



WORLD
AQUATICS

OPEN WATER SWIMMING WORLD CUP 2026

ADDITIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS

In force as from 1 January 2026

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1. GENERAL CONCEPT

The World Aquatics Bureau approves the organisation of the World Aquatics Open Water Swimming World Cup. The Open Water Swimming World Cup is an annually staged elite level global competition series.

The Open Water Swimming World Cup consists of numerous stops staged by Organising Committees "OC's" under the recognition of the "Host," and are staged throughout the year on dates to be approved by World Aquatics.

Except as granted to the Host under its hosting agreement with World Aquatics, World Aquatics owns all rights to the Open Water Swimming World Cup.

The Open Water Swimming World Cup shall be open to participation by athletes of World Aquatics affiliated National Federations or the World Aquatics Refugee Team. Athletes affiliated with National Federations that are currently suspended may be eligible to participate in the Open Water Swimming World Cup, provided they meet all established requirements to compete under "Neutral Individual Athlete" status.

All Open Water Swimming World Cup stops will be conducted according to the World Aquatics Competition Regulations (the "Competition Regulations") and the additional rules & regulations set forth in this document.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document serves to supplement the Competition Regulations by specifying additional rules, regulations and technical components that are specific to the World Aquatics Open Water Swimming World Cup 2026 (the "Event"). This document also offers further World Cup-specific operational guidance to support consistent application across all stops of the Event. Unless specified otherwise, all technical components referenced in this document can be found in the Competition Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, if any conflict arises between these additional rules and regulations and the Competition Regulations, the Competition Regulations shall prevail.

3. PARTICIPATION, ENTRIES & COMPETITION FORMAT

Participation:

Entries will only be accepted from (i) World Aquatics National Member Federations or (ii) the designated World Aquatics representative of the World Aquatics Refugee Team.

The team representative (team leader, coach) is responsible for representing the competitors at the Team Leaders Meeting and feeding them during the event.

Each National Federation that has entered one or more competitor in an event must have at least one team official (such as a team leader or a coach) present at the race. A competitor will not be allowed to start the race without his/her designated team representative being present.

To clarify, a team official can be responsible for up to two (2) competitors in the water at the same time.

Each Host shall make its best efforts to ensure its strongest swimmers (specifically, Olympic or World Aquatics Championships medallists) participate in all stops of the Event. The presence of such medallists at any stop of the Event will enhance and promote both the Event (i.e., clinics, master class, etc.) and the development of Open Water Swimming.

Entry Process & Registration:

All National Federations registration and entries must be done online through the World Aquatics General Management System (GMS) via <https://data.worldaquatics.com> Each National Federation will access the system to complete their registrations before the designated deadline for each stop.

Athletes representing the World Aquatics Refugee Team shall be registered by the designated World Aquatics representative responsible for the Refugee Team.

Information Bulletin:

The Host, in collaboration with World Aquatics, shall create an information bulletin (including entry process, official hotel & transportation information, venue and course information, prize money distribution, etc.) to be shared via email with all National World Aquatics Member Federations and World Aquatics at least 60 days prior to each competition.

Final Entries:

Final Entries are to be submitted through World Aquatics GMS no later than the deadline set within each stop's information bulletin – normally fourteen (14) days prior to each stop. The Host is not obliged to guarantee participation or provide any logistical assistance for those participants that do not meet this deadline.

Competitor Withdrawal:

If any competitor entered by his/her National Federation is withdrawn the fourteen (14) days prior to the respective Event stop, or otherwise does not participate in an Event stop without extraordinary reasons that can be corroborated by World Aquatics pursuant to written evidence, then the National Federation to which the Athlete is affiliated must pay a penalty fee of five hundred United States Dollars (US\$ 500) to the Host.

Team Leaders Meeting:

The Host, in collaboration with World Aquatics, shall organise a Team Leaders Meeting on the day before the first day of competition, not later than 17:00. The World Aquatics Technical Delegate shall chair the Team Leaders Meeting, supported by the World Aquatics Sport Manager and the OC. This will be the only permitted opportunity for last minute entry changes.

Event Programme for each stop:

Each Event stop shall follow a 2–3-day competition format. The number of events, and the order, shall be decided by World Aquatics and the OC, depending on the dates of the competition. Information will be published in the information bulletin. The OC will provide training facilities for three (3) days prior to the first day of each Event stop.

The events: 10km (all stops), 3km Knockout Sprint, 4x1500m mixed team relay.

