# United States Masters Swimming (USMS)

# Long Distance Championship Guidelines

Other recommended resources:

**USMS Rule Book:  http://www.usms.org/rules/part3.pdf**

**Open Water Manual: http://www.usms.org/longdist/owman.pdf**

# Preparing Documents for the LD Web Site

## Introduction

Hosts of Long Distance National Championships are required to provide **electronic versions of entry forms and official results** to the Long Distance (LD) Chair in accordance with the deadlines on the timeline. The LD Chair, after checking the format, will relay the items to the Long Distance Webmaster for posting on the USMS web site in PDF (Portable Document Format).

## Entry Forms

Entry forms should be sent to the LD Chair in **Word** (or Word compatible) format or already converted to **PDF**. Although most printers can handle margins as small as 1/4 inch, the software that creates PDF files cannot. If you transmit a Word file with 1/4" margins, the page size will be reduced to 99% of full size in order to accommodate the PDF software. A safe margin size is 1/2" or 3 picas. If an on-line entry is to be used, procedures must be compliant with the guidelines in the Online Meet Entry for USMS Open Water Events.

## Official Results

Official results should be sent to the LD Chair in a **single Excel** (or Excel compatible) file for relaying to the LD Webmaster. Due to the number of participants, only the One Hour Postal results may have multiple worksheets within the Excel file. **All other events should put both male and female age group results on a single worksheet.**

When preparing your results, you must adhere to article 305.8 of the USMS Long Distance Rules and the "Preparation of Meet Results" portion of Appendix B. The organization and content of official results for National Championships must be submitted in this format. All of the required elements should be included in the proper order. The page header should include the meet name, date, location, body of water, name & address of meet director. Please put an **asterisk next to all non-USMS (i.e. foreign) swimmers** to assist in the determination of All Stars. Example of Individual Results (from the 1999 2-Mile Cable Championship):

### WOMEN: 25-29

| Place | First | Last | Club | Age | Time |
|-------|-------|------|------|-----|------|
| 1 | Rose | Rice | DCM | 25 | 42:00.7 |
| 2 | Laura | Borgelt | GLD | 27 | 44:35.3 |
| 3 | Crocodile | Dundee | QSMT* | 27 | 44:39.3 |

Example of Team Results (from the 1999 3000 Yd Postal Championship):

### WOMEN 35+
```
1       San Diego Swim Masters        1:57:00.19
                Barbara Dunbar (50)
                Betsy Jordan (62)
                Karlyn Pipes Neilsen (37)
2       Niagara                       2:23:28.06
                Louise Murray (59)
                Sally Sackett (40)
                Celia Applegate (39)
```

Only the age group results that pertain to the national championship part of your meet will be posted on the LD web site. However, you are free to post results for the event, including overall standings, on your own web site.

Results for previous years may be seen at www.usms.org/longdist/.

# OPEN WATER SAFETY GUIDELINES

SAFETY COORDINATOR: It is recommended that a "Safety Coordinator", be designated who shall report to the Meet Director. All safety issues should be assigned to the coordinator, and the coordinator should have sufficient authority to ensure safety directives are observed or enforced.

ENTRY INFORMATION: If appropriate in light of special hazardous conditions in a race, a warning statement should be included on each entry form which cautions the swimmers about such special hazards of the race (e.g., extreme cold or warm water temperature, distance or surface conditions) and advises medical examination and proper training prior to participation. .

INDIVIDUAL ESCORTS: The use of personal escorts should be the option of the meet director and/or safety coordinator.

MEDICAL SERVICES: A primary responding agency, either from the lifeguard agency or an outside provider such as an ambulance company or the Red Cross, should be assigned as emergency medical services for the meet.

COMMUNICATION:  A public address system with sufficient amplified strength capable of reaching the majority of the beach or staging area should be considered.  It may be helpful to participants to post large course maps at the race indicating the course, course buoys and emergency facilities.

MEDICAL EVACUATION: A plan for medical evacuation should outline procedures for transporting swimmers needing medical aid from the water to land-based medical services.

1. The plan should take into consideration the course configuration.  Multiple plans may be required for extended open water swims.
2  If the safety coordinator provides emergency evacuation boats they should be sufficient in number to insure timely transport to land-based medical assistance.
3. Consider positioning safety monitor stations (i.e., canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, etc.) on the course at a minimum ratio of one station per 25 entrants.  Emergency evacuation boats cannot be counted as safety stations.
4. For events of significant length or significant conditions (e.g. surf, extremely cold water), it's recommended that personal escorts be required.
5. Arrangements should be made for communication between safety stations and emergency evacuation boats.

