

BRIDGES



TO BLUFFS ^{10K} SWIM
KNOXVILLE, TN



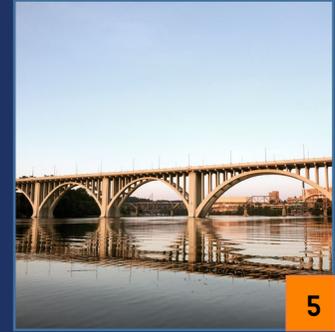
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RACE DIRECTOR

Swimmers,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 6th annual Bridges to Bluffs open water swim. Our local swim group, the Knoxville Open Water Swimmers have prepared tirelessly for your arrival. I am confident that you will find the courses safe, the scenery spectacular, and the Knoxville hospitality friendly. Bridges to Bluffs showcases the scenery of the Tennessee River and downtown Knoxville, I hope that you will enjoy the amenities that we have prepared for the weekend. Among the preparations are a focus on safety, so please take a few minutes to read through the information provided within this Athlete Guide.

We are proud to offer you one of the more scenic race courses in open water swimming. Bridges to Bluffs was named for the terrain you will be experiencing — the five bridges you'll be swimming under — to the scenic bluffs you'll swim by at both Cherokee and Sequoyah.

41 years ago, this city hosted one of the most popular events in the country at that time. The 1982 World's Fair welcomed more than 11 million people from around the world over six months. Today, only two structures remain as symbols from the event — the Tennessee Amphitheater and the Sunsphere — the latter of which you'll swim right by on your way downstream.

This race would not have been possible without the unwavering support of so many Knoxville Open Water Swimmers, who were invaluable in helping this race become a reality. What started out as a small group of friends is now a full-fledged event which we are all very proud of. Finally, this race would not be possible without the volunteers. Please take a moment to thank any volunteer you see throughout the weekend.

You all deserve tremendous credit for everything that has led up to this day. Remember to enjoy the moment and take it all in. It is an honor to have you at our race, and hope you all have a successful and safe weekend.

Cheers to an amazing weekend,

Your Bridges to Bluffs Director,

Jack McAfee



2023 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

*Schedule of events is tentative and subject to change. Please check website regularly for updates.



Saturday, September 16th, 2023

START	END	EVENT	LOCATION
5:00 p.m.	5:30 p.m.	Meet at Star of Knoxville, Board for Dinner Cruise	300 Neyland Drive
5:30 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	Athlete Check-In, Dinner Cruise	Star of Knoxville
7:00 p.m.	7:30 p.m.	Athlete Briefing	Star of Knoxville
7:45p.m.	8:15p.m.	Additional Athlete Check-In	300 Neyland Drive
8:00p.m.	11:59p.m.	Pilots may drop kayaks at start (overnight security provided)	Suttree Park

Sunday, September 17th, 2023

START	END	EVENT	LOCATION
6:30 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	Swimmers can begin parking at finish	Sequoyah Park
6:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	Buses depart at 6:45a, and every 30 minutes after.	Sequoyah Park
6:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	Pilots drop their kayaks/SUPS at start	Suttree Park
6:45 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	Pilots park at finish, bus to start	Sequoyah Park
8:00 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	Swimmers load on the Star Riverboat	Star of Knoxville
8:30 a.m.	8:45 a.m.	Pilots load kayaks/SUPS and enter the water	Suttree Park
8:30 a.m.		Star of Knoxville departs	Star of Knoxville
9:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	Race Starts, swimmers enter the water	Star of Knoxville
10:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Lead swimmers arrive at half-way point	
11:00 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	Lead swimmers arrive at finish	Sequoyah Park
11:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Post-race lunch	Sequoyah Park
	1:00p.m.	Race course closes	
2:00 p.m.	2:15 p.m.	Race Awards	Sequoyah Park

