



WOWSA 17.0 – MARATHON AND CHANNEL SWIMS

WOWSA 17.1 – Marathon and channel swims shall follow the rules as indicated in the this document.

WOWSA 17.2 – Channel swims shall be from shore to shore. Athletes start and finish on land with no body of water behind. The land must be part of a naturally occurring contiguous part of the shore. Stopping at a pier or man-made jetty is not permitted.

WOWSA 17.3 – Athletes shall use no swim aids other than goggles, ear plugs, one non-neoprene, non-bubble swim cap, one porous, non-neoprene swimsuit and illumination for night swims. No flotation devices, propulsive aids, protective swimwear, or full-length swimwear is permitted.

WOWSA 17.4 – Swimsuits shall not go beyond the end of the groin or shoulders.

WOWSA 17.5 – Shark Shields® or other shark repellent devices or gels may be used by the escort crew, kayaker or paddler who is alongside the athlete. Swim streamers may be used if the local governing body permits them.

WOWSA 17.6 – The WOWSA Observer Report for either solo swimmers or relays must be completely filled in for verification.

WOWSA 17.7 – On a two-way or three-way or multiple-island crossing, the athlete must completely clear the water line at all stops. The athlete can rest, sit or stand on land for up to 10 minutes while accepting fuel, hydration or skin lubrication from another individual.

WOWSA 17.8 – The timing of the swim shall be from the moment a start is indicated (by voice, whistle or air horn) until the time the athlete clears the water on the opposite natural connecting shore.

WOWSA 17.9 – The Observer is responsible for the timing of the swim and for the interpretation of the rules including the right to cancel the swim in adverse conditions or in cases where there is physical danger to the health and well-being of the athlete or crew.

WOWSA 17.10 – Pilots, navigators and crew must receive the permission from the local governing authority to cross a channel (e.g., Coast Guard).

WOWSA 17.11 – WOWSA shall not observe or recognize marathon swims or channel swims by athletes under the age of 14.



WOWSA 17.12 – Paddlers, kayakers and/or pace swimmers are permitted as long as they are not used as physical support by the athlete.

WOWSA 17.13 - No alcoholic beverages, stimulants or drugs that are on the United States Anti-Drug Agency or World Anti-Drug Agency shall be consumed by the athlete during the swim or 12 hours before the swim start. No alcoholic beverages or narcotic drugs shall be consumed by the Observer, boat crew member, or anyone associated with the swim from dock to dock.

WOWSA 17.14 – WOWSA will not ratify a swim if any rules are not followed.

WOWSA 17.15 – If any situation arises which is not covered by the current WOWSA rules, the Channel Swimming Association rules shall be referenced and followed. In all cases, WOWSA shall remain the right to interpret its rules relative to the athlete's actions.

WOWSA 17.16 – Relays shall consist of 2 or more swimmers.

WOWSA 17.17 – Each athlete shall swim for one hour each time he enters the water. This duration is called a leg.

WOWSA 17.18 – On receipt of a time signal, the changeover to the new athlete shall be made as soon as is practically possible (within one minute) after the previous athlete has completed his leg. In the exchange, the new athlete can either touch the preceding swimmer or enter the water behind the swimmer and swim past him.

WOWSA 17.19 - Team members must rotate in the same order throughout the swim. Substitution of a relay athlete can only occur before the first team member enters the water for his first leg of the swim. The substitute must have been approved prior to the relay start as an alternate.

WOWSA 17.20 – Marathon swims and channel swims can be attempted with wetsuits, fins, buoyancy devices and other equipment such as protective swimwear, shark cages, jellyfish nets or waterproof audio devices. Swims with such equipment shall be defined as Assisted Swims according to the method and/or aids used.

WOWSA 17.21 – If a local governing body or swim director wishes to deviate from the WOWSA rules, prior written permission must be obtained, and exceptions will be noted.