

LAST SPLASH OF SUMMER
OPEN WATER SWIM SAFETY PLAN

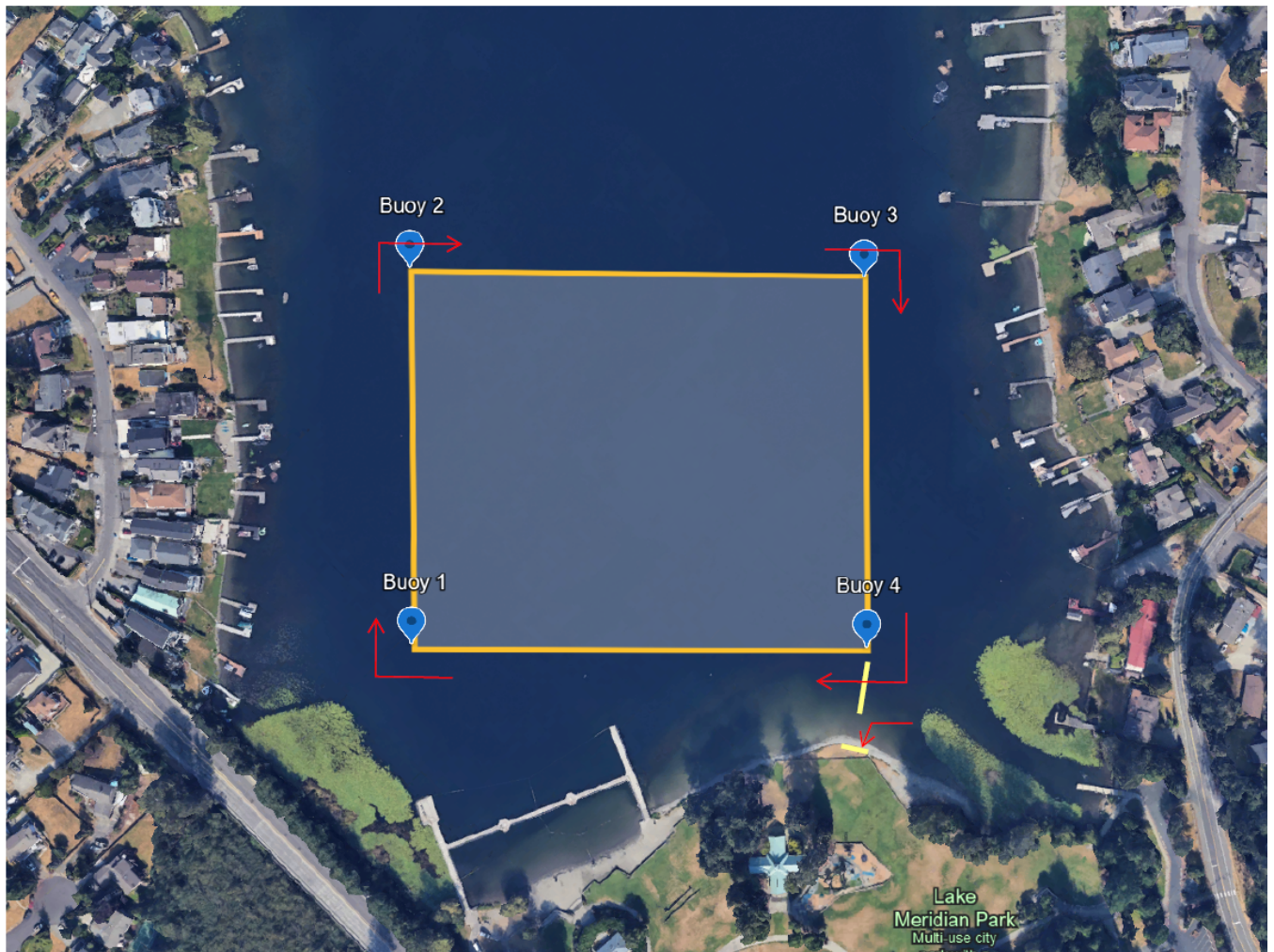
1. EVENT DESCRIPTION

2.1 General Description

The September 21st, 2024 Last Splash of Summer is an open water swim competition that will be held at Lake Meridian in Kent, Washington. It will include 1.0 and 2.0 mile swims with separate divisions for wetsuit and non-wetsuit swimmers age 12 and older. A separate 500 yard race for younger swimmers will also be held. The event is not sanctioned by either USMS or USA Swimming.