SAFETY CANCELLATION: A plan for cancellation should include details for evacuating the swimmers from the water.  Weather and tidal changes are two examples of dangers that might occur at an open water venue. Dangers may occur before the start of an event so plans should be made for cancellation or postponement. Other plans should be made for cancellation due to safety considerations once the competition has started.

PRE-RACE BRIEFING: A public briefing of all swimmers held prior to the start of the event should include:

1.      Course directions/markers/rules
2.      Starting procedure and signals
3.      Finish procedures and cut-off time
4.      Procedure for getting aid while swimming
5.      Participants' obligations if they drop out
6.      Opportunity for withdrawal if a swimmer has apprehensions as to their ability to participate
7.      Positioning of the swimmers at the start so that the faster swimmers are at the front.

# OW SAMPLE ENTRY FORM PAGE 1

## INSIDE THE HEADER INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

Name of the event (you must include that it is a USMS National Championship)

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Host team | Distance of competition |
| Name of body of water where it takes place | Sanctioned by YOUR LMSC. for USMS # _____ |
| Date of event | Logo of your team or other artwork |

**EVENTS:** In this space you should explain what events you are conducting and any special details (ie: course, seeding) that you feel should be explained prior to the event.

**SCHEDULE:** In this space you should indicate the time that check in begins/ends (and the location if it's not obvious), pre-race instructions are given, and the race starts. For example:

8:00 am - 9:00 am  Registration/Check-In
9:10 am            Pre-race instructions will be given
9:30 am            Race begins

A picnic lunch and awards ceremony will follow the finish of races on both days.

**LOCATION:** In this space you should indicate where the event takes place. You could also indicate particulars about the body of water (e.g. temp, altitude) that will be important to the swimmer

**ELIGIBILITY:** This event is open to all USMS registered swimmers 19 years of age as of (date of your swim). All entrants must submit a photocopy of their registration card with their entry. One-event USMS registration will be available for $XX on race day. (Optional)

**ENTRY FEES:** List the entry fees that you plan to charge. Most people include the entry deadline here also, which is usually 10-14 days before race day.
For example:
$20 if received by June 11 (for your event on the 21st).
$30 for late or race day entries (if you want to accept them). Mention what the entries include (t-shirt, cap, refreshments etc.).

**T-SHIRTS:** If you want to sell t-shirts rather than give them away, you should have a section for that information.

**RULES:** You must state "Current USMS rules will govern this event" and any other special rules that apply (e.g. "Please, no dogs at the race site")

**SAFETY:** Indicate in this space what safety arrangements you have made (e.g. types of safety craft, lifeguards). You can state something like "Swimmers must wear the swim cap provided and their race number on their arm (or leg)."

**SEEDING:** If it is necessary to have special seeding, you can have a separate section. Otherwise you can include this info. in the EVENTS section.

**AWARDS:** Describe the awards that you will give. Include that you will present a championship patch to all first place finishers. Indicate the age groups as follows: "Age groups are 19-24, 25-29, 30-34 and so on in five-year increments as high as necessary for both men and women. If you're giving any high point (first man/woman) type award you should mention it also. You might include check-off allowing swimmers to decline awards should they so choose.

**RESULTS:** Include how results can be obtained ("snail" mail, email or posted "on line"). If posted on line, an email message should be sent to alert competitors that the results are posted.

**DIRECTIONS:** Provide good instructions to get to the event site from different directions (if necessary). Keep in mind that you hope to attract swimmers who are not familiar with the event location and the surrounding area.

**CAMPING/LODGING:** Provide the names/numbers of local hotels and camping (if available) to help swimmers from out of town find lodging. If your team can offer a HOST (house our swimmers tonight) program it is always appreciated.

**FINALLY,**
Always provide a phone and e-mail contact for people to use when they have questions. The wording is usually:

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact:
RACE DIRECTOR: the director's name, (phone number) and <e-mail address>. It's fine to specify "phone calls before a certain time" if you're concerned about late calls.

