

FGC OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Hosted by: Hurricane Aquatics
March 21, 2026**

Location: Tigertail Lake Recreation Center
580 Gulf Stream Way, Dania Beach, FL 33004

Backup pool Location: TBD

Date and time: March 21, 2026, 8:00 am start

Bad weather date: March 22, 2026

Venue: Tigertail Lake allows us to use the beach for event setup, spectators, and parking. The race will take place in the freshwater lake.

Sanctioned By: Held under the Sanction of USA Swimming and Florida Gold Coast Swimming.
Sanction No. FG3W2608018024

Parking Options: You can park in the Tigertail Lake lot or in the garage next door. Please pay attention to parking rates and meters.

Events Start Time FGC Qualifiers:

Events 1	Men 5 K / "Five-Kilometer"	8:00 am
Events 2	Women 5 K / "Five-Kilometer"	9:00 am
Events 3	12U 2K / "Two-Kilometer"	10:15 am
Events 4	13O 2K / "Two-Kilometer" **	11:00 am
Event 5	Open Water 500 Under 12 YO	11:45 am
Event 6	Open Water 500 13YO & Older	12:15 am

Events 1 & 2 may be combined as needed, pending meet size and weather. Events 3 & 4 may be combined as needed for weather. Events 1-2 will remain separate from 3-4 unless absolutely necessary for safety reasons.

The start times listed above are tentative. The Meet Director, in conjunction with the approval of the Meet Referee, may have male and female wave starts within appropriate interval splits for combined/separate heats, as deemed necessary to ensure safety and fairness for all competitors.

Age Group Categories: All Age Group Categories include Male and Female.

Race 1-2: Five KM 12 & Under, 13-14, 15-16, 17 & Over

Race 3-4: Two KM 10 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17 & Over

Race 5: Open water sprint will be 10 & Under, 11-12

Race 6: Open water spring will be 13-14, 15-16, 17 & Over

Age Up FGC Qualifiers: 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17+ swimmers will be entered, raced, and placed as their age on the day of this meet. For swimmers applying for the 2026 FGC OW Zone team, the selection will be based on the swimmer's age per the Southern Zone Open Water Champs information. The final decision is made by the Southern Zone and not FGC.

Timing System: Victory Sports Timing will use ankle monitors on athletes.

Eligibility in FGC Open Water Championships: Open to all 2026 USA Swimming registered athletes. No swimmer will be permitted to compete unless the swimmer is a member, as provided in Article 302. The FGC Open Water Championship is a closed meet. To be eligible to swim at the FGC Open Water Championship, the swimmer must be registered 60 days before the first day of the meet unless either of the following conditions is met:

i. Former permanent FG swimmers who are not registered / re-registered by the 60-day point will be FGC Open Water Championship eligible, provided they did not register for any other team outside the LSC, or foreign club or team during the 60 days prior to the Championship meet.

ii. Swimmers who legitimately transfer into the LSC within the 60-day window may apply for an exemption to the 60-day rule provided that they petition the Registration Chair and provide proof of permanent residence by athlete and parent or guardian within the LSC boundaries.

a. Proof of residence requires copies of two of the following documents:

1. Florida Driver's License
2. Florida Vehicle Registration
3. Utility Bill
4. Others as determined by the registration chair.

The host WILL NOT accept New or Renewing USA Swimming registrations at the meet. All USA Registrations must be done before the start of the competition.

Entries Fees: One payment per team, please. Teams may pay by check to Hurricane Aquatics Inc. or Zelle to hurricaneaquatics@gmail.com. As a last option, teams may pay by credit card. Note: credit card payments will have a 3% transaction fee added to the team total. Zelle and check payments will not incur any transaction fees.

Event 1-2:	5 K	\$80
Event 3-4:	2 K	\$60
Event 5:	500	\$50
Event 6:	500	\$50

Refunds: Once a team or individual entry has been received and processed, there will be no refunds in full or part.