Swim Race Course

Refer to the course map below. The course can be seen in its entirety from the dock and the shoreline.



The start is in the water at Buoy #4. The swim is clockwise with right shoulder turns at the corners marked by yellow cylindrical buoys. The one-mile course requires 2 trips past all buoys and the 2-mile course requires 4 trips past all buoys, then a swim and exit to the finish line. The 500-yard swim will start at buoy #4, swim around buoy #1 return to buoy #4 and swim to the finish line. The finish line is on the beach. Water temperature is expected to be in the mid to upper sixties.

2.2 Race Day Schedule

7:30 am Registration opens

8:30 am MANDATORY Safety Meeting

8:40 am Check-in and warmups

9:00 am START under age 18 - 2 Mile Swim

9:05 am START 18 and over - 2 Mile Swim

9:10 am START under age 18 - 1 Mile Swim

9:15 am START 18 and over - 1 Mile Swim

10:00 am START under age 18 - 500 Meter swim (at the conclusion of the 2 Mile Swim)

2. SAFETY PERSONNEL

2.1 Safety Director

Safety Director will be responsible for safe conduct of the race, to include: a) Weather and Visibility safety thresholds for the race; b) communication coordination with in-water safety personnel before, during and at the completion of the race; c) final accounting of all swimmers exiting the water; and d) prime responsibility for any emergency water evacuation as necessary. The Safety Director will complete the Safety Director's Checklist.

2.2 Lifeguards

There will be a maximum ratio of 25 swimmers to 1 lifeguard. Lifeguards are to provide a ready response to swimmers in distress, and to initiate rescue, provide first aid, and transportation to safety and advanced care, as appropriate.

- **Head Lifeguard** - Will give pre-race briefing to all lifeguards. Will be on shore with a safety radio coordinating lifeguards and, if necessary, rescue efforts.
- **Lifeguards** – Will be positioned on the inside of the course with one or more lifeguards responsible for each side of the course between two buoys. They will be in a kayak, or a long board as detailed below.
- **Long board Lifeguards**- will be on a long board with whistle and flag. They will be spread out evenly throughout the course under the direction of the Head Lifeguard. They are responsible for reaching and moving distressed swimmer to EMT boat or shore, whichever is most expedient. May make first contact with distressed swimmer.
- **Kayak Lifeguards**- will be in kayaks with whistles, flags, safety radios and rescue tubes. They will be spread out evenly throughout the zones under the direction of the Head Lifeguard. They are responsible for identifying swimmers in distress, making first contact with distressed swimmers, if necessary, assisting distressed swimmers until long board lifeguard arrives to move them.

2.3 Kayakers

Kayakers are there to: (1) keep swimmers from swimming outside of observed area; (2) watch for swimmers in distress, (3) escort any swimmers withdrawing or needing rescue to EMT boat, to observation boat, or to shore; and (4) follow the direction of the meet director (i.e. follow the lag swimmer, keeping non-participants out of the racecourse, etc.)

The non-lifeguard kayakers will wear a personal flotation device (PFD), as well as have an extra flotation device i.e. rescue tube or foam noodle. They will also have a whistle and flag. Non-lifeguard kayakers are there to help ensure swimmer safety and to follow lag/last swimmers in each event. The non-lifeguard kayakers may offer

assistance in the way of flotation devices but must defer to lifeguards if distressed swimmer requires more assistance than flotation aid.

Kayakers should be experienced and come equipped for up to two hours on the water. Kayak must be seaworthy. Red signal flags and extra floatation devices will be provided the kayakers.