Mass Participation event: As a complementary part of the Event programme, the Host may organise a mass participation event with one or more open races, on the same day as (but not during) the Event’s elite race(s). Entry is open to any competitor. This event(s) will be considered a complementary part of the Event, but not a World Aquatics competition. The Host shall be solely and entirely responsible for the Mass Participation event and cover all the costs.

4. POINTS SYSTEM & DISTRIBUTION

Points system:

For the 10km, points will be awarded to the competitors depending on their race finishing position. Competitors may accumulate points at each stop in which they participate and finish, with their total points counting towards the overall final rankings for each year.

Points distribution:

Points distribution for the overall rankings:

Position / Points	10km
1st	800
2nd	700
3rd	600
4th	550
5th	500
6th	450
7th	400
8th	350
9th	300
10th	250
All other finishers	As per Appendix 1

Notes:

- Any competitors who do not finish the race (DNF, OTL) or who are disqualified (DSQ) will receive zero (0) points.
- Competitors suspected of colluding or agreeing to finish with a tie may be disqualified, subject to a determination by the AQIU that such conduct has been proven to the “comfortable satisfaction” burden of proof.
- In the case of an unintended tie, tied positions receive the same ranking and the same number of points. Ranks in the next lower ranking are skipped.
- In the case of “race emergency abandonment,” where some competitors have already finished the race and received points, the remaining competitors who must leave the water before completion shall be awarded points based on their ranking in the race at the time the race is abandoned (or as close to the abandonment as possible).

5. PRIZE MONEY & AWARDS

EACH STOP:

10km Prize Money:

The Host shall pay a minimum total of fifteen thousand United States dollars (US\$ 15'000) to the respective National Federations of the top 8 qualified competitors in the 10km event, in both the men's and the women's categories, to subsequently be distributed directly to the competitors as follows:

Position	Prize Money
1st	US\$ 3'500
2nd	US\$ 3'000
3rd	US\$ 2'500
4th	US\$ 1'700
5th	US\$ 1'500
6th	US\$ 1'200
7th	US\$ 950
8th	US\$ 650

Sprint Winner Prize Money:

A sprint winner will be crowned at each stop of the Event, based on the results of the first lap in the 10km event, in both the men's and women's categories. World Aquatics shall pay a minimum total amount of two thousand United States dollars (US\$ 2,000) to the respective National Federations of the top 3 qualified competitors in the 10km first lap sprint, in both the men's and women's categories, to subsequently be distributed directly to the competitors as follows:

Position	Prize Money
1st	US\$ 1'000
2nd	US\$ 700
3rd	US\$ 300

Mixed Team Relay Prize Money:

World Aquatics shall pay a minimum total amount of ten thousand United States dollars (US\$ 10,000) to the respective National Federations of the top three mixed relay teams, to subsequently be distributed directly to the relay teams as follows:

Position	Prize Money*
1st	US\$ 5'000
2nd	US\$ 3'000
3rd	US\$ 2'000

**Only one team per National Federation will be entitled to prize money. If multiple teams from the same National Federation place in the top three, only the highest-placed team from that National Federation shall receive prize money. Any remaining prize money allocation shall pass down to the next highest-finishing team from a different National Federation that has not already received prize money, continuing in this manner until all prize money has been awarded.*

3km Knockout Prize Money:

World Aquatics shall pay a minimum net total amount of five thousand United States dollars (US\$ 5.000), in both the men's and women's categories, to be distributed as follows:

Position	Prize Money
1st	US\$ 2'500
2nd	US\$ 1'500
3rd	US\$ 1'000

Notes:

- *For the sprint lap, the intermediate gate and the transponder will be used to determine the position of each competitor's position at the end of the first lap. If the sprint is close, video replay will be consulted to determine the sprint ranking. The competitor whose head crosses the line first shall be considered ahead for ranking purposes.*
- *Any competitors who do not finish the race (DNF, OTL) or who are disqualified (DSQ) will not be eligible for the prize money/award.*
- *Competitors suspected of colluding or agreeing to finish with a tie may be disqualified, subject to a determination by the AQIU that such conduct has been proven to the "comfortable satisfaction" burden of proof.*
- *In the case of an unintended tie, tied competitors/teams all receive the assigned prize money for the rank. For example, if two competitors tied for 2nd place in the 10km event, both of them will receive US\$ 3'000.*
- *The method of the distribution of the prize money shall be announced to the National Federations after each stop.*
- *World Aquatics will transfer to the National Federation the total amount of the prize money without any deductions.*
- *In case there are less than eight (8) finishers (for the 10km Men & Women) and three (3) finishers (for the mixed team relay), then all the prize money will be redistributed amongst the finishers as determined by the Technical Delegate.*

OVERALL:

World Aquatics will contribute an additional minimum total amount of three hundred sixty thousand United States dollars (US\$ 360'000) to the Event's overall annual prize money. This amount will be paid to the National Federations of the winners, as described below, and subsequently distributed to the competitors.