Suttree Park, 1820 Foggy Bottom St, Knoxville, TN 37920

Sequoyah Park, 2280 Cherokee Blvd, Knoxville, TN 37919

Star of Knoxville, 300 Neyland Dr, Knoxville, TN 37902

PRE-RACE INFORMATION



SWIMMER CHECK-IN

Swimmer Check-In will be held on the Star of Knoxville Riverboat on Saturday, September 16. Swimmer Check-In will NOT be available on Sunday. If you do not check-in during designated Swimmer Check-In hours, you will not be able to race. ALL SWIMMERS MUST BE CHECKED IN AT THE RIVERBOAT CRUISE SITE AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES:

5:00 P.M. or 7:45 P.M. ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

Over the last couple years, due to the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, we are now allowing swimmers and pilots to opt out of the riverboat cruise. However, you must still check in either before or after the cruise. If you are unsure of when or where to pick up your packet, please contact race officials at knox.ows@gmail.com.

PRE-RACE BRIEFING

This year, swimmers and pilots are encouraged but not required to attend the Race Briefing, which will take place on Saturday, September 16th on the Star of Knoxville. This Race Briefing is a requirement of USMS and hosted for the benefit of all those involved. The briefing will cover important information pertaining to any peculiarities of the course, rules and cut-off times for swim, and, most importantly, any last-minute changes or procedures to the race that have occurred, or may potentially occur due to weather-related forecasts. We will make the information available to those who decide to opt out of the riverboat cruise, please email knox.ows@gmail.com for the information.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Always train with at least one other person when open water swimming. While swimming, please wear a brightly colored swim cap and ensure that your family members and/or friends know where you are. During the race, you are required to wear a swim cap of your choice. A swim cap will also be provided.

STAR OF KNOXVILLE RIVER CRUISE

Join us as we kick off the 6th annual Bridges to Bluffs 10k Open Water Swim with a river cruise on the Star of Knoxville. The river cruise is included for all athletes and their pilots. General public tickets will be available for sale beginning September 1 on a first come, first serve basis if space is available. Dinner will be served on the cruise. There will also be a cash bar available, although swimmers are encouraged to hydrate with lots of... water.

PARKING

If you cannot find parking in front of the Star of Knoxville (300 Neyland Drive), you can also park at the City-County Garage (400 Main St SW). All locations are within a 10-minute walk of the Star of Knoxville.

PRE-EVENT SWIM ADVISEMENT

The entirety of the race takes place where the river is open to the general public for swimming, boating, and other recreational and commercial activities. Bridges to Bluffs cautions all participants that it does not provide lifeguard services prior to the event, and that all participants who swim prior to race day will do so at their own risk. There will NOT be an official practice swim prior to the race. Athletes are allowed to swim in the river at their own risk and must follow all local regulations. While we make reasonable efforts to inspect the swim exit points for underwater hazards, the inspection does not take place until just before the race starts. Participants are further admonished to exercise caution and use common sense if they elect to swim prior to the event, and to be mindful of underwater hazards. Keep in mind that this is a natural body of water and is subject to hidden hazards, including but not limited to: currents, underwater obstructions, tides, rip currents, and indigenous marine life.

ATHLETE / PILOT CHECK LISTS



Pre-Race

- Directions to Lodging
- Directions to the Star of Knoxville (start)
- Directions to Sequoyah Park (finish)
- Photo I.D.
- Attend race check-in, listen to race briefing, pick up race packet
- Study the race course and plan your nutrition

Post-Race

- Towel
- Post-Race clothing
- Sunscreen

Race Day

Swimmers

- Swimsuit (some people forget!)
- Goggles (+ spare pair with pilot)
- swim cap (any swim cap, but must be worn)
- Ear plugs/nose plug (if desired)
- Body glide/Vaseline (if desired)
- Sunscreen (if desired)
- Fluids (with pilot)
- Nutrition (with pilot)
- GPS watch (if desired)

Pilots

- Kayak/SUP
- Paddle
- Personal Floatation Device (PFD)
- Whistle (recommended)
- Nutrition and fluids
- Sunscreen (if desired)
- Hat (if desired)
- Phone
- Depend diapers (kidding, but consider using the restroom before the race starts)

RACE DAY INFORMATION



RACE MORNING PROCEDURE

Both the Suttree and Sequoyah Parks open at 6:00 a.m. on race morning for unloading of kayaks, and gear, and vehicle parking. If you rented a kayak through one of our partners, they will be dropped off for you. Remember to bring your swim cap, and, if applicable, wetsuit. Body marking will begin at 7:30 a.m. outside of the riverboat. You will not be permitted on the riverboat on race day without your swim cap. If you have misplaced any of these items, please see the Race Director for a replacement. Do not apply sunscreen, oil, Vaseline, or lotion until after you have been body marked. The riverboat departs at 8:30 a.m. sharp. All swimmers must be on the riverboat BEFORE this time. Once on the riverboat, there will be bags available with labels for you to store anything you wish to be taken to the finish line by volunteers.

