

## Masters Swimming Canada

### CANADIAN MASTERS OPEN WATER SWIMMING RULES

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#### CMOWS 1 DEFINITIONS

**CMOWS 1.1** Canadian Masters Open Water Swimming shall be defined as any event held in open water and covering a minimum distance of one(1) km and a maximum distance of ten(10) km. Age groups for Canadian Open Water Swimming shall be in accordance with CMSW 10.1.1 and CMSW 10.4.

**CMOWS 1.2** A Masters Open Water Swimming event may be designated as a MSC OWS Championship by MSC or a provincial or regional Open Water Swimming Championship by a PMO or region.

**CMOWS 1.3** A Canadian Masters Open Water Swimming event shall be an independent event restricted to registered Masters swimmers. When the Masters event is held in conjunction with another Open Water Swimming event the start for the Masters shall be at a different time than all others. Masters swimmers wearing wetsuits shall not start at the same time as the Masters event and shall not be included in Masters results. Results submitted to MSC or the provincial Masters bodies shall list only registered Masters swimmers.

#### CMOWS 2 OFFICIALS

**CMOWS 2.1** Depending on the nature of the course and the number of swimmers, the following officials may be appointed, as deemed necessary by the referee at Open Water Swimming competitions. Depending on the duties, it is possible that one person may perform more than one function. The appointment of an announcer is at the discretion of the organizing committee.

- A Referee
- Assistant Referees
- Starter
- Chief Timekeeper plus 3 Timekeepers
- Chief Judge plus 2 Finish Judges
- Race Judges (one per wave)
- Turn Judges (one per alteration of Course)
- Safety Officer
- Medical Officer
- Course Officer
- Clerk of the Course
- Recorder

Announcer

### **CMOWS 3 DUTIES OF OFFICIALS**

#### **THE REFEREE shall:**

**CMOWS 3.1** have full control and authority over all officials and shall approve their assignments and instruct them regarding all special features or regulations related to the competition. The Referee shall enforce all the Rules and decisions of MSC and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the competition, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these Rules.

**CMOWS 3.2** have authority to intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that MSC Rules are observed.

**MOWS 3.3** adjudicate on all protests related to the competition in progress.

**MOWS 3.4** give a decision in cases where the judges' decision and times recorded do not agree.

**MOWS 3.5** signal to swimmers, by raised flag and short blasts on a whistle, that the start is imminent and when satisfied indicate by pointing the flag at the starter that the competition may commence.

**CMOWS 3.6** disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the Rules that the Referee personally observes or which is reported to the Referee by other authorised officials.

#### **THE ASSISTANT REFEREE shall:**

**CMOWS 3.7** ensure that all necessary officials for the conduct of the competition are at their respective posts. The Assistant Referee may, with the approval of the Referee, appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient. The Assistant Referee may appoint additional officials if considered necessary.

**MOWS 3.8** receive all reports prior to the start of the race from the Clerk of the Course, Course Officer and Safety Officer and inform the Referee of their contents 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the race.

**CMOWS 3.9** Appoint the Race Judges and allocate them to their respective escort safety craft.

#### **THE STARTER shall:**

**MOWS 3.10** be stationed in such a position as to be clearly visible to all competitors.

**MOWS 3.11** on signal of the Referee raise a distinctive flag into the vertical position.

**MOWS 3.12** simultaneously bring the flag holding arm down, with arm kept straight, and activate an audible signal.

**THE CHIEF TIMEKEEPER shall:**

**MOWS 3.13** assign at least three Timekeepers to their positions for the start and finish.

**MOWS 3.14** ensure that a time check is made to allow all persons to synchronise their watches with the official running clocks 15 minutes before start time.

**MOWS 3.15** collect from each Timekeeper a card showing the time recorded for each swimmer, and, if necessary, inspect their watches.

**MOWS 3.16** record or examine the official time on the card for each swimmer.

**TIMEKEEPERS shall:**

**CMOWS 3.17** take the time of each swimmer assigned. The watches must have memory capability and shall be certified correct to the satisfaction of the Management Committee.

**CMOWS 3.18** start their watches at the starting signal, and only stop their watches when instructed by the Chief Timekeeper. Where the course involves more than one circuit, record each lap time of the assigned swimmer.

**MOWS 3.19** promptly after each finish record the time and swimmers' number on the timecard and turn it over to the Chief Timekeeper.

