

**Title:**           **EVENT SAFETY**

**Policy:**        The Race Director and Water Operations Director have a duty to provide for the safety of swimmers, lifeguards, and volunteers.

**Purpose:**       To explain safety measures taken at the event to ensure a safe event for all involved.

**Scope:**        These procedures apply to race day safety relating to course markings, swimmer markings, swimmer management and accountability, emergency personnel, boat traffic policies, coast guard and marine police rules, and weather conditions.

**Procedure:**

**1.0 COURSE MAP**

1.1 The course is a 1 mile loop. The 1 mile loop is a large triangle where the swimmers start parallel with the Flash Marina gas dock and swim out towards Mason Street Pub staying on the left of island, turn left towards OH Sullivan's Pub, turn left at marina docks, then towards starting point. The loop is repeated for the 2 mile swim. The finish is an in-water finish at the end of the Flash Marina gas dock.

1.2 The swimmers enter the water at the marina boat launch area. As swimmers enter the water they line up by number and are checked off as they enter, and again upon exit.

1.3 The swimmers swim out to the starting buoy for an in water start.

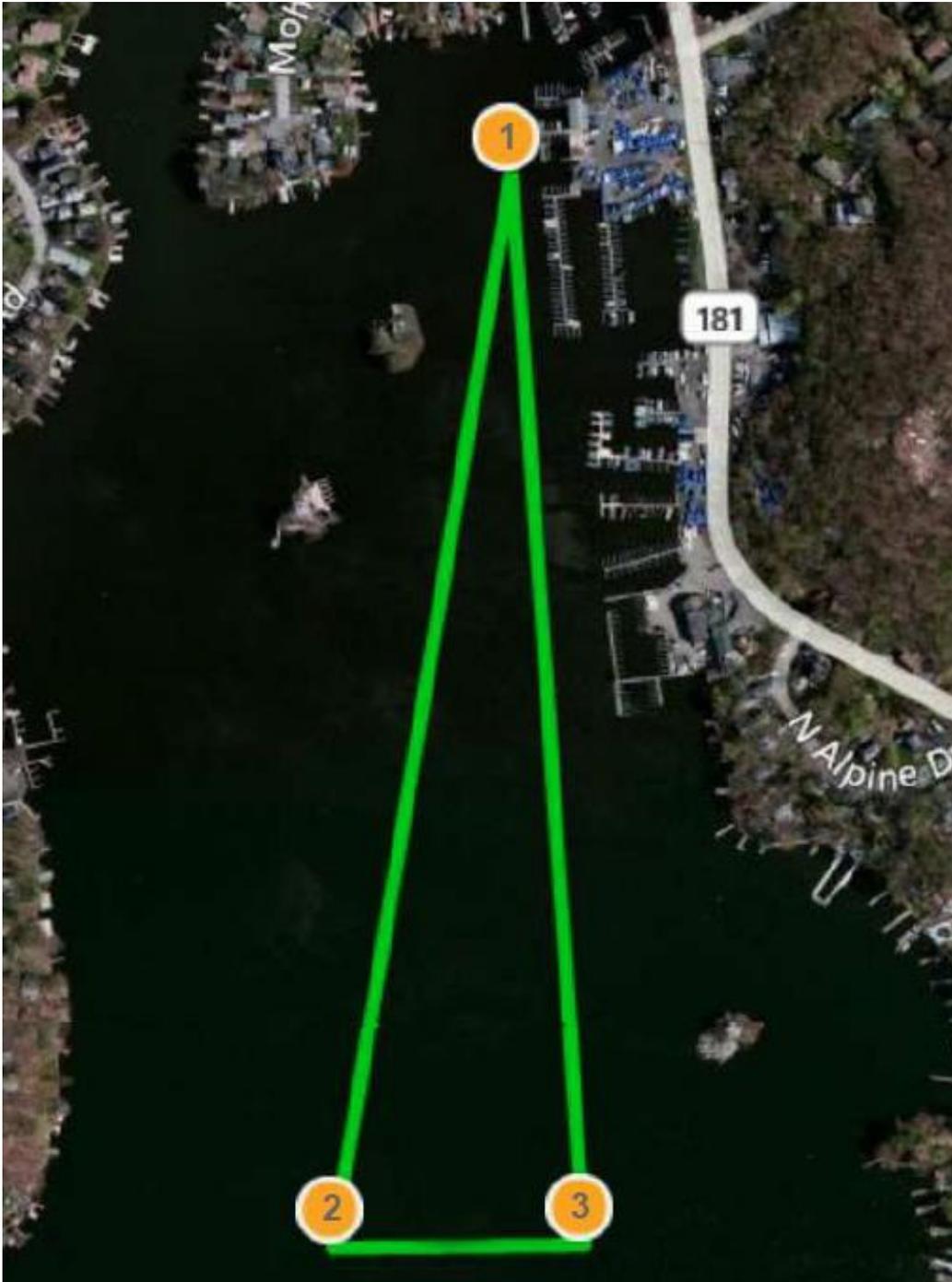
1.4 An air horn is used to start the swimmers. Each distance race is run separately. Each race will begin at the completion of the previous race. There will be a max of 75 swimmers per wave. Therefore, there may be multiple waves per division. There will be 2-3 minutes between waves.

