- Count swimmers to ensure they have all returned to land and have been accounted for
- Return accreditation cards, if required
- Continue to ensure that the swimmer's needs are being met at the end of the race (snacks, blankets, liquids, etc.)
- Submit Clerk of Course report to the Chief Referee

MARKERS



Under responsibility of the Clerk of Course

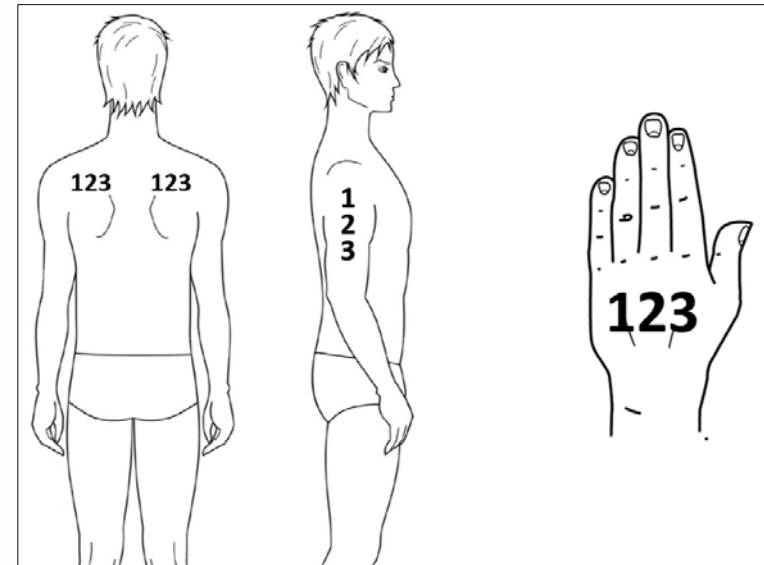
Before the start of the event:

- Control the swimmer identification process (Passport, ID card).
- Request swimmers put on suits prior to marking unless indicated otherwise, or other instructions have been given.
- Verify that the swimmer is not greased.
- Verify finger and toe nails, jewelry, earrings etc.
- In certain competitions, install a microchip transponder according to provided instructions.



MARKER (cont'd)

- Mark the swimmers with the number assigned to them. Ideally, all of the following should be marked:
 - Hands (must be easily visible by video) -
 - Upper arms – numbers must be marked vertically
 - Scapula (shoulder blades) – numbers must be marked horizontally
- Respect the marking model.
- Ensure that numbers are clear and legible.
- If writing numbers by hand, pay special attention to the numbers **1** and **7**
- Ensure that the marking is **not** done by the swimmers or coaches (respect of marking models)





MARKER (cont'd)

During and after the event:

- Prepare swimmers' personal effects, snacks, etc. to be returned to the athletes
- If microchip transponders have been distributed, retrieve them
- Return Accreditation cards at the request of the Clerk of Course

Mandatory minimum equipment

- List of swimmers and their assigned numbers
- Indelible large black felt pens (20mm) or stamps (note: plan for coloured markers for swimmers with darker complexions)
- Chip bracelets if they are being used
- Nail clippers or scissors with a liquid disinfectant



FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO CLERK OF COURSE ROLE



OWS 3.47 *Assemble and prepare competitors prior to each event and ensure proper reception facilities at the finish are available for all competitors.*

OWS 3.48 *Ensure each competitor is identified correctly with their race number and that all swimmers have trimmed fingernails and toenails and are not wearing any jewelry, including watches.*

OWS 3.49 *Be certain all swimmers are present, in the assembly area, at the required time prior to the start.*

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO CLERK OF COURSE ROLE



OWS 3.50 *Keep swimmers and officials informed of the time remaining before the start at suitable intervals until the last five minutes, during which one minute warnings shall be given.*

OWS 3.51 *Be responsible for ensuring that all clothing and equipment left in the start area is transported to the finish area and kept in safekeeping.*

OWS 3.52 *Ensure that all competitors leaving the water at the finish have the basic equipment required for their well-being should their own attendants not be present at that time.*



COURSE OFFICER DUTIES

RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE RACE

- Verify the course with the Chief Referee, Course Officer and, at international meets, the FINA Delegate
- Verify the implementation of the Safety Protocol and Safety Materials
- Attend the Safety Meeting
- Provide safety officials with any pertinent information on dangers, evacuation procedures, etc.
- Receive the start list from the recorder

DURING THE EVENT



- Follows the progress of the race from shore
- Provides replacement equipment when necessary
- Checks the finish area that all equipment is in place and operating
- Ensures the first aid team are in place and the necessary safety material available – warm towels, water, chairs, etc
- Ensures the arrival staff are in place and prepared

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO COURSE OFFICER ROLE



OWS 3.42 *Be responsible to the Management Committee for the correct survey of the course*

OWS 3.43 *ensure that start and finish areas are correctly marked and all equipment has been correctly installed, and where applicable is in working order*

OWS 3.44 *ensure all course alteration points are correctly marked, and installed prior to the commencement of the competition*

OWS 3.45 *with the Referee and Safety Officer inspect the course and markings prior to the commencement of the competition*

OWS 3.46 *ensure that Turn Judges are in position prior to the start of the competition and report this to the Referee*



STARTER DUTIES

BEFORE THE RACE



- Verify that the starting system – electronic starter, gun or other equipment is present and functioning properly
- Verify that there are flags available for the start and the starting platform is safe
- Is present at the technical meeting
- Is knowledgeable of the flag signals used prior to the start of the race.

DURING THE START



- Starter shall be in a position so as to be clearly visible to all competitors, facing the referee:
- The start shall be given by lowering the flag with the arm extended while sounding simultaneously an audible signal once he judges that the swimmers are ready
- When the start is a dive start from a platform the start signal will be preceded by the command 'take your marks'
- Note: the starter may occupy other compatible functions such as Finish Judge.



