

Pool Open Water Swimming

“Put a little POW™ in your Pool”

Description:

What is Pool Open Water?

Pool Open Water (POW™) is Open Water swimming in pool. Traditional Open Water swimming is done in the ocean, bays, lakes, rivers, channels, dams and reservoirs throughout the world. Now you can bring the fun and challenge of Open Water swimming to the pool while you introduce your swimmers to the sport. Use POW™ when you can't get access to an actual Open Water site or use it as a break from traditional training and competition.

Think of POW™ as “short-track open water swimming”. Basically take out the lane lines in a pool, set four turn buoys at the corners and swim loops around the course. Information on how to set up and conduct the competition is included in this packet.

POW™ is flexible. Each POW™ Race Director can choose the number of loops the athletes swim around the pool. For young children, we encourage starting out with 1- or 2-loop POW™ courses. We call these 150- or 300-meter events, although the actual swimming distance is shorter. For teenagers and older swimmers, we encourage 4- to 10-loop POW™ courses. A POW™ event could also include two, three or four person relays.

A 50 meter pool is preferable, but any pool can be used; just adjust the number of loops to be swum. The course will have 4 turn buoys and is rectangular in shape. The race is run in a counter-clockwise direction. See diagram below.

In a 50 meter eight lane pool, turn buoy #1 is set near the intersection of lane 1, lane 2 and the backstroke flag on one end of the pool. Turn buoy #2 is set near the intersection of lane 1, lane 2 and the backstroke pool on the other end of the pool. Turn buoy #3 is set near the intersection of lane 7, lane 8 and the backstroke flag on the same end of the pool. Turn buoy #4 is set near the intersection of lane 7, lane 8 and the backstroke flag at the other end of the pool. A similar set-up would be used in different length or width pools.

Rules:

POW™ racing rules are simple!

The Start: The start will be in the water with all swimmers behind a start rope. Use the false start rope and place it in line with the buoys (right under the backstroke flags.) The rope is in the water. After the starting signal, lift the rope so the swimmers pass under the rope.

Race Countdown: A 1-minute and 30-second warning will be given by the Race Starter to indicate that the swimmers should enter the pool and get into position behind the start rope. A final countdown will begin at 10 seconds.

Turn Buoys: The POW™ Race is conducted in the counter-clockwise direction. The swimmers must keep all four turn buoys off of their left shoulder around each turn buoy.

The Bell Lap: As the first swimmer starts the last loop, the Referee will ring a bell indicating that one loop remains.

Disqualifications: Swimmers can be disqualified for making intentional contact, obstruction or interference with another swimmer. Such unsportsmanlike conduct is judged by the officials who are located at the turn buoys and by the Referee/Starter. A warning can be given by a whistle. At the first rule infraction, the official will show a yellow card to the swimmer. For the second infringement, swimmers are shown a red flag and can be asked to immediately leave the pool.

The Finish: The finish is in the water and is determined by the swimmers touching the wall. The order of finish is determined by the Referee.

Recommended distances and heat sizes:

(Note: races are coed. It is not necessary to split the genders, but, of course, you could choose to do so.)

8 and under = 2 loops approximate distance in a 50 meter pool 300 meters.	25-30 swimmers per heat
9-10 = 4 loops approximate distance in a 50 meter pool 600 meters.	25-30 swimmers per heat
11-12 = 6 loops approximate distance in a 50 meter pool 900 meters.	20-25 swimmers per heat
13-14 = 8 loops approximate distance in a 50 meter pool 1200 meters.	15-20 swimmers per heat
15-18=10 loops approximate distance in a 50 meter pool 1500 meters.	15-20 swimmers per heat

Conducting one heat of each age group will yield a competition of approximately 2 hours.

POW™ Equipment and Logistics

Pool Equipment

1. 4 Buoys 20" (could use balloons, pull buoys, or any floating object)
2. Cinder blocks or anchors (4)
3. Start Rope and anchor rope (4 x depth of pool) +(1 x 10ft)
4. Bell
5. Gun or Horn

Administrative Equipment

1. Hy-Tek Meet Manager
2. PA System
3. Computer
4. Printing Stop watch (if available)
5. Clip boards (6)
6. Pens and Pencils (numerous)
7. Stapler (1)
8. Jumbo Markers (Black and White)
9. Results sheets
10. Lap Counter sheets
11. Red and Yellow cards (5 sets of 8.5 x 11 laminated colored paper.)
12. Whistles (5)

OFFICIALS and Meet Workers

- 1 Starter
- 4 Turn Judges
- 2 Finish Judges
- 2 Lap Judges
- 2 to Handle Registration/Numbering of Athletes
- 1 Warm up area marshal
- 1 Announcer
- 1 Computer Operator
- 1 Timing Operator
- 1 Administrative Helper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To Set up the Pool

- a. In a 50 meter eight lane pool, turn buoy #1 is set near the intersection of lane 1, lane 2 and the backstroke flag on one end of the pool. Turn buoy #2 is set near the intersection of lane 1, lane 2 and the backstroke pool on the other end of the pool. Turn buoy #3 is set near the intersection of lane 7, lane 8 and the backstroke flag on the

same end of the pool. Turn buoy #4 is set near the intersection of lane 7, lane 8 and the backstroke flag at the other end of the pool. A similar set-up would be used in different length or width pools.

- b. Attach each buoy to rope and cinderblock or other anchoring device
- c. The warm-up area is inside the four buoys used for the race (see chart below)

2. To Set up the Meet

- a. Set up the meet on the computer.
- b. Follow the instructions on Hy-Tek for setting up an open water race.
- c. Enter athletes into meet database, then seed
- d. Athlete numbers will be assigned by Hy-Tek.
- e. Number athletes with the marker on right arm and shoulder. (Numbers go down the arm and left to right on the shoulder.

3. **Conducting Warm-up.** Depending on number of participants, either split warm-up by age group or conduct simultaneous warm-up. Be sure to have marshals watching warm-up.

4. Procedures for Officials. (5 minimum)

- a. One referee/starter
- b. Four turn officials. Station one official at each buoy to be sure swimmers round the buoys
- c. Officials are also to watch for safety and 'foul play.' Each official can yellow or red card a swimmer. (See below for explanation.)

5. Recording Results

- a. Recorder write the number of each athlete as he/she finishes
- b. Match athlete number with recorded times (either from printing stopwatch or timers)
- c. Enter results into Hy-tek (Hy-tek has instructions for setting up an Open Water competition)

POW™ Pool Layout

