

Distance Derring-Do in 2018

Can you swim all the long distance and open water national championships?



The Fire Island lighthouse overlooks the course of one of USMS's open water national championships this year.

Courtesy of Discover Long Island

Every year, U.S. Masters Swimming offers a slate of long distance and open water national championships across the country designed to test your endurance. From a 3,000-yard pool swim to a 10.7-mile open water race, there's an event for everyone.

ePOSTALS

USMS 1-Hour ePostal National Championship

Jan. 1–Feb. 28

Get started on your 2018 distance resolution right away on Jan. 1 with the USMS 1-Hour ePostal National Championship. Hosted by Indy Aquatic Masters, this offering is a wonderful way to check your fitness after the holiday season. Take advantage of the two-month window this annual classic now offers and see how far you can swim in 1 hour.

USMS 5K/10K ePostal National Championships

May 15–Sept. 15

For those of you who might not be so keen on open water but still want to get in on the national championship action this summer, consider completing the 5K and 10K ePostal events. Hosted by the Chicago Smelts, these events can be swum in any 50-meter pool and are a great way to gear up if you want to do an open water event!

USMS 3000/6000 Yard ePostal National Championships

Sept. 15–Nov. 15

To round out the ePostal season, test your mettle with the 3,000-yard and 6,000-yard ePostal National Championships. Hosted by Marcia's Enthusiastic Masters of Oakland, these two events serve as an awesome pair of workouts and a good way to gauge your pool fitness after a long summer in open water or a long course pool.

OPEN WATER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

USMS Middle Distance Open Water National Championship (2 miles)

May 27, Reston Masters Swim Team, Lake Audubon, Reston, Va.

Start your summer off right by heading to Audubon Lake in Reston, Va., for Memorial Day weekend and the first swim in the 2018 USMS

Open Water National Championship season. Located just 20 miles from Washington, D.C., Lake Audubon is the perfect stop for urban adventurers who want to enjoy the nation's capital. Or combine this challenging 2-mile race in a gorgeous lake with a more rural experience exploring the nearby Blue Ridge Mountains or Shenandoah National Park.

USMS Sprint Distance Open Water National Championship (1 mile)

June 9, Saluki Masters Swim Club, Little Grassy Lake, Makanda, Ill.

Eclipse your expectations and set yourself up for a great summer of open water swimming with a 1-mile sprint distance race across Little Grassy Lake in Makanda, Ill. Event host Saluki Masters Swim Club named this event the "Eclipse Crossroads Open Water" swim because nearby Makanda, Ill.—a quaint country village in Southern Illinois offering accommodations and attractions for all tastes and budgets—boasted the longest duration of totality during the 2017 solar eclipse and will do the same in the upcoming 2024 solar eclipse.

USMS Long Distance Open Water National Championship (5K)

July 7, Open Water Swim Long Island, Fire Island, New York

Could it be the lost city of Atlantis? Probably not, but Atlantique Beach on Fire Island is as lovely and enticing as it sounds. A narrow barrier island running along the southern edge of Long Island in New York, Fire Island is the quintessential summer vacation destination with loads of hotels, restaurants, shops, and other attractions to rival its inviting white-sand beaches. In addition to the 5-kilometer USMS national championship, event host Open Water Swim Long Island also offers 400-meter and 1-mile races.

USMS Ultramarathon Distance Open Water National Championship (10.7 miles)

July 8, Portland Bridge Swim, Willamette River, Portland, Ore.

Heading into its eighth year, the Portland Bridge Swim is the longest swimming race in the Pacific Northwest and has become one of the most popular marathon swims in the country. Swim with the current down the Willamette River through downtown Portland and scoot under 12 different bridges spanning the waterway.

USMS's open water national championship season starts May 27 with a 2-mile swim in Lake Audubon in Virginia.
Nandor Nagy/Reston Masters Swim Team



Afterwards, check out the impressive dining, drinking, and sightseeing options Portland has to offer.

USMS Cable Open Water National Championship (2 miles)

July 12, Central Oregon Masters Association, Foster Lake, Oregon

Cable swims are a rare breed of open water event, and currently there are only a few sites in the United States that can host the USMS 2-Mile Cable Open Water National Championship. This year, the event returns to scenic Foster Lake in the Willamette Valley. The Willamette National Forest is adjacent to this pristine venue that's easily accessible by I-5.



The 10.7-mile Portland (Ore.) Bridge Swim is one of the most popular marathon swims in the country.

Jamie Francis/Travel Portland

USMS Marathon Distance Open Water National Championship (10K)

July 14, Rogue Valley Masters, Applegate Lake, Oregon

Conclude your week in Oregon and the USMS Open Water National Championship season with the oldest-running open water swim in Oregon, the 2018 Applegate Lake Open Water Weekend. This year, this pristine lake will feature the USMS 10K National Championship. But you can also swim a 2.5K, a 5K, or a 1500-meter race or the ever popular 3 x 500-meter pick-up pursuit relay event at this weekend-long open water festival. Camp on-site to enjoy the wilderness of Southeastern Oregon or shack up in nearby Medford, Ore. Either way, you'll have an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy the Siskiyou National Forest and other delights of the Rogue River Valley. —ELAINE K. HOWLEY



USMS's open water national championship season concludes with a 10K at Applegate Lake in Oregon.

Geri Mathewson

SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fitness Series

For swimmers looking for fun fitness goals they can achieve in the pool, U.S. Masters Swimming is also launching the 2018 SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fitness Series.

The series starts with the SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Winter Fitness Challenge from Feb. 15–28 and is perfect for anyone setting a New Year's resolution of getting into better shape. This 30-minute swim can be done in any manner desired, and registration for the event is open.

The Fitness Series also includes the SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Summer Fitness Challenge, a 2,000-meter swim in the final two weeks of July, and the SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fall Fitness Challenge, a 1-mile swim in the final two weeks of November.

Fitness Series events support the USMS Swimming Saves Lives Foundation, which has granted \$430,000 since 2012 to adult learn-to-swim programs across the country.

If you'd like some extra help in training for these challenges, USMS-certified coaches designed six-week training plans for a range of abilities and goals.

We're encouraging coaches, clubs, and workout groups to pick a date to host this event at their local pool and invite interested teammates, co-workers, recreational or lap swimmers, friends, and family members to see if they can finish the challenge.

If you have any questions, please contact us at events@usmastersswimming.org or 941-556-8767. We hope to see you in the pool!