



Open Water Swimming Officials



Now recruiting in South West Region

Would you like to officiate at events in the open air, rather than in a steamy swimming pool?

You too can enjoy the benefits of sun, sea and sand whilst judging a swimming event!



Open Water swimming is now an established Olympic discipline held over a distance of 10km. The first event was held in Beijing in 2008. At the 2012 London Olympics the event was held in the Serpentine with a capacity crowd and the 2016 Rio Olympic the event was a sea swim off the famous Copacobana Beach and one of our South West Region OW referees was there! We can't quite compete with Rio but we do hold events at Weymouth's Preston Beach and at other locations in lakes or reservoirs. Open Water swimming like other disciplines needs officials to ensure events run smoothly and safely so we have a programme to develop officials to perform at county, regional and national events throughout the summer season.



ASA SWR are running development courses for new officials during the 2017 season as below:

Saturday 27th May – Wells Leisure Centre, classroom workshop sessions
Saturday 3rd June – Weymouth, practical sessions on beach and boat.

Learn about officiating at Open Water events with the Open Water Judge Level 1 qualification, update on FINA rules relating to Open Water. Gain practical experience in boats and with swimmers. Then officiate at:

**The South West Region Open Water Championships on 24th June
@ Preston Beach, Weymouth**

British Swimming Open Water Level 2 and Referee qualification courses can also be arranged to meet demand

If you are interested, please contact:
Alan Withers arwithers@aol.com SWR Open Water officials' co-ordinator

What does an Open Water official do:

Timekeeper:

You start your watch on the starter's signal as you would in the pool, however at the end of the race you will be expected to take the time of every swimmer in your race. At bigger events you will be given a watch that incorporates a printer, so there is no need to write down all the separate times. At local events however you will use an ordinary stopwatch but be sure to check it can take enough splits.

Judge:

All open water events are freestyle, so there will be no stroke judging, what you will be looking for is fouling, and safety of the swimmers



Finish judge:

As a finish judge you will be asked to record the order of all the swimmers as they touch the finish. Usually these are spread out and easy to judge, however sometimes you can have four, five or more swimmers all coming in together racing to finish. Then you have to very quick to read the numbers written on their shoulders and hands. If you are lucky there may be a video camera recording the finish to help you sort out the finish order.

Starter:

You will be starting a lot of swimmers all at once. You will have a flag and an air horn, so that the swimmers can have no doubt when the signal is given. Sometimes the swimmers will be on a platform for the start and will dive in, other times they will start as a big bunch all together in the water.

Referee:

You will be controlling all of the officials mainly using a radio. Your principal concern is safety. The weather can cause problems, water temperature, safety boat cover and of course ensuring swimmers are playing fair and not crowding together and causing danger to other swimmers.

There are other specialised officials such as **Safety Officer**, and **Course Officer** that you do not see in pool swimming but you will start with timekeeping and judging.

During the summer there will be courses for Level 1 Open Water officials; why not enrol? More information including application forms online at:

<http://www.swimming.org/britishswimming/swimming/open-water>