1.5 Buoys remain on the left side of the swimmer. The finish dock is marked with smaller buoys.

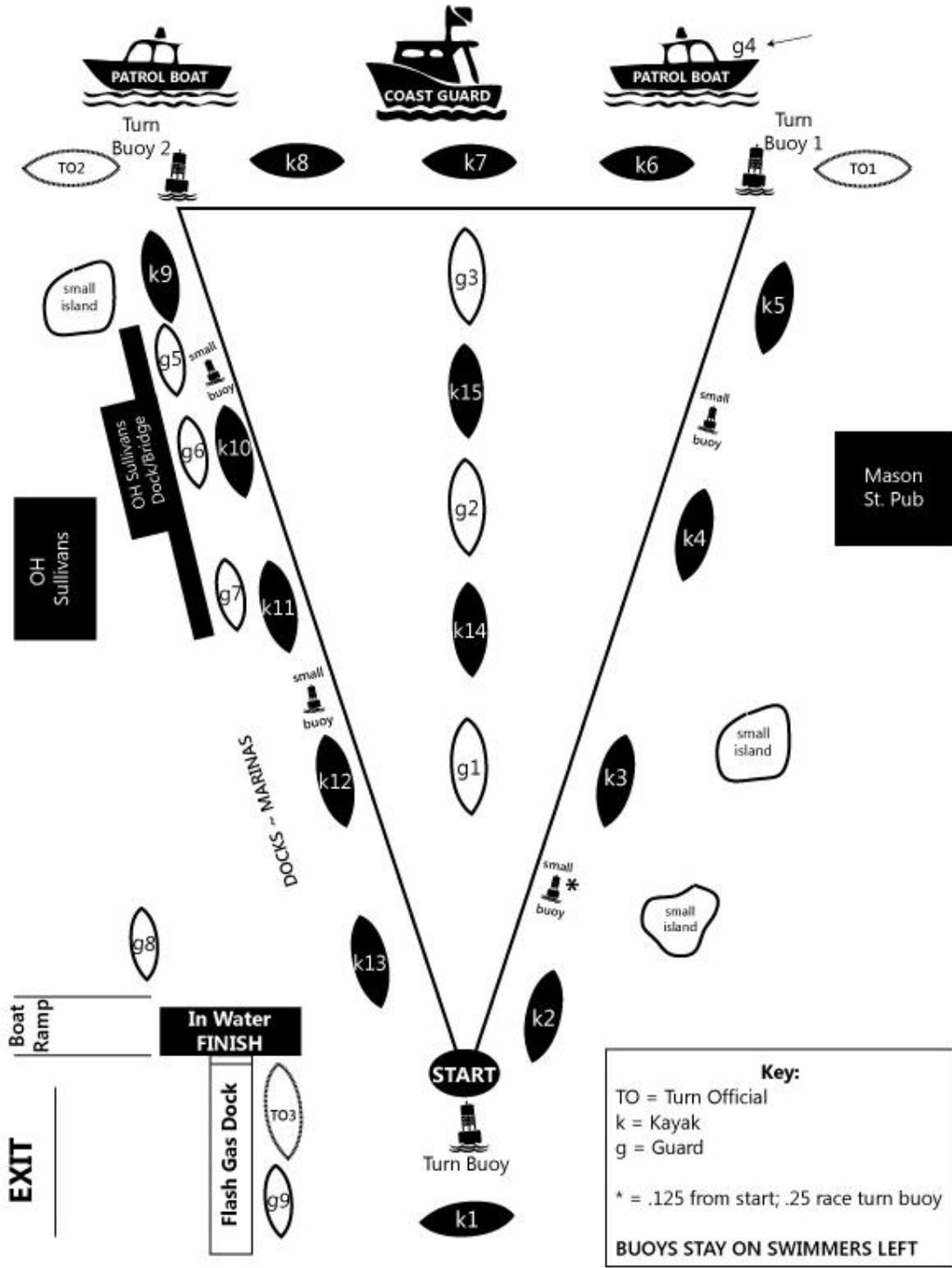
- 3       5' orange buoys used for major turns
- 4       4' orange buoys used between major turn buoys
- 3       2' orange & yellow buoys used to mark marina area