FINA OPEN WATER RULES RELATED TO THE STARTER



OWS 3.11 *start the race in accordance to OWS 4 following the signal by the Chief Referee.*



CHIEF TIMEKEEPER DUTIES

BEFORE THE EVENT



- Verify that all stopwatches are in working order
- Synchronize stopwatches with the clock giving the official time 15 minutes prior to the start
- Receive the start list from the Recorder
- Assign timekeeper positions at the start and finish of the race

Mandatory Minimum Equipment

- Stopwatch with recording and printing capacity, rolls of paper and batteries
- Clip boards
- Start list
- Pencils

DURING THE EVENT



- The Chief Timekeeper aligns himself, along with a minimum of 2 timekeepers, beside or above the arrival pad taking care to not impede the Chief Finish Judge or the Finish Judges
- Supervises timekeepers
- Receives signed tapes of recorded times from the Timekeepers
- Records the official times and transmits them to the Chief Finish Judge

AFTER THE EVENT



- Gives the order to stop all the stopwatches once the Chief Referee has declared the race finished
- Gives the timekeeper tapes (signed by the timekeepers and the Chief Timekeeper) to the Chief Finish Judge
- Together with the Chief Finish Judge, establishes the times of the swimmers according to the order of arrival recorded by the Finish Judges

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO CHIEF TIMEKEEPER ROLE



OWS 3.12 *Assign at least two Timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish.*

OWS 3.13 *Ensure that a time check is made to allow all persons to synchronize their watches with the official running clocks 15 minutes before start time.*

Note: where tape watches are used, OWS 3.14 and OWS 3.15 are not observed.

OWS 3.14 *Collect from each Timekeeper a card showing the time recorded for each swimmer, and, if necessary, inspect their watches.*

OWS 3.15 *Record or examine the official time on the card for each swimmer.*



CHIEF FINISH JUDGE DUTIES

BEFORE THE EVENT



- Receive, in sufficient number, arrival forms from the Organizing Committee
- Receive the start list from the Recorder
- Indicate to the Finish Judges their positioning at the arrival and the procedure to take the order of arrivals

Minimum Material Requirements

- Pencils
- Start list
- Arrival forms

DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT



- The Chief Finish Judge aligns himself beside or above the arrival pad.
- At each arrival, record the swimmer's number on the arrival forms.

After the event

- Establish the order of arrivals, using their arrival orders and those of the Finish Judges, and submits it to the Chief Referee.
- In conjunction with the Chief Timekeeper, the Chief Finish Judge sets a time for each swimmer using the order of arrival. Time is a ranking tool and should not be used as proof of arrival.
- Collect signed Finish Judges' Arrival Forms

Note: If there is a discrepancy between the judges' order of finish and the time recorded by the timekeepers, the matter is directed to the Referee for their review. Video replay can be extremely helpful in resolving discrepancies.

POSITIONS OF TIMERS AND FINISH JUDGES AT FINISH



FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO CHIEF FINISH JUDGE ROLE



OWS 3.19 *Assign each Finish Judge to a position.*

OWS 3.20 *Record and communicate any decision received from the Referees during the competition.*

OWS 3.21 *Collect after the race, signed results sheets from each Finish Judge and establish the result and placing which shall be sent directly to the Chief Referee.*

FINA OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES RELATED TO CHIEF FINISH JUDGE ROLE



OWS 3.22 *Confirm to each Race Judge their escort boat and instruct them in their duties.*

OWS 3.23 *Record and communicate any decision received from the Referees during the competition.*

OWS 3.24 *Collect after the race, signed sheets from each Race Judge of their observations during the race which shall be sent directly to the Chief Referee.*

Note: *the Finish Judges must not perform Timekeeper functions during the same event.*

FINA WETSUIT AND SWIMSUIT REGULATIONS REVIEW



FINA SWIMSUIT REGULATIONS



BL 8.2 *In swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit.*

BL 8.4 *For open water swimming competitions with water temperature from 20 C swimsuits for both men and women shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the ankle. Subject to these specific shape specifications, swimsuits for open water swimming competitions shall further comply with all other requirements applicable to swimsuits for pool swimming competition.*

FINA WETSUIT REGULATIONS



BL 8.5 *For open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20 C, men and women may use either swimsuits (BL 8.4) or wetsuits. When the water temperature is below 18 C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory. For the purpose of these rules, wetsuits are swimsuits made of material providing thermal insulation. Wetsuits for both men and women shall completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles.*

BL 8.6 *BL 8.1 to BL 8.5 apply also for the masters Open Water competitions.*

OFFICIALS ATTIRE REMINDER



As Open Water Swimming competitions take place outdoors in variable conditions, please ensure you have all the equipment required for the forecasted weather:

- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Jacket
- Gloves
- Sweater
- Raincoat
- Shoes that are appropriate for your assigned position
- Any other clothing that may be needed for the weather conditions

RESOURCES



- Safety Guide, Supplementary Rules, Meet Manager Guidelines:
<https://www.swimming.ca/content/uploads/2021/01/Open-Water-Safety-Guide-and-Event-Director-Guidelines-v13.pdf>

CONGRATULATIONS



You have now completed the Level 2 OWS Clinic.

To be certified as a Level 2 Open Water official you must obtain 2 experiences in the following Open Water positions:

- 1 experience as Clerk of the Course or as Event Director
- 1 experience as Chief Timekeeper or as Chief Finish Judge

To participate in the Open Water Level 3 Clinic you must be certified as a Level 2 Open Water official.



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