**Note:** When Automatic Officiating Equipment is used, the same complement of hand timers is to be used.

**THE CHIEF JUDGE shall:**

**CMOWS 3.20** assign each Judge to a position or wave of swimmers.

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

**FINISH JUDGES (three, one of whom shall be the Chief Judge) shall:**

**MOWS 3.22** be positioned in line with the finish where they shall have at all times a clear view of the finish.

**MOWS 3.23** record after each finish the placing of the swimmers according to the assignment given (CMOW 3.20).

**Note:** Finish Judges shall not act as Timekeepers in the same event.

**EACH RACE JUDGE shall:**

**CMOWS 3.24** where necessary, be positioned in an escort safety craft, which will accompany the wave they are assigned to.

**MOWS 3.25** ensure at all times that the Rules of competition are complied with, violations being recorded in writing and reported to the Referee at the earliest opportunity.

**MOWS 3.26** have the power to order a swimmer from the water upon expiry of any time limit so ordered by the Referee.

**MOWS 3.27** ensure that the swimmers do not take unfair advantage or commit unsporting impediment on another swimmer and if the situation requires instruct a swimmer to maintain clearance from any other swimmer.

**TURN JUDGES shall:**

**MOWS 3.28** be positioned so as to ensure all swimmers execute the alterations in course as indicated in the competition information documents and as given at the pre-race briefing.

**MOWS 3.29** record any infringement of the turn procedures on the record sheets provided and indicate the infringement to the Race Judge at the time of infringement by blasts on a whistle.

**MOWS 3.30** promptly upon completion of the event deliver the signed record sheet to the Chief Judge.

**THE SAFETY OFFICER shall:**

**MOWS 3.31** be responsible to the Referee for all aspects of safety related to the conduct of the competition.

**MOWS 3.32** check that the entire course, with special regard to the start and finish areas, is safe, suitable, and free of any obstruction.

**CMOWS 3.33** be responsible for ensuring that sufficient safety personnel and craft are available during the competition so as to provide full safety backup to the escort safety craft. Boats should be stationed about the course, if necessary to ensure no boat, jet-ski, windsurfer, etc. encroaches on the course. All diesel and gasoline powered boats up wind to the course shall be anchored and not start their motors except in an emergency situation.

**CMOWS 3.34** if relevant, 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.

**MOWS 3.35** 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.

**THE MEDICAL OFFICER shall:**

**MOWS 3.36** be responsible to the Referee for all medical aspects related to the competition and competitors.

**MOWS 3.37** inform the local medical facilities of the nature of the competition and ensure that any casualties can be evacuated to medical facilities at the earliest opportunity.

**MOWS 3.38** in conjunction with the Safety 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.

**THE COURSE OFFICER shall:**

**MOWS 3.39** be responsible to the Management Committee for the correct survey of the course.

**MOWS 3.40** ensure the start and finish areas are correctly marked and all equipment has been correctly installed and, where applicable, is in working order.

**MOWS 3.41** ensure all course alteration points are correctly marked, and manned prior to the commencement of the competition.

**MOWS 3.42** with the Referee and Safety Officer inspect the course and markings prior to the commencement of competition.

**MOWS 3.43** ensure that Turn Judges are in position prior to the start of the competition and report this to the Assistant Referee.

**THE CLERK OF THE COURSE shall:**

**CMOWS 3.44** assemble and prepare competitors prior to each event and ensure proper reception facilities at the finish are available for all competitors.

**Note:** In this context “reception” means facilities for changing, showers, toilets, to provide nourishment and for keeping the participants dry and warm after their swim

**CMOWS 3.45** ensure each competitor is identified correctly with their race number and is not wearing a watch.

**MOWS 3.46** be certain all swimmers are present, in the assembly area, at the required time prior to the start.

**MOWS 3.47** 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.

**CMOWS 3.48** be responsible for ensuring that all clothing and equipment left in the start area is transported, if necessary, to the finish area and kept in safekeeping.

**MOWS 3.49** 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.

**THE RECORDER shall:**

**MOWS 3.50** record withdrawals from the competition, enter results on official forms, and maintain records.

**CMOWS 3.50.1** The listing of results shall include separate compilations of:

- The men's results separated by age-groups and indicating stroke employed.
- The women's results separated by age group and indicating stroke employed.