# THIS SIDE OF THE PAGE IS THE EVENT INFORMATION. THE OTHER SIDE IS THE ACTUAL ENTRY FORM.

USING COLUMNS USUALLY SAVES SPACE AND SEEMS TO MAKE ENTRY FORMS EASY TO READ. SET YOUR MARGINS SO THAT THEY ARE LINED UP ON BOTH THE LEFT AND RIGHT SIDES. THE MARGINS FOR YOUR ENTRY FORM CAN BE AS NARROW AS 1/2 INCH AND THE CENTER SPACE AS NARROW AS 1/4 INCH. INCLUDE A SPACE BETWEEN TOPICS AS SHOWN.

USE BOLD PRINT TO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANT ITEMS LIKE TITLES AND DATES BUT DON'T OVERUSE THE FEATURE.

YOU PROBABLY WON'T HAVE THIS MUCH EXTRA SPACE. BUT IF YOU DO, YOU CAN MAKE YOUR FONT LARGER (This copy is 9 pt and uses mostly Ariel font and Ariel Black font for the titles).

YOU COULD ALSO PUT A "FOOTER" ON THIS PAGE AND INCLUDE SPONSORS OR ADD SOME ARTWORK AT THE BOTTOM OR TAKE MORE SPACE AT THE TOP.

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## NAME OF YOUR EVENT (include location and logo)

AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE ENTRY FORM IS TO ALLOW ENOUGH SPACE FOR THE SWIMMER TO INCLUDE THE REQUESTED INFORMATION.  THE FONT SIZE SHOULD BE LARGER THAN IT IS ON THE EVENT INFORMATION PAGE.  ALSO CONSIDER WHAT INFORMATION YOU WANT YOUR DATA ENTRY PERSON TO ACCESS AND TRY TO FORMAT THIS PAGE SO THAT IT IS EASY TO FOLLOW.

Name: _____     USMS Number: _____

Club Abbr: _____ Age: _____(on race day)     Gender:_____(Male)  or _____(Female)

Address: _____     City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Date of Birth: _____Club Name: _____

Phone (home): _____     Phone (work): _____

E-mail address: _____

Emergency contact: _____     Phone: _____

ADD OTHER INFO HERE IF NEEDED (e.g. submit a time for seeding, select a size for t-shirt that is free with entry)

ENTRY FEES:                                          MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND MAIL TO:

_____ $20 (if received by "specific date")              Name of your entry person

_____ $30 (late or race day)                           Address

_____ $15 t-shirts  (check size) _____ M _____ L _____ XL     City, State, Zip

_____ $ TOTAL ENCLOSED WITH ENTRY                    phone or E-mail

**LIABILITY RELEASE:**
I, the undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all of the risks inherent in Masters Swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OFFICIATING AT THE MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS. Finally, I specifically acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in open water swimming and agree to assume those risks.

**Signature:** _____     Date _____

## PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR USMS CARD OR PROOF OF MEMBERSHIP IN A FOREIGN ORGANIZATION.

**IF YOU HAVE EXTRA SPACE, YOU COULD LIST THE SPONSORS OR CONDENSE THE TOP PORTION ENOUGH TO LEAVE 1/3 OF THE FORM BLANK, ALLOWING THE FORM TO BE FOLDED IN THIRDS AND USED AS A MAILER (JUST ADDRESS AND MAIL - NO ENVELOPE).**

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# OPEN WATER PRE-RACE INSTRUCTIONS

*Note: A strong effort should be made to involve all the contestants in the pre-race briefing and to ensure that the instructions can be heard and understood. A good public address system is essential.*

## WELCOME

 a. Announce the name of the swim
 b. Thank the sponsors

## GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

 a. Water temperature
 b. Possible hazards
 c. Currents or tides

## SAFETY/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES-Suggested wording

 a. "If you are apprehensive about participation in the swim or your ability to complete the distance, please withdraw before entering the water at the start. This is not the time to test your open water swimming skills for the first time if you are worried or concerned about them."
 b. "If you need assistance during the race, wave one arm overhead and a paddler will come to you."
 c. "If you drop out before or during the race, **YOU MUST** report immediately to the finish line judge under the finish banner so your safety can be accounted for."
 d. "Faster swimmers should position themselves closer to the start line at the edge of water with slower swimmers assuming a less risky position further back in the pack."
 e. "Emergency staff will be stationed. . . (indicate where).
 f. "A cut off time of _____ hours/minutes will be enforced. Swimmers still in the water at this time will be brought to shore for their own safety."

