



2021 Swim for the Potomac

Open Water Swimmers, Parents and Coaches,

A few updates and reminders for this weekend's Swim for the Potomac.

Thank you so much for signing up for these events. We are very excited to see some excellent racing and open water swimming from swimmers ages 10 to 74. We understand many of you are new to open water swimming so ask questions on race day. Please read all of these notes so you best understand how the events will work.



CHECK THE WEBSITE BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR HOME FOR ANY LAST-MINUTE UPDATES -

<https://www.waveoneopenwater.com/latest-news-info>

- Arrive ready to swim. There are no locker rooms. Bathrooms are on site.
- Only swimmers are allowed in the ramp and dock (with the exception of a 10K coaches feed station – more later)
- Spectators may occupy the length of the pier.
- If you can volunteer at registration or to kayak and see the swimmers up close, we have kayaks for you. Go [here](#) and let us know how you want to help. Volunteers' energy is extra special and creates a more enjoyable and positive experience.

<https://waveoneopenwater.redpodium.com/volunteer-sign-up>

UPDATED TIMELINE

Saturday September 25, 2021 Event 1 - 10K

Check in opens 0700

Safety Briefing 0720

Start 0730

Event 2 - Potomac Splash 500/1000/1500

Check in opens 0730

Safety Briefing 0800

Start Event 2 0810

Clear Water 1200

Sunday September 26, 2021

Event 3 - Tri-Swims 1.2/2.4 mile

Check in opens 0715
Safety Briefing 0745
Start Combined 0800

Event 4 – 5K

Check in opens 0755
Safety Briefing 0820
Start 5K 0830

Event 5 – 2.5K

Check in opens 0830
Safety Briefing 0850
Start 2.5K 0900



Clear water 1130

Check-in and Start

- Upon check-in you will be numbered on right hand and shoulder, receive your cap, and t-shirt.
- The safety briefing will take place 10 minutes prior to event start time.
- After the briefing, proceed down the ramp to the dock, and enter the water – feet first looking down to be sure no one is below you.
- To be fair to all swimmers, we strongly urge swift and careful entry, so all swimmers can begin swimming and warm up. The water will be chilly so everyone will want to race as soon as possible.
- The in-water start area is very large to accommodate safely distanced swimmers.
- Start will be between the two posts in front of the dock toward buoy one. When you arrive to the venue take note of the posts. Starting between the posts allows starting swimmers space between swimmers already on the course that may be rounding the home turn.
- We will count down and blow a whistle to signify the start.
- All races will be swum counterclockwise, which is from the dock towards the MGM Hotel tower, then left.
- Know your course turn buoys.

Cold Water Considerations

- Summer clung to DC until 48 hours before our swim. The water will be warmer than the air at approximately 74F, air will be in the low 60's.

- As open water swimmers, we train and prepare ourselves to adapt to various natural conditions. One condition is cold water temperature. Water temp at 72F -75F is perfect for open water racing however, it takes most people 1-2 minutes to initially adapt physically.
- When you enter the water, your body will naturally respond to the chill by transferring blood from your extremities to your body core. Begin moving to help your body acclimate. Put your face in the water to activate your instinctual “mammalian dive reflex” which warms your body.
- Many people experience tightness when they breathe and become anxious. Focus on a slow steady exhale as you swim. Your inhale will work naturally. A trick is to count your strokes, each hand entry is one, two, three, etc., or count exhale breaths, one, two, three, etc up to 25 or more. Before you realize it, you will be cruising at full speed.
- As you begin to swim, focus on the race or your technique, or coaches last words of encouragement. Stay positive, have fun swimming, and you will generate all the heat you need.

Saturday September 25

Event 1 - 10K

Start time 0730 Brief 715; 1666m course x 6 laps; Large triangular buoys will mark the corners. You need to turn outside each corner to finish the legal distance. You may swim on either side of the intermediate marker buoys mid-leg. 4 hour max time limit. That means we estimate you can complete the last lap within the 4 hour limit, not begin the last lap within 4 hours.

Everyone should have some type of feed system; you need to fuel for this event. There will be a float buoy near the start buoy to place feed bottles. Feed bottles – mark and use string with a carabiner. Make your bottle(s) distinctive and easy to spot. Set up with a rubber band or small pouch to hold gels or food to your bottle. Be sure no gel wrappers or other trash fall into the water. Do not expect to have a place to lay out a 5 course meal. This is a gulp and go race. We will have a coaches cup and pole area, the low dock (with all the plastic swans)– limited number up to about 10 feed crew. First come basis.

