

Lake Erie Open Water Classic

SAFETY PLAN

2014

Timeline:	Check-in –	6:45am
	Warm-up –	7:00am
	Pre-Race Instructions –	7:45am
	First Heat -	8:00am
	Awards -	11:00am

Keeping Track of the Swimmers

We want to know exactly how many swimmers are in the water at all times. To accomplish this we provide positive identification of swimmers at check-in, electronic timing backed up by manual timing, multiple start heats, a brightly colored swim cap and each swimmer will have a number put on his/her left arm.

Positive Check-in: Each swimmer will have entered the event via on-line registration. After registration closes, five days before the event, on-line registration will produce a computer-generated spreadsheet of all registered swimmers. On the day of the event, each registered swimmer must present him or her self at the check-in table. If check-in table volunteers do not personally know the swimmer, they may ask for photo identification. After proper identification, the swimmer's name will be checked off the spreadsheet, the swimmer will be assigned a registration number and will be given a swim cap. This number will then be written on the swimmer's left arm. The swimmer will then receive an ankle bracelet, which contains the electronic timing chip that will correspond to the number on his/her arm, which must be worn throughout the event. Registered swimmers who do not check in by the time of Pre-Race Instructions begin will be scratched from the event.

Electronic Timing: We use electronic timing for two reasons. One is to time the event. The other is to keep an electronic count of the number of swimmers in the water. Although the swimmers start the swim in the water, we require that they pass through the finish line chute as they enter the water on their way to the start line. There will be a rubberized electronic pad at the chute. This electronic pad records the swimmers as they enter the water and again when they exit the water. Electronic timing provides an exact count of the number of swimmers in the water at all times. It also provides a time for each swimmer.

Manual Timing: Volunteers at the finish line will have electronic stopwatches. The times they get are intended to backup the electronic timing system. Electronic timing will probably work perfectly. But electronic timing chips can be inadvertently knocked off or lost during the swim making a backup system necessary. As each swimmer passes

through the finish line chute, a volunteer will read the number written on the swimmer's left arm and will call out that number. Another volunteer will write that number down in finish sequence. Another volunteer will call out the time, which will then be written down next to the swimmer's number. This provides a manual count of how many swimmers have finished the event and who those swimmers are. We can then determine how many swimmers remain in the water and who they are. NOTE: If a swimmer is wearing a sleeved wetsuit, the number will be written on his/her swim cap.

Multiple Heats: To avoid as much as possible inadvertent bumping between swimmers, the swimmers will be started in several heats. Heats will start 4 minutes apart. This will also spread the swimmers out making visual sighting of them easier.

Swim Caps: Each swimmer must wear a swim cap, which will be provided at check-in. Brightly colored swim caps facilitate visual spotting of swimmers in the water. This helps the timers, kayakers, lifeguards, and coast guard personnel in following the movement of the swimmers. The swim caps make an actual head-count possible if necessary.

Swimmers who come ashore before completing the event distance will be asked to inform finish line personnel. Finish line personnel will be asked to look for swimmers who come ashore elsewhere than the finish line.

Warm-Up: Warm-Up starts at 7am. At least 2 lifeguards must be on the water before warm-up can begin.

Emergency Response on the Water

Physical Presence

Kayakers and lifeguards may be outside or inside the course. If a swimmer touches a kayak, he/she is disqualified from the event. If a swimmer needs assistance from a kayaker, he/she should grab the kayak at the kayak's bow or stern end. The kayaker should paddle the swimmer to shallow water. The swimmer should exit the water and walk to the finish line so he/she can be counted. If the Coast Guard Auxiliary Boat is closer than shallow water, the kayaker may take the swimmer to the Coast Guard boat.

Due to the shallow depth of the water close to shore, the Coast Guard Auxiliary Boat will be on the lake side of the course. The purpose of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Boat is to back up the kayakers and lifeguards on the lake side of the course. If a swimmer is brought to the CGAux Boat, the Captain of the Boat should determine how best to respond to the situation. Options include waiting until after the conclusion of the event before bringing the swimmer to the CGAux Dock or bringing the swimmer to the Dock immediately. The Event Director must be kept informed so he can account for the swimmer and call 911 if necessary. If heavy winds prevail, buoys may break loose from their anchors. The CGAux Boat may be asked to retrieve a buoy.