Entries Cap: Open to all FGC-registered athletes. **A maximum of 50 single-day USA Swimming registered swimmers may compete in Event 4 as exhibition and may not qualify for medals or Zone Teams.

Entry Procedure: Electronic entries only (CL or SDIF format). E-mail entries to: coachlizkershaw@gmail.com. Confirmation for electronic entries will be sent via e-mail. ** Submission

of entries signifies that all swimmers are in good standing with USA Swimming ** Questions: please contact Liz Kershaw at 214-695-0109 or coachlizkershaw@gmail.com. Swimmers without a registration number or birth date will not be entered.

REQUIRED: PARTICIPANT WAIVERS MUST BE COMPLETED BY EVERY SWIMMER/PARENT ONLINE AND IN ADVANCE OF THE EVENT. SWIMMERS WITHOUT COMPLETED WAIVERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PICK UP TIMING CHIPS AND WILL BE PREVENTED FROM ENTERING THE WATER.

Entry Limitations: Swimmers may swim a maximum of 2 events for the day. A coach must certify on the release form that the swimmer can complete the race.

Entry Deadline: Entries Open Tuesday, February 17, 2026. Entries Close at 06:00 PM EST on Tuesday, March 10, 2026.

Deck Entries: Late entries and deck entries WILL NOT be accepted for the FGC Open Water Championship. The FGC deck entry policy WILL NOT be in effect.

Seeding: Each Event # and corresponding race category/ age group will compete on the same course at the same time. If there are a high number of 50 entries in a particular event, the meet host reserves the right to run the event in waves.

Meet Info: Updates to meet information as well as Time Lines and Psych Sheets and Meet Results for the meet will be posted online after entries are processed. Look for the information on the [CANES Website](#).

Athlete Body Numbering: Swimmers shall be marked with their race numbers on both upper arms and upper backs. The swimmers shall be numbered vertically down the arms and horizontally across the upper backs.

Backup Safety Protocol: 2-3 paddle craft will monitor the course for safety in addition to the use of the timing chips. A spotter will be located at the start/finish and at one turn near the beach.

Each team is asked to provide 1 volunteer to assist with safety and operations. The volunteer should be able to manage on a kayak, SUP (provided by the team/volunteer).

Officials Communication and Signals on the course: The Referee will carry a set of flags for officiating the race – a yellow flag for warnings and a red flag for disqualifications. Watercraft will communicate with officials on the beach via radios and cell phones.

Parameters for Abandoning Race: The following individuals are empowered to independently order the race to be abandoned due to unsafe course or other conditions. Meet Referee, Independent Safety Monitor, North Miami Police Team Leader, or the Meet Director.

If the race is to be abandoned, Race Control will relay via radio to all vessels to signal abandonment. Simultaneously, the Search & Rescue will signal abandonment.

The abandonment signals will consist of 5 short whistle blasts followed by one long blast. Swimmer actions are to discontinue swimming. Look for directions from the Officials or water safety personnel. Once safe on the beach, proceed to the start/finish area and check in.

Weather Delay/Sea Conditions: In inclement weather, the following positions will comprise a meet committee: Meet Director, Meet Referee, Safety Director, Age Group Chair or their designee, one coach, and 2 athletes. This group will have the final say on how the event proceeds, regarding moving the event to the pool or rescheduling for the next day in either the ocean or pool. Inclement weather (and water quality after any weather event) must be considered. If inclement weather causes a delay, a notice will be posted on the CANES Website, along with each race's adjusted start times/location.

Option 1 preferred for FGC Qualifiers - Keep the race on the original date with an adjusted time. Simply move the race to a pool. A pool OW race will be conducted without lane lines and with buoys placed accordingly in a closed-loop pattern.

Option 2 backup, and only if absolutely necessary: try to hold the OW race on the alternative date. If weather or water conditions prevent the race in Open Water, a pool race will be conducted.

There will be no refunds.