Pilots will need to drop their kayaks or SUPs off at the Suttree Park between 6:00a.m. - 7:00a.m. They will then drive to the finish at Sequoyah Park and park their personal vehicles. Swimmers will also need to park their personal vehicles (if applicable) at the finish in Sequoyah Park. Buses will be provided to transport both swimmers and pilots to their designated starts. Swimmers will be taken to the Star of Knoxville, pilots will be taken back to Suttree Park.

SWIM CUT-OFF

The swim course will close 4 hours after the last swimmer starts the swim. Each swimmer will get the full 4 hours to complete the 6.2-mile swim regardless of what time they enter the water. Athletes who take longer than 4 hours to complete the swim will receive a DNF. Bridges to Bluffs officials reserve the right to pull athletes off the course who exceed the course time cut-offs.

COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- If you drop out or are pulled from the race at any time, please inform a race official. It is essential that we know where you are on the course at all times for your safety and our peace of mind. If you are transported to any medical station, the medical staff will take responsibility for you

RACE DAY INFORMATION



GENERAL SWIMMER SAFETY RULES

- Be advised that this is an OPEN course — non-event watercraft will be near the swim course.
- Swimmers should stay along the designated course route; that being, within 100 feet of shore (except during start/entry and the single crossing), and within 30 feet of their pilot. It is required that each swimmer swim to the left of the furthest left pillar on each bridge.
- Swimmers must remain on the LEFT of all buoys until the crossing, at which time they must remain on the RIGHT of all buoys.
- All swimmers must be body marked with their number in permanent marker on their hands.
- All swimmers must wear a swim cap during the race.
- No waterproof mp3s or in-ear audio devices are allowed.
- Swimmers will enter the water from the designated starting ramp on the Riverboat. Swimmers will be started one by one by race officials with several seconds in between in order to clear the area for the next swimmer. Their pilot will be waiting in the water and will join them at that point.
- Each swimmer is required to have their own personal pilot. If the pilot's watercraft becomes disabled or cannot continue to accompany the swimmer, the swimmer may stay in the water near the disabled escort craft until a replacement arrives, join another escort craft that is accompanying only one other swimmer until another escort craft arrives, or exit the water.
- At the river crossing, the pilot and swimmer should communicate to each other that they will cross the river, staying within 30 feet of each other.
- If a swimmer withdraws from the race, their pilot will call the provided contact and inform them of the swimmer's decision. The patrol boat will come pick them up.
- We will have a lightning detector onsite. In case of a need to evacuate the course for weather or other reasons, the patrol boat will inform the pilots with a bullhorn and loud whistle blasts to clear the course, while displaying a red flag. Each pilot should bring a whistle to alert their swimmer. All pilots and swimmers should immediately exit the water at the closest shore. Swimmers should have some warm clothes in their personal kayak if needed to stay warm. If it does not thunder for 15 minutes, the patrol boat will inform swimmers that the race can resume.
- While water temperatures are expected to be in the 70's on the day of the race, the following thermal plans will be followed in case of colder or warmer temperatures:
 - Cold water plan: If the water temperature is 60.8 degrees Fahrenheit or below, swimmers will be required to wear wetsuits.
 - Warm water plan: If the water temperature measures 85.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, the swim will be cancelled.