## FINISH

 a. Chute directions
 b. Clock location
 c. Finish directions
 d. Electronic timing details, if applicable

## COURSE

 a. Direction of swim
 b. Buoys - number, type, color and related requirements
 c. Reference to course map and course violations

## START

 a. Announce the expected time of the start
 b. Repeat positioning warning to slower/faster swimmers
 c. Appeal to swimmers to spread out and be courteous
 d. Explain starting signals
 e. Identify start line

# POSTAL MEET SUGGESTIONS

## ENTRY INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| DESCRIPTION | Describe the objective of the event, its duration and the goal. |
| LOCATION | Indicate the requirements for pool length. |
| DATES | Indicate the official time period for the swim. |

ELIGIBILITY — Indicate and emphasize the requirement for USMS or similar registration for another country. This is a good place to make a statement that proof of registration must accompany the entry.

INDIVIDUAL ENTRY — Describe age groups and rules about aging up during the duration of the swim.

TEAM ENTRY — Describe types of teams being contested and age groups. All team members must be registered with the same club and must be entered as individuals also.

AWARDS — Describe the awards to be presented for individual, team and club divisions.

RULES — Current USMS rules govern your event. Explain drafting rules and rules about having an official and counter present. Also explain determination of distance for the One Hour Swim.

FEES — Describe entry fees for individual and team events. Include who checks should be made payable to and where to send entries. Entries for ALL POSTAL EVENTS must be postmarked by the 2nd and/or received by the 10th of the month following the event.

RESULTS — Indicate that results will be available within 30 days of the final day to submit entries.

T-SHIRTS — T-shirt and event merchandise should include the year, USMS National Championship wording, postal wording, and an appropriate design. Indicate method for ordering National Championship t-shirts on your entry form.

INFORMATION — Provide a contact for information. E-mail, snail mail addresses and a phone contact (it's ok to limit the hours for accepting calls).

DIRECTOR — Provide the name of the event director and a method of contact.

## ENTRY FORM

| | |
|---|---|
| TEAM ENTRY | Provide space for 4 swimmers. |
| INDIVIDUAL ENTRY | Be sure the lines are long enough to accomodate the information requested. |
| LIABILITY RELEASE | Refer to the current USMS Rules for the language to be used. |

SPLITS — Allow space for recording splits for every two lengths swum. CUMULATIVE times must be recorded (emphasize).

**RECEIVING ENTRIES** Check for completion. Open entries when they are received and check to see that the entry form is completely filled out and that proof of registration is included. Look for team name/code on the USMS card as well as the swimmer's name. Check the splits for completeness and accuracy. Request additional information as needed and reject any incomplete entries. Return entries immediately if they are not complete. Any challenge to the results should be discretely investigated. A close look at all the splits (100's or 50's,not just 500's) is required.

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# POSTAL SAMPLE ENTRY FORM

## 200X USMS Postal XX and XX National Championships

**INDIVIDUAL ENTRY FORM**                    **PLEASE FILL OUT LEGIBLY & COMPLETELY**

Name: _____  M __ F __ Age: ____ Birth date: ___/___/___

Address: _____  Club: _____ Abbr: _____

City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____  Country: _____ USMS #: _____

Phone: ( ____)_____-_____        E-mail address _____

I would like to receive the official results via ____ E-mail ____ mailed hard copy (please check only one box)

Name of your timer/counter: _____ Phone: (____)_____-_____

LIABILITY RELEASE: I, the undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in Masters Swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OFFICIATING AT THE MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS.

I certify that I have read the rules of this event and on _____/_____/200X, I swam (___3000) (___6000) yards in

____:____:____.____ at (pool location/address) _____.

Swimmer signature _____ Timer signature _____ Date _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

BE SURE TO INCLUDE:

_____ = $XX individual entry fee

_____ = $XX team entry fee per team

    Photocopy of registration card

_____ = $XX for each t-shirt ($XX for foreign)     send to: XXXXXXXXXXXXX     Check for total fees

    Size M___L___XL___XXL___                   XXXXXXXXXXXXX     SASE for entry receipt verification

_____ = TOTAL ENCLOSED WITH ENTRY              XXXXXXXXXXXXX     Complete form and split sheet

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DIRECTOR BY**

SPLIT SHEET: Record CUMULATIVE (not split) time for each 50 yards (to 10th's) and final time (to 100th's)

(Insert 100 meters for the 5/10 K postal.) Add your split forms in this space (100 - 10,000 by 100's for 5/10 K postal

50-6000 by 50's for 3000/6000 yd postal).

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