Water/Air Temperature: In the month of March, the water conditions tend to be 72-79 degrees, with an anticipated water temperature of 75 degrees. The average humidity for March is 68%, and the temperature is anticipated to be 70 degrees.

The race shall not begin if the following conditions are not satisfied:

- .1 The water temperature shall not be less than 16.0° C (60.8° F).
- .2 For races of 5k and above, the water temperature shall not exceed 29.45° C (85° F).
- .3 The air temperature and water temperature when added together shall not be less than 47.8° C (118° F) nor greater than 80.8° C (177.4° F).
- .4 The water temperature shall be checked the day of the race, two (2) hours before the start, on the course at a depth of 40 cm (15.75 inches).

Sea Life: Open Water Swims are subject to the presence of marine life. In the area of the event, there may be some marine life. At this time of the year, the swim is run, and swimmers are encouraged to use Sea Safe Sunscreen. If any swimmer decides not to swim because of the presence of sea life at the time of the event, there will be no refund of entry fees.

Buoy: Larger buoys will be used to mark the course's corners. Smaller buoys will be used for intermediate markers as needed.

Psych Sheet: Once the psych sheet has been posted, no changes to the entries will be allowed unless they occurred due to an administrative error. Coaches are responsible for reviewing their team entries before submitting them to the meet host.

Coaches: All FGC coaches must be registered and certified with USA Swimming and must show proof of certification/registration for the FGC Qualifiers.

A coach/general meeting will be at the date and time listed in the Deadline and Meeting Summary.

On Race Day Check-In: All competitors must check in on the day at the registration booth located at the beach at Tigertail Lake.

The Registration Booth will open at 6:45 am on race day and close at 11 am.

All swimmers must report to the registration and check in for a mandatory suit, fingernail, and toenail check, get marked, pick up ankle strap timing chips, and a bathing cap.

Pre-Race Safety Meeting: All swimmers must attend the Pre-Race Safety Meeting. The pre-race safety meeting will occur on the beach next to the finish line 20 minutes before the race starts.

Course: see picture below.

Warm-Up / Warm-Down: An area adjacent to the competition will be available for continuous warm-up and warm-down for competitors under the supervision of a coach. Swimmers are asked to WU/WD between the dock and the enclosed pool near the start. Please do not swim out onto the course. Please do not enter/exit the water while the race is starting or finishing.

Swimmers found in the water outside of the designated area and not engaged in the competition will be scratched from the meet regardless of whether or not they have completed their events.

Race Start & Finish: In-water start. An air horn, and whistle start from in the water. Swimmers need to be touching a rope. Race finish is a beach finish, swimmers must run up the beach and across the finish line.

Time Limits FGC Qualifiers: Swimmers not completing the racecourse within 30 minutes of the first athlete to cross the finish line will be notified that the race is over and must leave the water at that time. Results will show their time as Did Not Finish (DNF) and will not be eligible for awards.

Tents: 10x10 tents or smaller. are permitted on the beach. NO STAKES can be used to anchor tents. All tents must be secured by filled water buckets, round disk weights, or sand bags. All tents larger than 10x10 will be asked by park staff to be taken down.

Scoring: Scoring will not be kept at this meet.

Awards: All events will be awarded with Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals for the top three finishers by categories set in this document for individual events only.

Results: Results will be posted on [Victory Sports Management's](#) website within 24 hours of the meet's conclusion.

Admission: Admission is \$5 for spectators.

Restrooms: Will be available at the Tigertail Lake Recreation Center.

Hospitality: Hospitality will be provided for coaches, officials, and volunteers through water, drinks, and snacks.