RACE DAY INFORMATION



GENERAL PILOT SAFETY RULES

- All support craft need to be in the water at Suttree Park (1001 Waterfront Drive, Knoxville, TN 37920) by 8:45 AM.
- Offloading at the grass ramp at the park is allowed but must be done quickly and the vehicle must be moved to a parking space immediately.
- Pilots will drop their watercraft and gear at Suttree Park, drive their personal vehicles to the finish, and will be bused back to Suttree Park. Please consider the time it will take to complete this process.
- Each craft is required to have (1) Personal Flotation Device per individual on the craft.
- (1) whistle is recommended per craft.
- Each craft will have to carry a cell phone in a waterproof container (ziplock, drybag, drybox etc) in case of swimmer emergency.
- Support craft are there as support! Bring WATER! FOOD! For TWO! (you are out there just as long as they are and have much higher exposure to the sun and heat.
- SUNSCREEN!
- Swimmers are NOT ALLOWED to make forward progress while holding onto support craft at any time during competition.
- For more information, please see the provided PILOT GUIDE on our website. <https://knoxvilleopen-waterswimmers.squarespace.com/>

PILOTING RULES

- If the pilot's craft becomes disabled or cannot continue to accompany the swimmer, the swimmer may:
 - Stay in the water near the disabled pilot craft until a replacement arrives,
 - Join another pilot craft that is accompanying only one swimmer until another pilot craft arrives, or
 - Exit the water.
- Piloting craft may provide the following assistance to swimmers:
 - Food or drink may be passed from pilot to swimmer
 - The pilot craft may also assist the swimmer with navigation, including verbal and written communication
- Piloting craft may NOT provide the following assistance to swimmers:
 - Swimmers shall not receive forward progress from pilots.
 - Drafting directly behind the pilot shall not be permitted when open water is readily available.
 - Pilot craft shall not obstruct other swimmers in the race.

POST RACE INFORMATION



GEAR CHECK-OUT

If you rented your kayak or Stand up Paddleboard (SUP) through the race website, you simply need to remove it from the river and you're done!

If you brought your own kayak or SUP, you are welcome to leave it in Sequoyah Park until no later than sunset. All swimmers and pilots are encouraged to park their watercraft transport in Sequoyah Park to easily load their watercraft at the conclusion of the race. Bridges to Bluffs is not responsible for any watercraft left in Sequoyah Park overnight.

There will be a volunteer to assist with their removal on shore near the exit ramp.

POST-RACE PARTY AND AWARDS

Join us for food and awards at the finish line in Sequoyah Park! Watch the swimmers finish, have lunch, see the awards ceremony, and celebrate your efforts! Lunch is free for swimmers and pilots; there is an additional charge for spectators so as to ensure that we have enough food for participants. Food tickets will be available for friends and family to purchase beginning September 1. Please refer to the Event Schedule for dates and times.

All finishers will receive a finisher award.

T-SHIRT EXCHANGE

Swimmers will have an opportunity to exchange their shirt for a different size, if needed, at the post-race party at Sequoyah Park. Shirt sizes are based on availability and are not guaranteed. Swimmers must bring their original shirt in order to swap sizes!

LOST AND FOUND

On race day, Lost & Found will be available at the post-race party in Sequoyah Park. After the conclusion of the event, please contact knox.ows@gmail.com to locate any missing items and schedule returns. Shipping fees will apply.

*All unclaimed items will be donated after 14 days.

RACE PHOTOGRAPHY

Find your photos at:

<https://knoxvilleopen-waterswimmers.squarespace.com/>

Our race photographer, will be shooting photographs at several spots along the course on race day (so make sure you smile for the camera). We will notify all participants via email as soon as the photos are online. Photos should be ready to view approximately 1-2 weeks after the event.

SWIM COURSE SUMMARY



The point-to-point swim in the Tennessee River will start 6.2 miles upstream of the finish line. Swimmers will enter the water in a time trial fashion. Spectators will have great opportunities to watch at various points during the entire swim. At the 4.2 mile mark, swimmers will cross from the left downstream bank to the right downstream bank and stay on this side until the finish. Swimmers will then finish the race in the water at the beautiful Sequoyah Park. The water temperature is generally in the mid 70's (degrees Fahrenheit).