2.4 Swim Officials (4-6)

Swim officials in kayaks, wearing PFDs, will have a whistle and flag, extra flotation device, course radio, and cell phone. Some swim officials will be posted at turns and others will be following and observing groups of swimmers. Swim officials may offer assistance in the way of flotation devices.

2.5 Observation Boat/jet ski

There will be one observation boat/jet ski, located near the northwest side of the course, at least 50 feet away from the swimmers. The boat will be manned by the captain and if a boat, a swimmer monitor. The boat/jet ski will have a whistle, flag, rescue tube or foam noodle flotation device, cell phone and warm blankets/towel. The boat will be available for swimmers at the far end of the course who are not in need of medical attention but are too tired to continue with the race. The boat engine will be turned off if swimmers approach within 25 feet of the boat. The Captain and Safety Director will complete the Boat Operator's Checklist.

3. SAFETY MEETINGS

3.1 Safety Personnel Pre-Race Meeting

7:45 am is the lifeguard and safety crew meeting conducted by Safety Officer, Race Director and/or Head Lifeguard. Any decision to delay, modify or cancel the race will be made at this meeting by the Safety Officer in discussion with the Race Director. During this 20-minute meeting procedures will be reviewed for:

- Communication
- Swimmer rescue
- Course patrol and boat order
- Contact information
- Procedures for course evacuation

3.2 Swimmers' Mandatory Safety Meeting

At 8:30 am all swimmers are required to attend a safety talk. This talk will cover:

- Swimmer Accountability
- Course description and conditions
- Entry into the water
- Distressed swimmer
- Early exit/race abandonment
- Personal responsibility

3.3 Volunteers in the water ready to go

- All lifeguards and kayakers must be at the finish area ready to go by 8:40 a.m.
- Same to be in the water by 8:45 a.m.

3.4 Covid-19 Protocols

See Locally Updated USMS Covid-19 Safety Plan Addendum.

4. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS/SWIMMER ACCOUNTABILITY

4.1 Assigned numbering –

At registration all swimmers will be given an identical numbered: a) popsicle stick; and b) permanent marker arm or hand number. All numbers are used to verify swimmers' entry into, and exit from, the water. High visibility swim caps will be given to swimmers in various colors to designate the distance and division they are swimming in. Without impacting the numbering plan above, ankle timers may be used.

4.2 Entry into water

Swimmers will turn in their popsicle sticks to water entry/exit volunteers prior to crossing the finish line and entering the water. Swimmers may warm up prior to the start of their specific race outside the start area. Swimmers will gather at the start line between two small buoys. There will be a 2-minute, 1 minute, 30 second and 15 second warnings prior to the start. 5 to 10 seconds prior to the start, the race official will raise a flag above his/her head indicating the start is imminent. The race official will bring the flag down and simultaneously sound a marine air horn to signal the start.

4.3 Normal Exit from water

As they reach the conclusion of their race distance, the swimmers will complete the race by exiting the water and crossing the finish line and if available electronic timing pad (where their race time ends). The water entry/exit volunteers will assist in removing the ankle timer and steadying the swimmer as needed and manually record the swimmer's number. The electronic and manual record of those exiting the water will be reconciled at the direction of the Safety Officer.

4.4 Premature Exit from water

Safety personnel will be on the lookout for any swimmer exiting the water prior to the finish line or getting assistance from safety personnel out of the water and attempt to get the name and number of the individual and radio that to the Safety Director.

4.5 Communications

There will be two sets of radios, one set for course officials (course radio), and the other set for safety personnel (safety radio), including designated lifeguards and safety officer. The Safety Officer will carry a radio from each set.

Kayaks and lifeguards will have whistles and flags. Use both only if they need assistance with a swimmer. Use them to flag down errant swimmers, or to get the attention of lifeguards, other kayakers and paddleboards. The Race Director, Safety Officer and Meet Referee can communicate by course radio and/or safety radio.

