

2013 Open Water Swim Season Summary

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The season offered more than 70 open water swims at the shore or nearby states. A new swim option offered this season was featured with the June 2nd 2013 Escape the Cape Triathlon that included a swim from the Cape May Ferry. The race director, Steve DelMonte <stephen@delmosports.com> is allowing participants to either just swim or bike & swim, in lieu of completing the full triathlon. He has already scheduled next year's event for June 8th 2014 but unfortunately, this is the same date for the 2014 Great Chesapeake Bay Swim.

June 1st 2013 offered good season opening swims with the very competitive Navesink Swims (1.2 or 2.4 miles) in the Navesink River with tri-athletes heavily represented.

June 9th 2013 and unfortunately, the informal Donny Fund Swim (pick your own distance) in Pleasantville, New Jersey, was scheduled the same day as the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim. When there isn't a schedule conflict, this informal swim allows athletes to enjoy a training swim on their own while supporting a worthy cause with a hot breakfast at the Pleasantville Yacht Club.

June 9th 2013 brought in warm weather with 72 degree water and good swimming conditions for the annual Chesapeake Bay Swims (1 or 4.4 miles) finishing nearby Hemmingway's restaurant in Maryland. Results can be found at www.linmark.com

June 28th 2013 and an overcast evening for the one mile Independence Day Swim at its new location in Beesley's Point, New Jersey (at the sea-doo beach location across from the Tuckahoe Inn. The new course directs swimmers on a triangular course towards the "cooling tower" and back again to the beach. That evening, 144 swimmers swam directly into the outgoing tide but at least had an easier swim returning with that tide to finish back at the beach area where we started. Results found at www.lmsports.com

July 20th 2013 and the Ocean City Masters Swim was changed from an evening venue to yet another morning swim – annoying those of us who don't like morning swims! The 10 a.m. swim gave us chilly 67 degree water along with bouncy seasick conditions that dashed all hopes for a blissfully balmy swim that morning for 219 swimmers. Results can be found at www.lmsports.com

August 3rd 2013 and the 2nd Annual North Wildwood Ocean Challenge sponsored by the North Wildwood Lifeguard Benevolent Association. Race director, Bill Auty (215-806-9422) is still working on getting "sea legs" for this evening event and turnout is still low due to schedule conflicts with the same day for the 8 a.m. Mid Summer Lavallette Ocean Swim. One of the few remaining evening swims, the course is in the form of two apex triangles, each a half mile, with swimmers exiting and re-entering the ocean to swim the second half of the course.

August 3rd 2013 ushered in the Mid Summer Lavallette Ocean Swim with chilly 66 to 68 degree water and a chilly breeze at 8 a.m. that morning. After a mile walk down the beach, the USA swimmers started first and all female swimmers had to wait for a half hour on the beach prior to beginning their division swim. The swim no longer offers a USMS division and is now limited to just two divisions for open championship and USA swimmers. The ocean swells blocked clear sighting along the course and some swimmers were either in too close to the beach or swimming way out to sea. At the finish, it was difficult getting out of the surf onto the beach due to the extreme slope filled with soft sand (plus tiny pebbles and broken shells) and swimmers kept falling without getting a solid footing to climb onto the beach. With the chilly conditions, many swimmers were cold while trying to warm up with muffins and crumb cake. Swim results take a lot of time and awards can be mailed to participants.

August 10th 2013 and unfortunately, the Yates Swim that historically was held in the evening went the way as the Ocean City Masters Swim and started at 10 a.m. this year. The ocean was a chilly 67 degrees and the ACBP would not allow swimmers to compete wearing wetsuits – they would be disqualified from receiving awards. The day before the swim, the ocean was a balmy 75 degrees but that morning, it was chilly with rolling waves and a west wind. There was no assisting current and swimmers had to work the swim but at least found a few warm water pockets along the course. The waves limited sighting back to the finish at the beach for this old “lifeguard” course that directed 68 swimmers out to sea and back to shore where the Atlantic City Lifeguards treated us to grilled hot dogs on the beach. The race director mentioned that they are working behind the scenes to hopefully return the Yates Swim course back to the inlet finishing at Gardiners Basin. Results can be found at www.acbp.org

August 25th 2013 and the 5K Cedar Island Swim in Avalon, New Jersey, treated 110 swimmers to an enjoyable swim around Cedar Island in 72 degree water. Along the course, there is a dock that offers champagne to the swimmers if you see it and stop long enough for a toast, and continue swimming onto the finish back at the Avalon Yacht Club. This year, the after swim refreshments were much less elegant than previous years that included sandwiches, hot dogs and burgers, deserts, sodas and beer – were now limited to pizza and cookies and water back at the dock. Results are not posted and this fundraising swim for Wounded Warriors (special cause selected by Tim and Midge Kerr) is more like an informal training event with prizes going to the top five male and female swimmers.

August 31st 2013 and this year's Pageant Swim was more than just a dip in the ocean for us. It was the toughest swim of the season, and probably one of the toughest swims ever in the 84 years the Atlantic City Beach Patrol hosted this swim. The course took most of us twice as long as usual to swim to the finish. We swim in 3 to 6 foot waves against a 1.5 knot current into the south wind. If the course had been reversed, then we would have set record times for this swim but the ACBP never alters the direction of the swim course. At least 30 swimmers were safely escorted to shore and 177 finally finished with the last swimmer arriving in 1 hour and 40 minutes. Race

director, Norm Draper, had fun with this year's commemorative long-sleeve tee shirt printed in deep purple with a pink crown welcoming the Miss America Pageant back to Atlantic City again. Results can be found at www.acbp.org

September 21st 2013 marks the final local swim for our open water season with the September Splash (1 and 2 mile swims) held in Wildwood Crest, New Jersey. With 68 degree water, the box-course in Sunset Lake was smooth as glass for the two-mile swim at 9 a.m. but started to pick up a little choppiness for the one-mile swim at 11 a.m. A serious safety problem was corrected with a new entrance stairway into the water that was free of debris and swimmers did not cut their feet at this year's swim. There were 59 swimmers who finished the two-mile event with faster times at the split for their event as compared to the one-mile event. For example, the first place winner in the two-mile swim finished in 25:51 minutes as compared to the winning time of 14:47 for the one-mile swim. Overall, there were 173 swimmers who finished the one-mile event with tougher conditions. Results can be found at www.lmsports.com