Swimmers will begin entering the water at 9:00 a.m. The swim course will close 4 hours after the last swimmer starts the swim. Each swimmer will get the full 4 hours to complete the 6.2-mile swim regardless of what time they enter the water. Athletes who take longer than 4 hours to complete the swim will receive a DNF. Bridges to Bluffs officials reserve the right to pull athletes off the course who exceed the course time cut-offs.

*Athletes who choose to wear a wetsuit in water temperatures between 60.9 degrees Fahrenheit and 78.0 degrees Fahrenheit will not be eligible for Age Group Awards, and will start after the non-wetsuit swimmers.

SWIM COURSE RULES & INSTRUCTIONS



- Athletes must wear a cap during the race.
- No fins, gloves, paddles, snorkels or flotation devices (including pull buoys) of any kind are allowed.
- No aqua socks, neoprene booties, or neoprene cap unless the water temperature is 60.8 degrees Fahrenheit or colder.
- When the use of wetsuits is forbidden, clothing covering the neck, clothing covering any part of the arms below the elbows, and clothing covering any part of the leg below the knee, is deemed illegal equipment and is not permitted. Compression sleeves or compression calf guards/socks may NOT be worn during non-wetsuit swims, but may be worn upon completion of the swim.
- Swim goggles and facemasks may be worn.
- Swimmers must be escorted by a pilot. The course will also be adequately patrolled by boats, canoes, and paddleboards.
- Any assistance required during the swim will result in disqualification if forward progress was made. Swimmers are permitted to use their pilots or boats for aid, as long as forward progress is not made.
- Course officials and medical personnel reserve the right to remove athletes from the course if determined medically necessary.
- The swim course will close 4 hours after the last athlete enters the water. Each athlete will have 4 hours to complete the 6.2-mile swim. Individual athletes who take longer than 4 hours to complete the swim will receive a DNF. Bridges to Bluffs officials reserve the right to pull athletes off the course who exceed any established course time cut-offs.

WETSUIT RULES

For Bridges to Bluffs 10k, wetsuits are not allowed. However, in the case that the water temperatures drop, wetsuits will be required up to and including 60.8 degrees Fahrenheit.

Swimmers may choose to wear a wetsuit in water temperatures between 60.9 degrees Fahrenheit and 78.0 degrees Fahrenheit, but will not be eligible for awards. If the water temperature is in this range and you choose to wear a wetsuit, you will start after the non-wetsuit swimmers at 9:00 a.m. Athletes electing to start at this time will still have 4 hours to complete the swim course. All other course cut-off timelines will remain in place.

Wetsuits will be prohibited in water temperatures greater than 78.0 degrees Fahrenheit.

SWIMWEAR POLICY (NON-WETSUIT)

- Swimsuits shall be nontransparent and conform to the current concept of the appropriate.
- Swimwear shall only include a swimsuit, cap(s), and goggles. Nose clips, ear plugs, and watches are also allowed.
- The swimmer shall only wear one swimsuit in one or two pieces. All suits shall be made from textile materials and not contain clasps or zippers. For both men and women, the swimsuit shall not cover the neck and shall not extend past the shoulder no below the ankles.
- Swimmers are not permitted to wear or use any device or substance to help their speed, pace navigation, buoyancy, or endurance during a swim. Any kind of tape or flat armband is not permitted unless approved by the referee. All devices used to maintain body heat are not permitted.

KAYAK/SUP RENTAL

During your race registration, you have been offered the opportunity to rent a kayak. Bridges to Bluffs handles this through River Sports Outfitters.

For this event, River Sports Outfitters is offering Kayak or SUP rentals for \$50, which includes drop-off at the Suttree and Pick-up at Sequoyah Park. This is especially convenient if you do not have a watercraft for race support or do not have a vehicle to transport your watercraft. While all swimmers and pilots are welcome to use their own watercraft for support during the race, this method is highly encouraged if you are concerned about making it to the race start on time.

If you have any last-minute issues securing a pilot or vessel, please email us BEFORE September 1 at knox.ows@gmail.com.