1.6 Course map (11 x 17), current water temperatures are posted periodically on our website, [www.swimlakehopatcong.com](http://www.swimlakehopatcong.com). Handouts are available at

the registration table for swimmers, and the course is covered in detail at the swimmer, kayaker and lifeguard meetings.



1.7 Kayak, Lifeguard, Patrol Boat Positioning



## 2.0 BOAT TRAFFIC

- 2.1 All marinas are notified weeks in advance of event, with a reminder sent 2 weeks in advance of the event, that boat traffic is closed off from 8am to 11am on the day of the event.
- 2.2 The marine police/coast guard/patrol boats begin to close and monitor for boat traffic beginning at 8am on event day. Boats & kayaks are positioned on the main turning points on the course towards the main lake with flashing lights, and additional boats are positioned at key areas along the marina docks to prevent traffic from leaving the marina.
- 2.3 The coast guard monitors for the last swimmer on the course by coordinating with kayak team leader. The kayaks follow the last swimmer towards the finish.
- 2.4 The coast guard confirms all swimmers are accounted for and then notifies the other monitoring boats that traffic can resume.

### **3.0 MARINE POLICE AND COAST GUARD**

- 3.1 Permits are obtained through the NJ State Marine Police, who approve all safety boats on the course and have the final say in all matters relating to safety, course, and weather conditions.
- 3.2 The Marine Police & Race Director coordinate assistance from the Coast Guard and Fire Boat, and dictate positioning of boats.

### **4.0 RESCUE SQUADS**

- 4.1 The Jefferson Township Rescue Squad provides land medical support services. The squad is positioned at our home base. Many kayakers and coast guard will use marine radios, channel 6, for communications.
- 4.2 The squad monitors swimmers at the finish and a sign identifies a first aid station.
- 4.3 Rescue vehicles are parked in clear sight to identify available assistance.
- 4.4 St. Claire's Hospital is located 7.9 miles from the event site.

### **5.0 LIFEGUARDS**

- 5.1 Permits issued for the event allow up to 200 swimmers and require a minimum of 10 lifeguards and 10 sit on top kayak/canoes.
- 5.2 The Race Director & Water Operations Director arrange for the minimum of kayak/canoes, and lifeguards to ensure minimums are met.
- 5.3 Lifeguards are a paid position.
- 5.4 All lifeguards are assigned a lifeguard tube, noodle for swimmer assist, and lifejackets.
- 5.5 Lifeguards are assigned to on shore points and patrol boats as spotters, and others on sit on top kayaks as rescuers. Whistle blasts should be as follows:

- 1. **Single blast** – followed by a hand gesture, it means “I need your attention or stop what you are doing.”

2. **Two consecutive blasts** - means “Attention please! Everyone stop swimming, look at me, I have something to say.”
3. **Three consecutive blasts** – loud and short, three blasts indicate that everyone should clear the water immediately because of an emergency or weather issue. All swimmers should immediately swim towards the finish.
4. In addition to whistle blasts designated kayakers will have orange safety flags which will be waved for any swimmers who may be hearing impaired

5.6 Lifeguards & kayakers (many are also certified guards, EMT) are to assist swimmers requesting help, as well as indicate any reasons for disqualifications.