Each swimmer must provide name and cell phone information for a handler/coach/parent/friend to be contacted in the event of an emergency. They must also provide their own cell phone number.

4.6 General Course Patrol

Goals are to (1) keep swimmers from swimming outside of observed area, (2) watch for swimmers in distress, and (3) escort any swimmers withdrawing or needing rescue to observation boat, or to shore.

- Kayakers should be watching for any swimmers in distress, other boats in the area, swimmers heading out of the observed areas or into dangerous situations. Alert your radio operator so that he/she can notify the Head Lifeguard/Safety Officer/Race Director.
- Use a flag or paddle, or shout to get swimmer's attention and herd them back to safety, but swimmers must not be harmed in your attempt to redirect them.
- Swimmers off the course should not be followed unless necessary to redirect them back to safety.
- Safety personnel must watch all the swimmers in their area. Unless directed by a race official or lead lifeguard, NO one should follow one swimmer- - there are no personal escorts.
- Swimmers asking to abandon the race should hold on to a flotation device, or the boat (stern or aft – never the sides) and signal a lifeguard for assistance. If swimmer can swim back to shore or an observation boat, Safety Personnel will follow them. Get their name and race number and relay that information to an official on shore, or to a lead lifeguard with a radio.
- Swimmers will be pulled from the competition:
 - If a swimmer demands Safety Personnel paddle next to them.
 - If a swimmer is incapable of staying on course and Safety Personnel are spending all their time corralling one individual
 - Safety Officer/Race Director/Head Lifeguard determines the last swimmer/swimmers need(s) to be pulled, and if so, will radio that information to either lead lifeguards or officials in kayaks.
 - Based upon the best judgement of the Safety Personnel.
- Actions when pulling a swimmer from competition.
 - Clearly explain the decision. Safety Personnel will tell, not ask and won't argue.
 - Swimmer will be directed to follow Safety Personnel to shore, to an observation boat, or to a long board lifeguard.
 - When swimmer is on long board, boat, or shore, Safety Personnel will return to their assigned position.
- Action for Aiding a Distressed Swimmer:
 - If a swimmer is panicking or appears in trouble, Safety Personnel will whistle and signal with the flag for lead lifeguard and long board.
 - The lifeguard making first contact will determine the type of assistance to offer and inform Head Lifeguard of situation by radio.
 - If a lifeguard is unable to reach the swimmer, other Safety Personnel will quickly approach the swimmer, give them a flotation device (rescue tube, foam noodle) and direct them to nearest observation boat (south side of course), dock or shore (north side of course).
 - As a last resort, the swimmer will be permitted to hold onto a boat, using caution, as a panicked swimmer can dump a kayak easily and quickly. Kayakers will get them to the stern and tow them to nearest longboard lifeguard, observation boat, or shore (start/finish area).
 - If a swimmer is rescued the Head Lifeguard will ensure that an incident report is completed at the end of the race.
 - If swimmer is tired but in relatively good shape offer a flotation device. If a swimmer accepts flotation support they must suspend swimming until they no longer are using flotation support. If the swimmer opts to quit the race, the lifeguard or kayaker will collect, pf applicable, the ankle timer and inform officials that the swimmer is out of the water.
 - If swimmer requires medical assistance and cannot swim out on their own, the long board lifeguard will take the swimmer to either the Observation boat or into shore.

4.7 Race Termination

- If the race is to be abandoned, radios will be used to communicate to all watercraft.
- From the Referee, the abandonment signals will be 5 short blasts followed by one long blast.
- From the Lifeguards, the abandonment signals will be 5 short blasts of the whistle followed by one long blast. Lifeguards and officials shall inform swimmers of cancellation.
- Swimmers are to discontinue swimming and look for directions from the Officials or watercraft personnel. Once safe on shore, make sure all swimmers get checked off as being safely out of the water

5. Other Safety information

5.1 First Aid and Medical Assistance

There will be emergency medical personnel on site, on shore. All calls to 911 Emergency response or local hospitals will be made by the emergency medical staff on site, not by other personnel, in order to increase the clarity of the communicated information and to speed proper advanced medical treatment.

