

**Title:**           **EVENT SAFETY**

**Policy:**        The Race Director and Water Operations Director have a duty to provide for the safety of swimmers, lifeguards, and volunteers.

**Purpose:**        To explain safety measures taken at the event to ensure a safe event for all involved.

**Scope:**        These procedures apply to race day safety relating to course markings, swimmer markings, swimmer management and accountability, emergency personnel, boat traffic policies, coast guard and marine police rules, and weather conditions.

**Procedure:**

**1.0 COURSE MAP**

1.1    The course is a 1 mile loop and includes a turn buoys .5 mile swim. The 2 mile event repeats the same 1 mile loop. The course starts at Clute Memorial Park, then veers right to align with the eastern shoreline. It then runs parallel to the eastern shoreline to reach .5 mile, then returns on the same path, separated by buoys. For the .5 mile swim, the course will be marked with special buoys serving as a turning point, and then returning to the marina. There will be a special buoy to indicate the turn-around buoys. The finish is a land finish at the Clute Memorial Park beach.

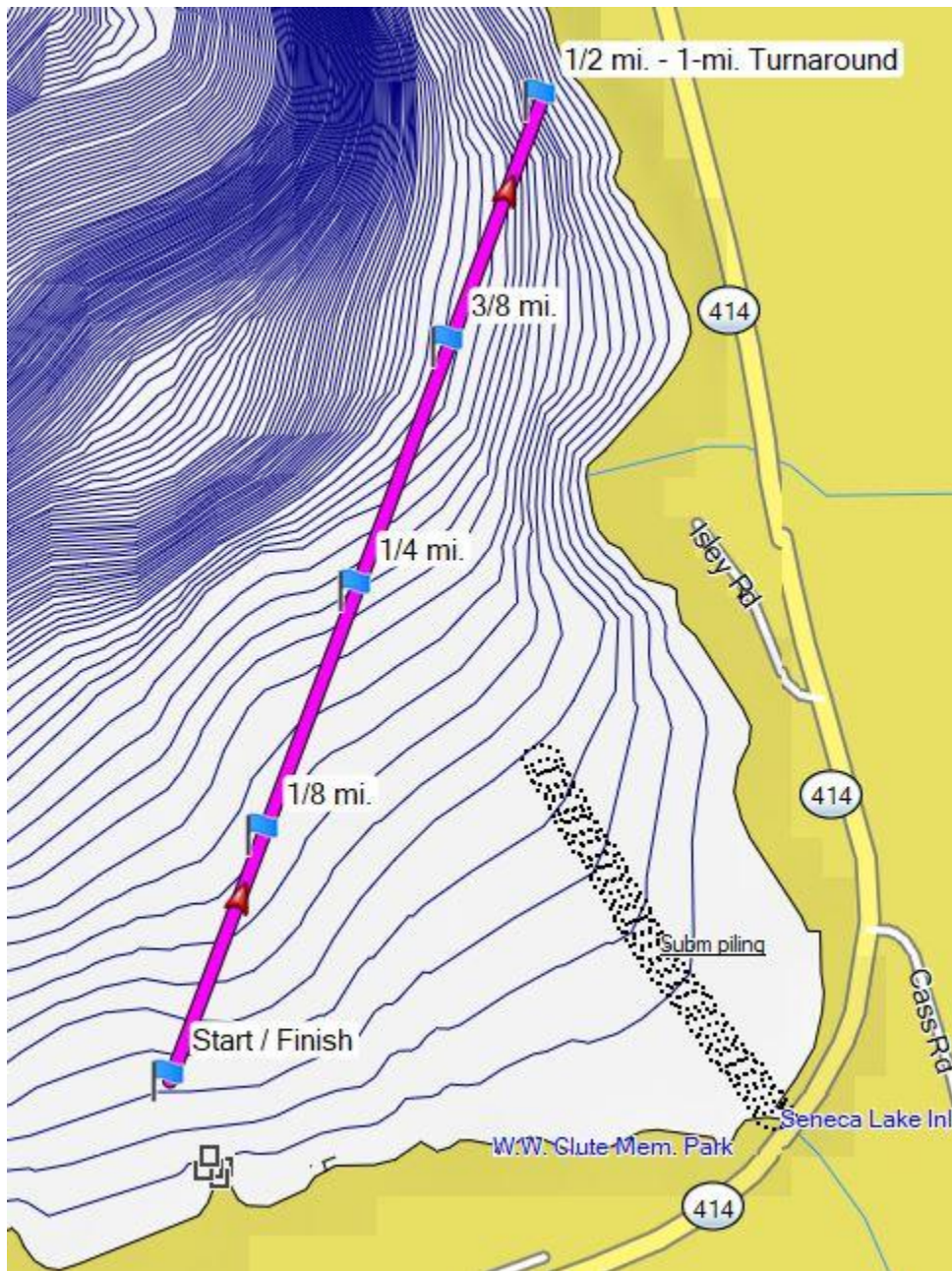
The 10 mile swim course will begin at on the western shoreline near Captain Bill's. To avoid harbor boat traffic, the swimmers will be dropped in the water on the western shore and will then swim to Green Point, turn around, and swim back on the western shore line. The swimmers will remain close to the shoreline with navigation provided by personal kayak escorts. The turnaround buoys will be on the docks of 4580 Green Point Road, Rock Stream, NY. Relief kayaks will be staged at the turn around point. The swimmers will turn at the Green Point buoy and return along the western shoreline. This event is limited to 25 swimmers, each having their own kayak escort. Navigation is provided by the kayak escort and a map. The below areas relating to event day/navigation/course, are only for distances 2 miles and less.