Communications

The Coast Guard Auxiliary boat, Safety Director and Event Director all have cell phones.

Event Director – Tom Spence cell: 216-299-3858

Coast Guard boat – Chris Spence cell: 216-767-6262

Safety Director – Mark Marshfield cell: 630-336-0457

Communications should concern urgent matters about the swimmers or about the course. If a swimmer requires emergency medical treatment, notify the Event Director or the Safety Director immediately so 911 can be called and treatment can be available by the time the swimmer is brought to shore.

Emergency Information

The Event Physician will carry a clipboard with a computer printout of each swimmer's emergency information. Also included will be any significant medical information which might have been provided as part of a swimmer's registration. Depending on the nature of the significant medical information, a kayak may be assigned to follow the swimmer around the course.

Pre-Race Instructions

Three days prior to the event, the Safety Plan and the course map will be emailed to each registered swimmer.

Instructions to Swimmers on the Beach

Welcome

Permits from Cleveland MetroParks, United States Coast Guard, Sanctioned by USMS

Ask for No-shows.

Course layout

In-water start – tread water

Beach finish

Towel and horn start signal

Electronic Timing

Manual timing

Kayakers and lifeguards

How to touch a kayak

If you must come ashore before completing the swim, tell us.

Lightening in the air

Flare Gun

Questions?

Instructions to Kayakers and Lifeguards

Course layout
In-water start
Beach finish
Towel and horn start signal
Flare Gun

Kayakers and lifeguards may be outside or inside the course. If a swimmer touches a kayak, he/she is disqualified from the event. If a swimmer needs assistance from a kayaker, he/she should grab the kayak at the kayak's bow or stern end. The kayaker should paddle the swimmer to shallow water. If the Coast Guard Auxiliary Boat is closer than shallow water, the kayaker may take the swimmer to the boat.

If lightning occurs during the event, the event will immediately be cancelled with the swimmers in the water. This decision will be communicated to the kayakers by flare and to the Coast Guard Auxiliary boat by cell phone. The Event Director will stop the event with 3 long blasts on the air horn and by shooting off the flare gun. All kayakers, lifeguards, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary boat will be asked to direct each swimmer to the nearest point of land. Swimmers will be asked to walk to the finish line so they can be counted.

Swimmers who are close to finishing after 90 minutes will be allowed to complete the distance. Swimmers who are not close to finishing after 90 minutes will be "pulled" from the water and assisted to land by a kayaker. The Event Director will determine which if any swimmers get "pulled". Kayakers will be asked to bring the swimmer to the finish line.

Potential Decisions (These decisions will be made by the Event Director and the Safety Director)

Weather or water conditions may cause the race to be shortened, delayed or cancelled.

Shorten The Distance: Once around the course is a distance of approximately 1 mile. By moving the western-most buoys toward the finish line, the course can be shortened to approximately ^{3/4} of a mile. Prior to the start of the event, the Event Director and Safety Director will determine which course to present to the swimmers during the Pre-Race Instructions.

Delay The Start: If weather conditions make swimming unsafe but if the weather shows signs of improving, the Event Director may delay the start of the event. This could delay the completion of the event past the time allowed by the permit from the Parks Department. The maximum delay would be about 30 minutes and the course would have to be shortened.

Cancel The Event Prior To the Start: If there is storm lightening in the area, the event will be cancelled prior to the start.

Cancel The Event After The Start: If storm lightening occurs during the event, the event will be cancelled with the swimmers in the water. This decision will be communicated to the kayakers, the sailboat and the Coast Guard Auxiliary boat by cell phone. The kayakers will tell the lifeguards. The Event Director will also blow the air horn three times and fire the flare gun to indicate the event has been stopped. All kayakers, lifeguards, and boats will be asked to direct each swimmer to the nearest point of land. Swimmers will be asked to walk to the finish line so they can be counted.

Strictly Enforce 90 Minute Time Limit: Swimmers who are close to finishing after 90 minutes will be allowed to complete the distance. Swimmers who are not close to finishing after 90 minutes will be “pulled” from the water and assisted to land by a kayaker. The Event Director will determine which if any swimmers get “pulled”.