**CMOWS 3.50.2** When the men's and women's events start at the same time, the results shall also include:

- A combined list of finishers by time and overall position, regardless of age, gender or stroke.

**CMOWS 3.50.3** After completion by the Recorder the final list(s) of results shall be approved by the Chief Judge and Referee.

**CMOWS 3.50.4** The Recorder may also keep a listing of Course records for each age group and stroke.

**THE ANNOUNCER shall:**

**CMOWS 3.51.** be an optional official whose requirement and duties will be determined by the group sanctioned to hold the event. These duties may include any of the following items:

**CMOWS 3.51.1** coordinate as necessary with the Chief Timekeeper in providing time checks within fifteen (15) minutes of the start.

**CMOWS 3.51.2** relay information to relevant officials and spectators on the current position of swimmers and retirements from the race.

**CMOWS 3.51.3** provide spectators with details of incoming swimmers.

**CMOWS 3.51.4** announce results at any presentation of awards.

**CMOWS 3.51.5** coordinate any desired musical presentations at the start , finish or presentation ceremonies - eg. The playing of the national anthem.

## **CMOWS 4 THE START**

**MOWS 4.1** All Open Water competitions shall start with all competitors standing or treading water in a depth sufficient for them to commence swimming on the start signal.

**MOWS 4.2** The Clerk of the Course shall keep competitors and officials informed of the time before start at suitable intervals and at one-minute intervals for the last five minutes.

**CMOWS 4.3** When the number of entries dictate the start may be segregated by gender, age or submitted times or combinations thereof into two or more waves. The men's, youngest or fastest waves shall always start before the women's, older or slower waves.

**CMOWS 4.3.1** Where space does not permit a single row of swimmers on the starting line, it is recommended that the swimmers arrange themselves in rows according to their starting speeds - the faster swimmers positioning themselves in the front row, etc.

**CMOWS 4.4** The start line shall be clearly defined by either natural or man made features or by removable equipment at water level.

**CMOWS 4.5** Subsequent to the Clerk of Courses' warnings (MOWS 3.47) the Referee shall indicate by a flag held upright and short blasts on a whistle when the start is imminent and indicate that the competition is under Starter's orders by pointing the flag at the starter.

**MOWS 4.6** The Starter shall be positioned so as to be clearly visible to all competitors.

**MOWS 4.7** The start signal shall be both audible and visual.

**MOWS 4.8** If in the opinion of the Referee unfair advantage has been gained at the start the competitions shall be stopped and restarted.

**CMOWS 4.9** Any escort safety craft shall be stationed prior to the start so as not to interfere with any competitor.

**MOWS 4.10** Although they may start together, in all other respects the men's and women's competitions shall be treated as separate events.

## **CMOWS 5 THE VENUE**

**CMOWS 5.1** Canadian Masters Open Water Swimming events will be up to 10km, conducted at a venue and course approved by MSC.

**MOWS 5.2** The course shall be in water that is subject to only minor currents or tide and may be salt or fresh water.

**MOWS 5.3** A certificate of suitability for use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities. In general terms the certification must relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations.

**MOWS 5.4** The minimum depth of water at any point on the course shall be 1.40 metres.

**CMOWS 5.5** The water temperature should be a minimum of 18°C. It should be checked the day of the race, 2 hours before the start, in the middle of the course at a depth of 40 cm. This control should be done in the presence of a Commission made up of the following persons present: a Referee, a member of the Organising Committee and a representative of MSC.

**CMOWS 5.6** The course should ideally be marked by buoys every 100 metres. Where a course has adjacent lines of swimmers swimming in opposite directions there shall be buoys every 20 metres. All turns/alterations of course shall be clearly indicated by a larger buoy at least one metre high.

**CMOWS 5.7** A clearly marked craft, platform or position on land, containing a Turn Judge, shall be positioned at all alterations of course in such a manner as not to obstruct a swimmer's visibility of the turn.

**MOWS 5.8** All turning apparatus and Turn Judges craft/platforms shall be securely fixed in position and not be subject to tidal, wind or other movements.

**CMOWS 5.9** The final approach to the finish shall be clearly defined.

**CMOWS 5.10** The finish shall be clearly defined by a natural or man made feature or marked by a vertical face.

## **CMOWS 6 THE RACE**

**CMOWS 6.1** Canadian Open Water competitions may be swum with any stroke. Results should list the stroke swum and separate records should be kept for each stroke. Individual Medley shall only be recognized if the course can be divided into four equal distances.

