



**BOMBELA CONCESSION COMPANY
SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL OPEN WATER
CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026**

RULES

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A. Indemnity Form

1. GENERAL EVENT INFORMATION

The 2026 Bombela Concession Company South African National Open Water Championships will be held at **Marina Martinique, Jeffery's Bay, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th March 2026**. A compulsory Race Technical Briefing will be held 30 minutes before the start of each event.

2. ENTRY PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Provincial Affiliates select SSA Registered members who have met the entry criteria to participate. Only times recorded at SSA-approved and/or sanctioned World Aquatic Open Water Swimming events will be considered for entry. Entries must be received on the Team Manager Hytek Event File. Only athletes who have times on the SSA Database from 1st March 2026 will be considered for entry.
- 2.2 A signed Indemnity Form for each athlete must be received by SSA by the closing date for entries.
- 2.3 International athletes must provide a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics affiliated Federation, granting permission to participate in the South African National Open Water Championships. **International athletes must submit their entry via their World Aquatics affiliated Federation.**
- 2.4 NO entries will be accepted after 1st March 2026.

(The closing date for entries and costs are:)

Dates		Fees
1 st Closing Date	10 th February 2026	R120.00 +R10.00 SSA Levy
2 nd Closing Date	17 th February 2026	R360.00 +R10.00 SSA Levy
Late Entries	18 th February – 1 st March 2026	R1200.00 +R10.00 SSA Levy

- 2.5 Each Provincial Affiliate will check and summarise entries and forward these, along with the indemnity forms, and deposit the entry fees into the SSA bank account. The entries will be presented on the entry form and/or Team Manager Data File.

Bank	ABSA
Name of Acc	Swimming South Africa
Branch Code	632005
Branch Name	The Zone
Account Number	1003790807
Ref	SAOWC – Provincial Affiliate Name/International Country

3. TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

- 3.1 Each participating SSA Affiliate will be required to provide at least **TWO** registered and trained Technical Officials, one timekeeper, and one judge for each event.
- 3.2 Technical Officials must be correctly attired, in white shirts (or event sponsored shirt) and navy blue trousers/shorts.
- 3.3 The names of SSA registered, trained, and available officials must accompany the SSA Affiliate Team entries. Furthermore, the LOC will provide a link for all Technical Officials who are available to officiate at the 2026 SA OWS Nationals to complete. (The link will be available on 10th February 2026 and will close on 1st March 2026)

4. ENTRY CRITERIA

Please take note that the prerequisites for entry to the South African National Open Water Championships by SSA registered athletes are as follows: (Athletes will, however, still be subject to selection by their Provincial Affiliate).

4.1 Entry to Women's 10km and Men's 10km event, on 6 March 2026:

- 4.1.1 Athletes must have achieved one 10km qualifying time at a **SSA approved Open Water Swimming** event that is recorded on the SSA Database from 1st March 2025.
- 4.1.2 International times at any World Aquatics accredited event will also be recognized.
- 4.1.3 The minimum age of athletes for the 10km event at the SA National Open Water Championships is 14 years. **The age for all athletes will be considered as at the 31st December** (born in 2012 and earlier) of the year of the competition.
- 4.1.4 Athletes must be registered with SSA, or a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics affiliated Federation granting permission to participate must be presented to SSA.
- 4.1.5 An out of time limit (OTL) of 30 minutes after the winner will be implemented.

4.2 Entry to Women's 7.5km and Men's 7.5km event, on 6 March 2026:

- 4.2.1 Athletes must have achieved one 7.5km qualifying time at a **SSA approved Open Water Swimming** event that is recorded on the SSA Database from 1st March 2025.
- 4.2.2 International times at any World Aquatics accredited event will also be recognized.

- 4.2.3 The age for athletes at the 7.5km event at the South African National Open Water Championships is 16 and 17 years old. **The age for all athletes will be considered as at the 31st December** (born in 2009 and 2010) of the year of the competition.
- 4.2.4 Athletes must be registered with SSA, or a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics affiliated Federation granting permission to participate must be presented to SSA.
- 4.2.5 An out of time limit (OTL) of 30 minutes after the winner will be implemented.