Meet Director: Liz Kershaw/Andrew Pittman

Meet Referee:

Starter:

Officials: We welcome all certified Officials to work this Championship, as it provides an excellent opportunity to achieve sessions as an Open Water Judge (OJ), Open Water Referee (OR) for recertification or sessions for apprentices. Please contact the meet referee at

Medical Director: TBD

Safety Director: Isidro Plannell

Course Official: TBD

First Responders: Tigertail Lake Lifeguards

Disability: FG and host clubs and their Meet Referees are committed to the FG Inclusion Guidelines for Policy for Disability Swimming. Athletes with a disability are welcome and shall provide advance notice of desired accommodations to the Meet Director. The athlete (or the athlete's coach) is also responsible for notifying the session referee of any disability before the competition. All swimmers are welcome at this meet. Any athlete with a disability will be accommodated. The coach or entry chairperson must alert the meet director, as to the need for any special accommodations or seeding arrangements at the time the entry is submitted. Please contact the pool office ahead of time to allow for preparations – [Insert email, name, and contact information]

Rules: 2026 USA Swimming and FGC rules will govern this meet. Safety rules as outlined by USA Swimming and as recommended by the Referee will be in effect.

It is understood and agreed that USA Swimming, Hurricane Aquatics, FGC Swimming, Broward College, and Tigertail Lake Recreation Center shall be free from any liabilities or claims for damages arising because of injuries to anyone during the conduct of the event.

Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted behind the in changing areas, restrooms, or locker rooms.

Operation of a drone or any other flying apparatus is prohibited over the venue (pools, athlete/coach areas, spectator areas and open-ceiling locker rooms) any time athletes, coaches, officials and/or spectators are present.

Current USA Swimming Rules, including the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy ("MAAPP"), will govern this meet.

Public Health and Safety mandates and guidelines of the State of Florida, Broward County, will be enforced.

Suits must meet USA Swimming Rules and Regulations. "Deck changes" are prohibited.

Image Authorization: All participants agree to be filmed and photographed by the official photographer(s) and network(s) of USA Swimming under the conditions authorized by USA Swimming, and allow event organizers the right to use names, pictures, likenesses, and biographical information before, during or after the period of participation in USA Swimming competitions to promote such competitions.

Camera Free Zone: The Florida Gold Coast Swimming CAMERA FREE ZONE policy is in effect at this meet. No person may use a camera or any other device capable of recording still or video images in the area behind the starting blocks, in the locker rooms, changing areas, showers or restrooms. Violators may be reported to law enforcement or other governmental authorities and/or may be barred from the facility during the sanctioned event.

Conflict of Interest: Unauthorized sale, advertisement, and promotion of products and/or services at the location of the competition as well as its vicinity are not allowed without the written request and written approval of the meet host and meet director. All requests must be submitted to the meet director no later than 10 days prior to the first day of the competition. Failing to comply with such an order will result in removal from the facility and/or immediate vicinity.

In the event the race is moved to a pool:

- Separate heats of Zone Applications will be given priority and their own heat (see below).
- Swimmers could race in waves 10 seconds apart and 5-10 swimmers wide (total of 18-20 swimmers per heat max).
 - Zone applications 11-12 need to be in a separate heat as they have different birthday requirements and race distances.
 - Remaining heats of OW entries that did not apply to Zones as time allows. Can break this up by gender/age if enough time similar to above.
 - What happens if there is more than one heat - final times from each heat will have the start time subtracted from the total time and merged with all heats. Final results will be determined by the swimmer with the fastest final time and the next fastest in order, regardless of what heat they were in.
 - How to determine who goes in which heat? Random names are drawn out of a hat.
- FGC Zone applications may need to be separate from USA Swimming members who did not apply to Zones if time/space is limited.
- Suggested distance 15 (or more) rectangle laps for the 13+ YO. 10 (or more) for the 11-12. This will be determined on race day given the number of swimmers present and the time allotted for the event at the facility.
- In-water starts with one hand on the wall. All swimmers must be to the right/left of the first buoy by the first set of flags (depending on if the race is conducted clockwise or counter-clockwise.).
- Hand touch on the wall to finish. Finish at the opposite 50-meter end from the start. That way if there is a sprint the swimmers have more space coming out of the corner.