5.2 Emergency hospital:

Nearest emergency hospital: MultiCare Covington Medical Center

Phone: 253-372-6500

Address: 17700 SE 272nd Street, Covington, WA 98042

Distance from site: 2.0 miles

6. Meet Personnel Contact Information

Race Director - Eric Durban lastsplashofsummer@BlueWave-Aquatics.com 206-423-8043

Safety Officer - Scott Lautman SLautman@comcast.net 206-669-6695

Head Lifeguard POC – Nicole Artino 206-304-2775

Meet Referee - TBD

Asst. Meet Director - Wendy Neely wendymal@mac.com 206-793-9391

7. Insurance Certificate Information

Insurance for the event is provided through MacKay Insurance.

SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES HANDOUT reviewed at Safety Briefing

The event's success requires the swimmers accept certain responsibilities. In addition to recognizing the risk inherent to exercise in cold water (e.g., heart attack, hypothermia, drowning), every participant is expected to abide by the following:

- Make sure you have provided your and a non-participant's name and cell phone contact to the registration personnel in case of emergency.
 - No guide is available. The kayaks, boats and paddleboards are there for the safety of the group, not as individual escorts or safety marshals. Expect to follow the course with the help of adjacent swimmers and buoys, not with the personal aid of the boaters.
 - Do keep an eye out for your fellow swimmers. Help them stay on course. If you see another swimmer clearly in distress, summon a kayak or paddleboard and stay in contact with the swimmer.
 - If you decide to abandon the event midway, DO NOT swim to the closest shore. Rather, notify a kayak and they will escort you to the observation boat, the EMT boat, or to shore.
 - If you are tired or injured and need assistance, summon help from a kayak or paddleboard; this is why they are here.
 - When a lifeguard or official approaches, clearly explain the nature of your problem. Be accurate when assessing your condition or circumstance. Don't sugar coat it, don't cry wolf.
 - If you are injured or have a medical emergency, enlist the help of a lifeguard. They are trained in first aid and lifesaving. If unable to reach a lifeguard, explain your situation to the nearest kayaker or swimmer. If urgent, BE VERY EXPLICIT.
 - If you need a rest or simply want a break and require a flotation device, raise and wave your hand, look for and get the attention of a kayaker.
 - Listen to whatever direction or instructions are provided by the lifeguard or official in the kayak.
 - If injured or needing medical attention, you will be transported to an EMT boat or to shore, whichever is more expedient. If uninjured but withdrawing from the race, a kayak or long board will escort or transport you to an observation boat or to shore.
 - If you are showing signs of distress, are obviously unable to follow the course, or will clearly finish outside of the 1½ hour time limit, you will be pulled from the event.
 - If you are pulled, do not argue with lifeguards or officials. They are looking after the safety of all the swimmers, not one.
 - You will either be escorted by a kayaker or transported by a long board as appropriate.
 - If transported or escorted to an observation boat, you will remain on the boat until that boat is authorized to return to the finish area. While on the boat, the boat crew will radio or call in your location and that you are out of the race. When you return to the finish area, **you must check in with a race official** and, as appropriate, return your electronic timing chip.
 - If you start the race and subsequently abandon it for any reason, you must report to a race official and, as appropriate, return your chip. If you start the race but do not check in at the finish, we will conclude you are still on the course. If the race is over and, as applicable, your time chip has not been returned, we will assume the worst and we will begin search and rescue procedures for you.
 - If you have sustained minor injuries and are able to remain at the race venue (ashore), notify the Race Director or Safety Officer. You will be expected to complete an incident report describing the nature of your accident, illness, or condition.
 - If the race is to be abandoned, the abandonment signals will be 5 short blasts of the whistle followed by one long blast. Swimmers are to discontinue swimming and look for directions from the Officials or watercraft personnel. Once safe on shore, make sure you get checked off as being safely out of the water.
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