4.3 Entry to Women's 5km event and Men's 5km event, 8 March 2026:

- 4.3.1 Athletes must have achieved one 5km qualifying time at a **SSA approved Open Water Swimming event** that is recorded on the SSA Database from 1st March 2025.
- 4.3.2 International times at any World Aquatics accredited event will also be recognized.
- 4.3.3 The minimum age for athletes in the 5km event at the SA National Open Water Championships is 14 years old. **The age for all athletes will be considered as at the 31st December** (born in 2012 and earlier) of the year of the competition (**World Aquatic Rules**). The first three placed athletes in the 2012 – 2010 (14 – 16) and 2009 – 2008 (17 – 18) year age group will be awarded South African National Youth Medals.
- 4.3.4 There will be a multi-disability category.
- 4.3.5 Athletes must be registered with SSA, or a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics-affiliated Federation granting permission to participate must be presented to SSA.
- 4.3.6 An out-of-time limit (OTL) of 15 minutes after the winner will be implemented.

4.4 Entry to the 3km Women's and 3km Men's "Knock Out Sprint" events, on 7th March 2026:

- 4.4.1 The event will be swum in **THREE** Rounds. After the first Round (1.5km), the **Top 20** athletes will proceed to the second round (1km). After the second round, the **Top 10** will proceed to the final (500m).
- 4.4.2 The 1km race (2nd Round) will commence 10min after the 20th placed athlete has finished the 1.5km race (1st Round). The 500m race (final Round) will commence 10min after the 10th placed athlete has finished the 1km race (2nd Round).
- 4.4.3 After completion of each round, qualifying athletes will immediately be taken to a designated holding area awaiting commencement of the next

round. Only accredited coaches of the qualifying athletes will be allowed to enter the designated holding area to assist the athletes. Hydration and feeding are allowed inside the designated holding area.

- 4.4.4 Any athlete with a qualifying time or who has entered for the 10km, 5km, or 3km races may enter for the 3km Knock Out Sprint event.
- 4.4.5 Athletes must be registered with SSA, or a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics affiliated Federation granting permission to participate must be presented to SSA.
- 4.4.6 **The age for all athletes will be considered as at the 31st December** (born in 2012 and earlier) of the year of the competition.

4.5 Entry to 3km Women's and 3km Men's events, on 7th March 2026:

- 4.5.1 Athletes must have achieved one 3km qualifying time at a **SSA approved Open Water Swimming** event that is recorded on the SSA Database from 1st March 2025.
- 4.5.2 Athletes must be registered with SSA, or a Clearance Certificate from their World Aquatics affiliated Federation granting permission to participate must be presented to SSA.
- 4.5.3 The following age groups for Men and Women will be recognized: **The age for all athletes will be considered as of the 31st December of the year of the competition.** The following categories will be awarded Medals:
 - 4.5.3.1 YOB 2012 - 2013
 - 4.5.3.2 YOB 2010 - 2011
 - 4.5.3.3 YOB 2008 - 2009
 - 4.5.3.4 YOB 2007 and earlier
- 4.5.4 There will be a multi-disability category.
- 4.5.5 A cut off time of 15 minutes after the winner of the respective category will be implemented.

4.6 Entry to Mixed Relay 4 x 1000m event, on 6th March 2026:

- 4.6.1 The Team event consists of 4 athletes, 2 males & 2 females.
- 4.6.2 Two teams per Provincial Affiliate/Country per event – Junior Relay – 14/15/16
- 4.6.3 Two teams per Provincial Affiliate/Country per event – Senior Relay – Open
- 4.6.4 The Junior & Senior Relay events will be staged concurrently.
- 4.6.5 Athletes must already be entered into the individual Open Water events

of the championship to be eligible to swim for a team and may only swim in one team event.