“River Sports Outfitters is Knoxville’s first kayak and paddleboard specialty shop. Offering the best selection of kayaks and accessories from great brands while embracing the local culture of Knoxville. River Sports Outfitters believes physical health, personal well-being, and community are a few of the most important pillars of happiness and productivity. We aim to foster an environment that openly and positively accepts the challenges of life as opportunities for even greater fulfillment. We are dedicated to equipping our customers with the tools and encouragement they need to increase their engagement with life through the activity of stand up paddleboarding.”



PARTNER HOTEL

For lodging, consider the Courtyard Marriott. Minutes away from the race start, mention Bridges to Bluffs for a discounted room rate of \$159 per night!

Event Summary:

Bridges to Bluffs

Start Date: Friday, September 15, 2023

End Date: Monday, September 18, 2023

Last Day to Book: Thursday, August 15, 2023

Hotel(s) offering your special group rate:

- Courtyard Knoxville Downtown for 159-169 USD per night

[**Book your group rate for Bridges to Bluff Open Waters Swim**](#)

USMS MEDICAL POLICY



The United States Masters Swimming (USMS) medical coverage protects each swimmer, volunteer, and race personnel for the day of the event at USMS sanctioned races, camps, and clinics. When athletes purchase a USMS annual membership or one-event membership, a portion of those fees cover the cost to provide them with excess medical insurance. This coverage only extends to their participation in a USMS sanctioned event, and is only available after the injured party has filed with any primary insurance policies. There is not a deductible for this excess coverage. If a swimmer, volunteer, or race personnel is injured while participating in a USMS sanctioned event the following steps must be followed:

- If anyone, swimmer or volunteer needs medical assistance at any time, they should seek out medical attention immediately. Any incident that occurs during a sanctioned event (swimmer or volunteer), no matter how small, should be reported to the race director and/or the safety director.

- The race director and the injured party will fill out an Incident Report Form. It can also be found here:

http://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/gto_ins_report_of_occurrence.pdf

- For serious incidents or for athletes requesting coverage, the Race Director can provide them with an Incident Report Form. If you fill out the form on your own, please email the completed document to: knox.ows@gmail.com

Be advised that coverage may not apply to each and every claim. Additionally, coverage only extends to swimmers who are USMS members or have purchased a one-event membership and were injured through participation in a USMS-sanctioned event. Please e-mail questions to:

membership@usmastersswimming.org.

In all cases, the final decision of medical consideration is at the discretion of the race Medical Director.

Particular dangers include dehydration, hyponatremia, sunburn, exhaustion and injuries sustained from accidents. Please ask for medical help if you have the slightest hint you may need it. You

will not be penalized for receiving a medical evaluation. You will only be withdrawn from the race if you require transportation, IV fluids, or if medical personnel feel your continued participation could result in serious harm or death.

During events of extreme endurance, the body's pain threshold is raised, and you may be in more trouble than you realize. The medical personnel will do all they can to keep you in the race and assure a safe finish.

Please trim your fingernails and toenails prior to the start of the race to avoid injury to other athletes. Be especially careful to rinse your goggles of any excess defogger solutions to avoid eye irritation.

If you spend 3 months prior to the event in a climate different than Knoxville, we suggest you consider an acclimation period before the race. The chance of dehydration and electrolyte imbalance can be reduced significantly by a proper period of acclimation.

Stay with your familiar and proven routine regarding training, nutrition and equipment, especially just prior to the race. This also applies to pre-race dietary intake and medications. It is recommended you avoid an extreme elimination diet. Adequate salt intake during training and during the event is especially important.

If you are taking any medications, or have any medical problem that may influence your performance or your treatment in the event of an injury, advise us of all necessary details well in advance of race day.

You are solely responsible for avoiding medications that appear on the list of banned substances as determined by WADA.

Closest medical facility: UT Medical Center, 1924 Alcoa Highway, Knoxville, TN 37920, approximately 2-5 miles away, [865-305-9000](tel:865-305-9000) From the Star of Knoxville, take a left out of the parking lot onto Neyland Drive. Take a right onto Kingston Pike, and merge onto US-129 (Alcoa Highway). Take the second exit onto Cherokee Trail UT Medical Center. Continue straight until you see signs for the UT Medical Center.

**KNOXVILLE.
A CLASSIC TOWN**



WHERE CHAMPIONS ARE MADE