Event 2 Potomac Splash: 500m-100m-1500m

Approximately 60 swimmers are entered for this event. Swimmers will start in water on the whistle command. This event will be times “as finished”. It is your choice of which distance you swim. The course will be a 250 meter triangle of red/orange buoys. This event is an “entry” level event to introduce new and younger swimmers to open water swimming. We will take our time to educate swimmers in some fundamental strategies during the briefing and answer questions. So we may go longer than the schedule indicates. Parents feel free to listen in. This is a short course with the third leg parallel to the pier (great viewing and photo area). We will loosely arrange younger swimmers to the left side of the starting area, and older to the right side. The start can be resembling a washing machine for the first minute or two until swimmers spread out, so we want to minimize any impact during the start. It’s all part of open water.

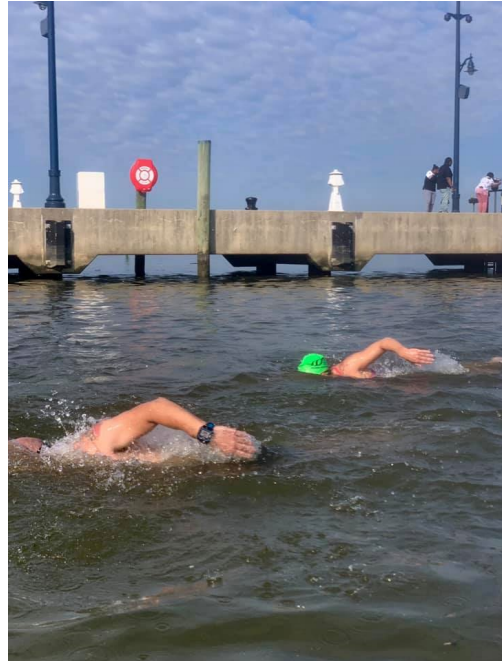
Sunday September 27

Event 3 – Tri Distance 1.2 mi & 2.4 mi.

These two distances will be swum concurrently. Note the course configuration for each distance. 1.2 mile course equals: 1 rectangular lap of large yellow buoys + 1 lap of round orange buoys in a rectangular course. 2.4 mile course equals: 3 laps of large yellow buoys + 1st turn addition of 40 meters (3750m +120m = 2.4 miles). We will review this in the briefing and make the course clear. It is your responsibility as a swimmer to track your own race.

Event 4 – 5K

The 5K course is four laps of the large yellow buoys – 4 x 1,250 meters. You may leave water bottle/feeds on the low dock. Clearly mark your stuff. No coaches will be allowed on the low dock to feed swimmers. You guys are on your own.



Event 5 – 2.5K

Check in opens when the 5K group descends the ramp. The 2.5K course is two laps of the large yellow buoys – 2 x 1,250 meters. Many of you are new to open water swimming. This is a great way to begin your career. The course may feel long so keep your head down and turn over one stroke at a time until you reach each buoy and the finish. You can do it! Your coach, parents and teammates are cheering you on.

Notes:

- **Finish:** Upon finishing, **call out your number**. We will record your time and you are eligible to collect a finishers medal. Showers are available to rinse off. Once you dry off, we ask you to leave the swim/staging area. You will be free to roam about National Harbor at will.
- **Parking** is available for a fee adjacent to the water near the carousel or in the buildings on National Harbor.
- Swimmer safety buoys are available for your use and purchase. Ask for one at check in.
- Bag drop area will be on the eastern side of the bump out of the pier.
- No warmup.

We look forward to seeing you swim this weekend. Preparation is the key for a successful open water swim.

- Fuel and hydrate today, tomorrow and race morning.
- Have your suit, goggles, swim bag, snack all ready to go.

- Prepare mentally for conditions other than what you expect. Visualize comfortable efficient swimming.
- Set your alarm.
- Arrive prepared to swim
- Realize some anxiety prior to and in the beginning of the swim is normal. It is your body telling you something good is about to happen.
- When the race begins, breathe. Focus on your exhale, slow your rhythm down.
- Remember to sight. Sight early, sight often.
- Rise to the challenge and let your body and mind show you how well they can perform.
- Have fun. Enjoy the experience. You are a member of a select few that swim in the “Nation’s River.”

Thank you again for swimming in Swim for the Potomac. It will be a great day for a swim.

Info Page: <https://www.waveoneopenwater.com/swim-for-the-potomac>