5. QUALIFYING TIMES

Event	Qualifying Time
10 km Men	2 hours 20 minutes
10 km Women	2 hours 30 minutes
7.5 km Men	1 hour 43 minutes
7.5 km Women	1 hour 50 minutes
5 km Men	1 hour 10 minutes
5 km Women	1 hour 20 minutes
5 km Men Multi Disability	1 hour 30 minutes
5 km Woman Multi Disability	1 hour 40 minutes
3 km Men	45 minutes
3 km Women	48 minutes
3 km Men Multi Disability	55 minutes
3 km Woman Multi Disability	60 minutes
*1.5 km Men	20 Minutes
*1.5 km Women	22 Minutes

**The 1.5km qualifying times may be pool times for entry to the 3km knock out events only.*

6. TIMETABLE FOR EVENTS

Friday 6th March 2026			
#	Event	Details	Time
1	10 km Men	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h00
2	7.5 km Men	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h00
3	10 km Women	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h05
4	7.5 km Women	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h05
5	4 x 1000m Mixed Relay	Registration	14h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	14h30
		Race Start	15h00
Saturday 7th March 2026			
#	Event	Details	Time
6	3km Women's "Knock out Sprint"	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h00
7	3km Men's "Knock out Sprint"	Registration	09h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	10h30
		Race Start	11h00
8	3km Women	Registration	12h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	12h30
		Race Start	13h00
9	3km Women's Multi Disability	Registration	12h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	12h30
		Race Start	13h00
10	3km Men	Registration	14h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	14h30
		Race Start	15h00
11	3km Men's Multi Disability	Registration	14h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	14h30
		Race Start	15h00

Sunday, 8th March 2026			
#	Event	Details	Time
12	5km Men	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h00
13	5km Men's Multi Disability	Registration	07h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	08h30
		Race Start	09h00
14	5km Women	Registration	09h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	10h30
		Race Start	11h00
15	5km Women's Multi Disability	Registration	09h00
		Compulsory Technical Briefing	10h30
		Race Start	11h00

7. REGISTRATIONS

- 7.1 Registrations close thirty (30) minutes before the advertised start of each event on each day.
- 7.2 All athletes are to:
 - 7.2.1 Register and ensure that they have already signed the Indemnity Form, and
 - 7.2.2 Leave both left and right shoulders, upper arms, and hands free from grease, as their athlete's number will be written on these areas. Care should be taken when applying grease to ensure that the athlete's number remains legible.

8. NUMBERING

- 8.1 The numbering of athletes is to appear on the arms, upper backs, and hands of the athletes.
- 8.2 On the arms, the numbers will be arranged vertically.
- 8.3 On the back and the hands, the numbers will be arranged horizontally.
- 8.4 The numbering on the arms and back are made with an ink template: 100mm high x 60mm wide.
- 8.5 The numbering on the hands can be done with an ink template: 50mm high x 30mm wide.
- 8.6 For athletes with darker skin, a white marker pen will be required.

9. PRE-RACE COMPULSORY TECHNICAL BRIEFING

- 9.1 There will be a compulsory technical briefing for all athletes in each event to be held on site at the competition venue at the times listed.
- 9.2 Coaches must be present at the briefing to receive instructions from the Referee concerning the course, water conditions, and any other pertinent matters.
- 9.3 The Course Officer at the briefing will provide full directions for the course.
- 9.4 **The Event Chief Referee will present a comprehensive pre-race briefing**, including water sample details, course details, anticipated temperature – air and water, general rules, rules specific to the event, etc., for every event.

10. RACE RULES

- 10.1 The SSA National Open Water Championships Bye Laws will apply and be maintained.
- 10.2 Course Marshals will observe athletes, and any infraction of the Rules will be reported to the Referee.
- 10.3 A warning may be issued during the event, but non-observance of the Rules could lead to disqualification.
- 10.4 In all Open Water events, it is mandatory for the cap to display on each side the "Affiliate - three letter code" and the Affiliate code shall be a minimum of 8cm in height. Caps meeting the specifications of 8.4 are not acceptable except for one (1) manufacturer's logo of a maximum size of 20cm² on the front. athlete's name of a maximum size of 20cm²: The athlete's name shall be printed under the Affiliate name (three-letter code). Displaying the athlete's name is not compulsory.
- 10.5 For the 2026 SA National OWS Championships, each province will be given a three letter code which they will need to display on their Team Caps.