**CMOWS 6.2** Race Judges shall instruct any swimmer who is, in their opinion, taking unfair advantage by pacing or slip streaming with the escort craft or another swimmer to move clear

**CMOWS 6.3** Disqualification Procedure

**CMOWS 6.3.1** If in the Opinion of the Referee, an Assistant Referee, Race Judge or Turn Judge any swimmer takes advantage of another swimmer by interfering with that swimmer, by making intentional contact with that swimmer, by pacing or by slip streaming, the following proceeding shall apply;

**CMOWS 6.3.2** The official shall blow several times on a shrill whistle while

pointing at the swimmer, indicating to the swimmer that they are violating the rules.

**CMOWS 6.3.3** Should the swimmer persist with the infraction they shall be disqualified and ordered from the water.

**CMOWS 6.3.4** If in the opinion of the official the action of a swimmer is deemed to be “unsporting” the official shall disqualify the swimmer concerned immediately and order them from the water.

**CMOWS 6.4** Standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a swimmer but they may not walk or jump.

**CMOWS 6.5** With the exception of MOWS 6.4 above swimmers shall not receive support from any fixed or floating object and shall not intentionally touch or be touched by any craft or crew therein.

**CMOWS 6.6** No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Goggles, a maximum of two (2) caps, nose clip and earplugs may be used.

**CMOWS 6.6.1** The Referee shall make the final ruling on the acceptability of any swim suit or device worn by a swimmer.

**CMOWS 6.6.2** Prosthetic limbs or limb attachments shall not be worn during a race.

**CMOWS 6.6.3** Watches, musical and other devices are not permitted to be worn by swimmers.

**CMOWS 6.7** Swimmers shall be allowed to use grease or other such substances providing these are not, in the opinion of the Referee, excessive.

**CMOWS 6.8** The pacing of a swimmer by another person is not permitted.

**CMOWS 6.9** All swimmers shall have their competition number clearly displayed in waterproof ink on their upper back and arms. All swimmers shall wear highly visible coloured and numbered swim caps at all times during the race. These caps may be of different colours to differentiate between waves, genders, ages, strokes or swimmers with disabilities.

**CMOWS 6.10** Race organizers in consultation with the referee and subject to advice from MSC are to designate in advance the cut off time for each Masters race. As a rough guide, a time of 30 minutes per kilometer could apply.

**CMOWS 6.11** Competitors who do not finish the course within the time limits shall be removed from the water except that the Referee may allow a competitor outside the time limit to complete the course.

**CMOWS 6.12** MSC sanctioned Open Water Swimming events shall not be conducted at the same time as an exhibition, wet-suit or other swim is conducted

on the same course.

## **CMOWS 7 THE FINISH OF THE RACE**

**CMOWS 7.1** Where required, the area leading to the finish line should be clearly marked by rows of buoys which narrow as they get closer to the finish line. The need for, and extent of, such buoys shall be determined during MSC sanctioning of the event.

**CMOWS 7.2** The finish line shall be a natural or man made feature which defines the finish or a vertical panel fixed above the water which the swimmer can strike with their hand.

**CMOWS 7.2.1** When automatic Officiating Equipment is used for timing of competitions in accordance with rule CMSW 11, microchip transponder technology should be added to the Equipment.

**CMOWS 7.2.2** Where microchip transponder technology is employed it is mandatory for all competitors to wear a microchip transponder as required by event officials. Any competitor who finishes the race without a transponder may be disqualified.

**MOWS 7.3** The Finish Judges and Timekeepers shall be placed so as to be able to observe the finish at all times. The area in which they are stationed should be for their exclusive use.

**CMOWS 7.4** Every effort should be made to enable the swimmers' representatives to meet the swimmer as they leave the water.

**MOWS 7.5** Upon leaving the water some swimmers may require assistance. Swimmers should only be touched or handled if they clearly display a need, or ask for assistance.

**MOWS 7.6** A member of the medical team should inspect the swimmers as they leave the water. A chair, in which the swimmer can sit while an assessment is made, should be provided.

**MOWS 7.7** Once cleared by the medical member, swimmers should be given access to refreshment.

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