- **"World Cup Winner"**: The overall individual annual winners of the Event will be determined, in both the men's and women's categories, based on which competitors accumulate the most points in the 10km event during the 2026 Event, provided they have participated in a minimum of three (3) stops (with a mandatory requirement of participating in the final stop of the Event).

The annual prize money to be awarded to the World Cup Winner, in both the men's and women's categories, is as follows:

Position / Points	Prize Money
1st	US\$ 50'000
2nd	US\$ 35'000
3rd	US\$ 25'000

4th	US\$ 20'000
5th	US\$ 15'000
6th	US\$ 12'000
7th	US\$ 8'000
8th	US\$ 5'000
9th	US\$ 3'500
10th	US\$ 1'500

- **“World Cup Junior Winner”:** To be eligible for this award, a competitor must be 19 years old or younger, as of 31 December 2026. The World Cup Junior Winner, in both the men’s and women’s categories, will be awarded US\$ 5'000, and will be determined based on which competitors within the eligible age range accumulate the most points in the 10km event during the 2026 Event, provided they have participated in a minimum of three (3) stops (with a mandatory requirement of participating in the final stop of the Event).

Notes:

- *In the event of a tie, results from the stops in which both competitors competed will be compared; the competitors with the most head-to-head wins will be ranked higher. If the competitors split wins, their specific placements at each stop will determine the ranking. If the tie still persists, the final tiebreaker will be the total of their World Ranking points earned at the World Cup stops in which they both competed.*
- *Should any of the World Cup 2026 stops be cancelled, the 75% participation rule to be eligible for the overall annual prize money will be calculated over the total of stops that have taken place during the season.*

6. DELEGATES, TECHNICAL OFFICIALS & JUDGES

World Aquatics Representatives:

For each stop, World Aquatics will nominate a Technical Delegate, a Medical Representative, a Safety Delegate, and a Media Delegate.

Technical Officials:

World Aquatics and the Host shall appoint the Technical Officials for all roles required as per the Competition Regulations. All appointed officials must be approved by World Aquatics Referees and Officials Committee (ROC) and the Technical Open Water Swimming Committee (TOWSC) Commission. All other officials, marshals and other persons required shall be recruited and appointed by the Host.

Technical Officials Meeting:

The Host shall organize an Open Water Swimming officials meeting with the participation of all of the appointed officials, on the day prior to the first race. This meeting will be organized by the OC and chaired by the World Aquatics Technical Delegate.

7. VISAS & TRANSPORTATION

Visas:

The Host shall make best efforts with its government regarding entry visas for all competitors and team officials from any National World Aquatics Member Federation, as well as for World Aquatics officials and Media attending the Event.

Local Transportation:

The Host shall welcome all entered competitors, team officials and World Aquatics Delegates and Officials at the nearest airport/railway station upon arrival and shall provide appropriate transportation to the official hotels. The Host shall also provide the return travel arrangements and confirm in advance the departure times from official hotels to the airport/railway station.

Flights for all competitors & team officials will be the responsibility of each National Federation to cover.

The Host shall provide local transportation between official hotels and training/competition venues (shuttle system) free of charge for the following groups for the duration of the Event and 4 days prior thereto, plus the day after the conclusion of the Event.

8. ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

Invited athletes:

The Host shall provide at its own cost accommodation in a minimum 4-star hotel with full-board (3 meals per day of adequate quantity and quality) up to 5 days for all invited athletes ("Invited Athletes"), with up to 8 Invited Athletes participating in the Event's athlete experience.

Rest of competitors:

Accommodation for the rest of team officials & competitors will be the responsibility of each respective National Federation. All participating National Federations must book their accommodation at the official(s) hotel(s) put in place by the Host. Request for accommodation at the official(s) hotel(s) must be done by sending to the OC (by the specified deadline) the completed accommodation form - available at the World Aquatics website.



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