5.7 Lifeguards & kayakers will alert swimmers who are off course and navigate them back on course.

5.8 The main turns will be monitored by officials in kayaks who will document swimmers missing the key turning points.

5.9 All kayakers will be issued a noodle for use as swimmer assist.

## 6.0 **SWIMMER MEETING**

6.1 A mandatory swimmer meeting is held 30 minutes before the race start. Registration closes prior to the swimmer meeting and late arrivals are not permitted to participate.

6.2 Swimmers who need assistance should wave arms, if possible, to a lifeguard or kayaker. The lifeguard/kayaker will assist the swimmer as needed. The lifeguard/kayaker should assist the swimmer with floating devices and allow them to hang on the kayak while the lifeguard/kayaker move the swimmer off the course to avoid other swimmer contact.

6.3 No swimmers are allowed to leave the course for any reason unless they are being escorted by an emergency team member (marine police, coast guard, fire boat, lifeguards, and kayakers). A swimmer leaving the course without assistance (authorization) is disqualified from the event, and is no longer allowed to participate in any future events.

6.4 Swimmers must follow all rules.

6.4.1 All swimmers must wear the provided timing chip and pre numbered cap, and have body marked with the assigned number.

6.4.2 All swimmers must swim around all buoys, keeping buoys on the swimmer’s left side.

- 6.4.3 All swimmers are not allowed to push off the bottom, rest on a kayak or receive any assistance without disqualification.
- 6.4.4 If you hear 3 signal air horn or long whistle blows then you are to return to the finish immediately. The race is considered over due to weather conditions or other emergency situation.
- 6.4.5 At the end of the posted course time limitation, all swimmers will be escorted back to the finish by rescue vessels.
- 6.5 All swimmers must line up according to race number (marked on cap and body) when called. Swimmers are called to line up within 10 minutes of the race start.
- 6.6 All swimmers are marked off as they enter the water. A race official will call out their number and another person will mark off they entered the water. Only one person is responsible for marking all swimmers per wave.
- 6.7 An air horn is used to start the swimmers. Each distance race is run separately. Each race will begin at the completion of the previous race. There will be a max of 75 swimmers per wave. Therefore, there may be multiple waves per division. There will be 2-3 minutes between waves. There is approximately 10-15 minutes from when the last swimmer finishes and the next division starts. This time is used to line up the swimmers, who will enter and be accounted for in assigned race number order. It is an in water start. Swimmers enter at the finish area for accountability of swimmers, and then swim to the start area.
- 6.8 Swimmers are provided assistance at the finish and should line up in single file as they reach land. Assistance is provided until the swimmer is in an upright position on land to avoid slipping. The race time ends at the touch pad on the gas dock, so there is no need to run when reaching land.
- 6.9 The finish official reads off the numbers in order of finish and each swimmer is checked in by another volunteer assigned to swimmer accountability. All swimmers are accounted for to ensure none are lost during the race.

## **7.0 RACE CANCELLATION or DELAYS**

- 7.1 The race director will coordinate with the Marine Police/Coast Guard prior to the start to determine if weather conditions should cancel the event. The Marine Police/Coast Guard orders dictate whether the race will be cancelled. The permits are for 8am to 11am and therefore the race can't be delayed more than 30 minutes and still complete all waves by 11am.
- 7.1 Weather conditions during the race are monitored by the Marine Police/Coast Guard who determines if the swimmers should immediately exit the water (i.e. lightening). If conditions exist requiring a swimmer exit then the Marine Police/Coast Guard/Starter will blow three loud horns indicating the race is over,

please exit immediately. Kayakers will then blow 3 long whistles. All lifeguards will stop swimmers and escort all swimmers back to the finish. The turn point officials will be the last to follow in swimmers. Swimmers are accounted for during exit from the water.

## **8.0 INCOMPLETE RACE**

- 8.1 Turning point officials indicate any swimmers who past the furthest buoy indicating they completed the full 1 or 2 mile course.
- 8.2 Awards will be given to any swimmer completing the course.
- 8.3 For swimmers that didn't complete the course the awards will skip one place after all finishers were awarded in each age group, and then remaining swimmers will all be awarded the next place.