1.2    The swimmers enter the water at the park beach area. As swimmers enter the water they line up by number and are checked off as they enter, and again upon exit.

1.3    The swimmers swim out to the starting buoy for an in water start.

- 1.4 An air horn is used to start the swimmers. Each distance race is run separately. Each race will begin at the completion of the previous race. There will be a max of 75 swimmers per wave. Therefore, there may be multiple waves per division. There will be 2-3 minutes between waves.
- 1.5 Buoys remain on the left side of the swimmer. The finish is marked with smaller buoys.
- 3 5' orange buoys used for major turns
  - 4 4' orange buoys used between major turn buoys
  - 3 2' orange & yellow buoys used to mark marina area
- 1.6 Course map (11 x 17), current water temperatures are posted periodically on our website, [www.finerlakesopenwaterswimming.com](http://www.finerlakesopenwaterswimming.com). Handouts are available at the registration table for swimmers, and the course is covered in detail at the swimmer, kayaker and lifeguard meetings.

### Course for the 2, 1, .5 mile swims



**Course for the 10 mile swim**  
**(western short to 4580 Green Point Road, Rock Stream NY, return)**



- 1.7 Kayak, Lifeguard, Patrol Boat Positioning – Lifeguards are positioned on the course in kayaks and on safety boats. The majority of the kayak escorts are also certified lifeguards. Kayak support is aligned in the middle and outer boundaries of the course. Patrol boats are positioned on the outside of the course to monitor for boat traffic.

## **2.0 BOAT TRAFFIC**

- 2.1 The courses are designed to keep swimmers within 100 foot from shorelines to minimize boat traffic traveling above 10mph. Kayak escorts and safety boats will monitor for boat traffic.
- 2.2 The lead safety monitors for the last swimmer on the course by coordinating with kayak team leader. The kayaks follow the last swimmer towards the finish.

## **3.0 MARINE POLICE AND COAST GUARD**

- 3.1 Permits are obtained through the NY State Parks Department, who approve all safety boats on the course and have the final say in all matters relating to safety, course, and weather conditions.

## **4.0 RESCUE SQUADS**

- 4.1 The local Watkins Glen, NY Rescue Squad will be requested to provide land medical support services. Many kayakers and safety boats will use marine radios, channel 6, for communications.
- 4.2 Schuyler Hospital is located 2.2 miles from the event site.

## **5.0 LIFEGUARDS**

- 5.1 Permits issued for the event allow up to 200 swimmers and require a minimum of 5 lifeguards and 10 kayak/canoes.
- 5.2 The Race Director & Water Operations Director arrange for the minimum of kayak/canoes, and lifeguards to ensure minimums are met.
- 5.3 All lifeguards are assigned a lifeguard tube and lifejackets.
- 5.5 Whistle blasts should be as follows:
- 1. Single blast** – followed by a hand gesture, it means “I need your attention or stop what you are doing.”
  - 2. Two consecutive blasts** - means “Attention please! Everyone stop swimming, look at me, I have something to say.”