11. ATHLETES' STARTING INSTRUCTIONS

- 11.1 At one (1) minute intervals from five (5) minutes before the Start of the event, athletes will receive a warning that the start is imminent.
- 11.2 Athletes may take up their pre-determined starting positions (if allocated) at the five (5) minute warning.
- 11.3 Please be advised that a dive start may be used, subject to the number of entries and approval of the referee and SSA.
- 11.4 The Referee will signal to the athletes that the Start is imminent by a raised flag and short blasts on a whistle.
- 11.5 When satisfied that all is in order, the Referee will point the flag at the Starter indicating that the competition may commence.

- 11.6 The Starter, on signal of the Referee, will raise a distinctive flag to the vertical position.
- 11.7 The Starter shall simultaneously bring the flag-holding arm down, with the arm straight, and activate an audible signal (pistol shot/air horn).
- 11.8 If, in the opinion of the Referee, unfair advantage has been gained at the start the competition shall be stopped and restarted.
- 11.9 The method of recall will be by repeated whistle blasts and resounding of the starting device.

12. RACE FINISH

- 12.1 The out-of-time limit (OTL) after the first athlete in each competition has finished shall be provided at the pre-race briefing.
- 12.2 In general, the OTL is fifteen minutes (15) after the 1st placed finisher for the 3km & 5km events and thirty minutes (30) after the 1st placed finisher for the 7.5km & 10km events.
- 12.3 The referee has the authority to stop the race for safety reasons.
- 12.4 The referee can withdraw an athlete from the water if he believes that the athlete will not complete the distance or will not finish within the prescribed cut-off time.
- 12.5 If an athlete withdraws or fails to complete the designated course, for any reason, he/she must personally report to the Medical Personnel for examination.
- 12.6 After release from the Medical Area, he/she must personally report to the Chief Recorder to have his/her athlete number recorded. This requirement is mandatory - please do not leave the area without reporting to the Recorders.
- 12.7 For all 3km “Knock out Sprint”, 3km, 5km, 7.5km & 10km events, safety/security craft will be in attendance, and individual escort craft are not permitted.

13. FEEDING (10km & 7.5km EVENTS)

- 13.1 For the open 10km race and the 7.5km race, all athletes are responsible for organizing their own handlers.
- 13.2 A pontoon/feeding area will be provided for the feeding of athletes during this event. This pontoon will be the only place on the course where an athlete may be fed. Each athlete is allowed **1 (one) handler**, who will be required to check in with the athlete at the time of registration. **No additional personnel will be permitted into this area.**
- 13.3 Once registered, the handler will be given an event-specific wristband. **Failure to display this wristband will mean that the handler will be denied access to the pontoon/feeding area.**

13.4 The pontoon/feeding area will be restricted to the participant's handler of the 10km and 7.5km events, and **NO public will be permitted into this restricted area.**

14. TEAM RELAY EVENT

14.1 Each athlete shall complete one lap of 1000m.

14.2 Athletes may swim in any sequence but may only swim once.

14.3 All teams will start together.

14.4 Starting order will be by random draw.

14.5 There will be a changeover zone of a minimum of 5m in width.

14.6 Changeover shall be made with the following athlete in the water in their starting position, holding the platform. Contact on the relay changeover must be visible. The touch, between the athletes, making the changeover, should be made above the water, anywhere between the elbow and the hand.

14.7 Athletes may enter the changeover zone when the previous athlete is approaching the zone and leave the water immediately at the conclusion of their lap.

14.8 Athletes shall all wear team caps of the same color and style.

15. RESULTS AND PRESENTATIONS

15.1 Medals will be awarded to **1st, 2nd, 3rd place** for all events.

15.2 Once all athletes in that event have completed the course, official results will be posted on the Swimming South Africa website as soon as practical following the completion of each race.

15.3 A Medal Presentation will be held at the venue once the results have been ratified and published. Podium finishers are requested to wear their Affiliate attire for the presentation.

15.4 **NO SPECTATORS and GENERAL PUBLIC** in the competition area.

Disclaimer:

Swimming South Africa and any other event Organiser will not be held liable for any costs and expenses incurred by any person following cancellation of an event outlined in this Event Information Notice. The limitation of liability includes but is not limited to any costs and expenses incurred by any members, participants, coaches, and administrative personnel or medical staff of Provincial Affiliates or individual swimming clubs in respect of the cancellation of the event. Swimming South Africa reserves the right to amend the above entry conditions as required.