3. **Three consecutive blasts** – loud and short, three blasts indicate that everyone should clear the water immediately because of an emergency or weather issue. All swimmers should immediately swim towards the finish.
4. In addition to whistle blasts designated kayaks will have orange safety flags which will be waved for any swimmers who may be hearing impaired

5.6 Lifeguards & kayakers (many are also certified guards) are to assist swimmers requesting help, as well as indicate any reasons for disqualifications.

5.7 Lifeguards & kayakers will alert swimmers who are off course and navigate them back on course.

5.8 The main turns will be monitored by officials in kayaks who will document swimmers missing the key turning points.

5.9 All kayakers will be issued a noodle for use as swimmer assist.

#### 6.0 **SWIMMER MEETING**

6.1 A mandatory swimmer meeting is held 15 minutes before the race start. Registration closes prior to the swimmer meeting and late arrivals are not permitted to participate.

6.2 Swimmers who need assistance should wave arms, if possible, to a lifeguard or kayaker. The lifeguard/kayaker will assist the swimmer as needed. The lifeguard/kayaker should assist the swimmer with floating devices and allow them to hang on the kayak while the lifeguard/kayaker move the swimmer off the course to avoid other swimmer contact.

6.3 No swimmers are allowed to leave the course for any reason unless they are being escorted by an emergency team member (marine police, coast guard, fire boat, lifeguards, and kayakers). A swimmer leaving the course without assistance (authorization) is disqualified from the event, and is no longer allowed to participate in any future events.

6.4 Swimmers must follow all rules.

6.4.1 All swimmers must wear the provided timing chip and pre numbered cap. and have body marked with the assigned number, if applicable.

6.4.2 All swimmers must swim around all buoys, keeping buoys on the swimmer's left side.

6.4.3 All swimmers are not allowed to push off the bottom, rest on a kayak or receive any assistance without disqualification.

- 6.4.4 If you hear 3 signal air horn or long whistle blows then you are to return to the finish immediately. The race is considered over due to weather conditions or other emergency situation.
- 6.4.5 At the end of the posted course time limitation, all swimmers will be escorted back to the finish by rescue vessels.
- 6.5 All swimmers must line up according to race number (marked on cap and body) when called. Swimmers are called to line up within 10 minutes of the race start.
- 6.6 All swimmers are marked off as they enter the water. A race official will call out their number and another person will mark off they entered the water. Only one person is responsible for marking all swimmers per wave.
- 6.7 An air horn is used to start the swimmers. Each distance race is run separately. Each race will begin at the completion of the previous race. There will be a max of 75 swimmers per wave. Therefore, there may be multiple waves per division. There will be 2-3 minutes between waves. There is approximately 10-15 minutes from when the last swimmer finishes and the next division starts. This time is used to line up the swimmers, who will enter and be accounted for in assigned race number order. It is an in water start. Swimmers enter at the finish area for accountability of swimmers, and then swim to the start area.
- 6.8 Swimmers are provided assistance at the finish and should line up in single file as they reach land. Assistance is provided until the swimmer is in an upright position on land to avoid slipping. The race time ends at the touch pad on the gas dock, so there is no need to run when reaching land.
- 6.9 The finish official reads off the numbers in order of finish and each swimmer is checked in by another volunteer assigned to swimmer accountability. All swimmers are accounted for to ensure none are lost during the race.

## **7.0 RACE CANCELLATION or DELAYS**

- 7.1 The race director will coordinate with the Marine Police/Coast Guard prior to the start to determine if weather conditions should cancel the event. The Marine Police/Coast Guard orders dictate whether the race will be cancelled. The permits are for 8am to 11am and therefore the race can't be delayed more than 30 minutes and still complete all waves by 11am.
- 7.1 Weather conditions during the race are monitored by the Marine Police/Coast Guard who determines if the swimmers should immediately exit the water (i.e. lightning). If conditions exist requiring a swimmer exit then the Marine Police/Coast Guard/Starter will blow three loud horns indicating the race is over, please exit immediately. Kayakers will then blow 3 long whistles. All lifeguards will stop swimmers and escort all swimmers back to the finish. The turn point

officials will be the last to follow in swimmers. Swimmers are accounted for during exit from the water.

## **8.0 INCOMPLETE RACE**

- 8.1 Turning point officials indicate any swimmers who past the furthest buoy indicating they completed the full 1 or 2 mile course.
- 8.2 Awards will be given to any swimmer completing the course.
- 8.3 For swimmers that didn't complete the course the awards will skip one place after all finishers were awarded in each age group, and then remaining swimmers will all be awarded the next place.