

Masters Swimming Queensland
and the
North Mackay Sinkers
Masters Swimming Club
**2026 Whitehaven
Open Water Swim**

Sunday 4th October 2026
(Kings Birthday long weekend)

Whitehaven Beach
Whitsunday Island
Sanction Number – Q8/26



EVENT GUIDE



Transport vessel "2001" a 30m tri hull fast ferry. (or alternate vessel)



Transfer vessel Discovery, Ship to shore.

Meet Date: Sunday October 4 th 2026	Location: Whitehaven Beach, (Whitsunday Is.)	Event Director: Dan Stampa
Entries open: Sunday 1st March 2026	MSQ Sanction Number: Q8/26	Email: wows@sinkers.au
Entries close: Sunday 20th September 2026	Event fee includes: Return full day trip, Shute Harbour - Whitehaven beach – Shute Harbour. Reef & Island taxes, transfers ashore, the event and a light lunch package. Non-Swimmers – limited availability (50) @ \$155pp as above (Plus, fees and charges, 50 Max)	Warm up Time: 8:30am
Release 1: MSQ/MSA members only. Event Cost \$175, plus any applicable fees or charges. (March) Release 2: General entry event cost \$195 plus any applicable fees, charges and insurance. (April onwards) 500m, 1km or 2km event. Maximum Swimmers = 150		Start Time: 9:00am (subject to arrival & weather)
		Accommodation Sponsor Mantra Club Croc 15% discount via email only at clubcroc.res@mantra.com.au

Program of Events

Event	Start	Distance	Stroke
1.	0900 (Max 60 min)	2km seasoned	Freestyle
2.	0910 (Max 50 min)	1 km Step up	Freestyle
3.	0920 (Max 30 min)	500m Novice	Freestyle

Event limits

- One event only (choose either 500m, 1km or 2km option)
- Event time limits apply – choose a suitable distance.

2026 Tidal predictions

	Saturday Oct 3 rd (Shute Harbour)	Sunday Oct 4 th @ Whitehaven Event day!	Monday October 5 th (Shute Harbour) (Public Holiday)
LW	-	-	0054 hrs - 0.70m
HW	0400 hrs - 2.06m	0537hrs - 2.28m	0647 hrs - 2.58m
LW	0942 hrs - 1.06m	1117hrs - 0.93m	1230 hrs - 0.73m
HW	1650 hrs - 3.25m	1806hrs - 3.48m	1906 hrs - 3.68m



Event Details

Welcome

Masters Swimming Queensland and the North Mackay Sinkers welcome you to the third Whitehaven Beach OWS in the beautiful Whitsunday Islands. This event location is on the iconic Whitehaven beach recognised as one of the top beaches in the world. We hope you enjoy the event itself as well as what is available in the area.

Eligibility

This meet is open to Masters Swimming Queensland (MSQ) registered swimmers, and swimmers registered with other Masters Swimming Australia (MSA) affiliated clubs. Swimmers must compete for their primary MSA club.

International swimmers who are current members of their National Masters Swimming Federation may also compete (proof of membership must be provided).

Non-Member swimmers are permitted to enter this meet after an initial offering to Masters members.

MSA/MSQ membership is available to all via the [MSA website](#).

Age

Age as at the 31 December 2026.

Minimum age on event day is 18 years.

Entries – Masters Swimming Australia members.

Entries are to be submitted online via the [online portal](#) on opening. (Portal at - <https://sinkers.au.whitehaven>)

Entries will be open for the month of March 2026 for MSQ/MSA members only.

*The closing date for **Release 1** is April.*

Limited (50) non swimmer guest places available - \$155

Non-members and further non swimming guests pending availability from mid-March. (via portal)

Entries – Non-members (April onwards)

Entries are to be submitted online via the [online portal](#) on opening. (Portal at - <https://sinkers.au.whitehaven>)

Entries pending availability will be open from the month of April 2026 onwards until closing.

Secondary alternate entry site

[Race Results](https://my.raceresults.com/385518/info) (<https://my.raceresults.com/385518/info>)

Entry closure – Sunday 20th September 2026

1. Late entries may be considered, but will incur an additional fee of \$30. Late entries are subject to the swimmer capacity not being exceeded in the event.

Conduct of events

Based on conditions and numbers it is anticipated that the 2km event will commence first, followed shortly after by the 1km and 500m events. The 1 and 2 k event will start at split times, by 10 minutes.

(Waves may be introduced pending numbers)

Qualifying times

While no qualifying time is required, a strict cut off applies.

500m: 30 minutes max.

1 km: 50 minutes and

2 km: 1 hour from race start.

Swimmers must prepare for the event accordingly and select the most suitable distance for the individual's ability.

Swimmers will be required to complete a 'terms and conditions of participation liability waiver' including an ability to swim the chosen distance.

Disclosure of any medical concerns or conditions is required at registration.

Relays

A relay format will not be contested at this event.

Multi Class events

Multi Class swimmers are always welcome, however there will be no separate Multi Class criteria conducted at this event.

Entry fees

A swimmer may enter a single event only.

(i.e. 500m, 1km or 2km).

The event will have two release dates:

Release 1 March 2026: To Masters registered swimmers only at a cost of \$175

(plus, applicable fees and charges)

Release 2 from April 2026. To any other Masters and non-masters' swimmers (guest swimmer) at a cost of \$195 (plus applicable fees, charges and insurance) **Unless sold out prior.**

Note: non masters will also pay a \$5 insurance fee at registration.

All entrants must pay the nomination fee online as directed by Portal.

Please enter and swim within your physical limits.

Entry List

The Entry List will be available on the MSQ event page in the week prior to the event.

Event Details

Event changes, withdrawals and refund policy

Changes: A swimmer may change their entries for the event by request via the event email at wows@sinkers.au

Withdrawal: A swimmer may withdraw from the event up until the closing date via email to wows@sinkers.au

A refund will only be considered prior to the closing date.

- 100% refund: withdrawal prior to 8th September.
- 50% refund: withdrawal 8 September until closing.
- No refund: On or after 20th September.

All changes to or withdrawals from events entered via wows@sinkers.au

Rules

All MSQ/MSA meet and OWS guidelines, by-laws and rules, and World Aquatics swim rules apply. **Take the time to follow the link and review.** Rules are in place for starts, finishes, wetsuits and jewellery.

MSA OWS rules link [here](#)

By nominating to participate in this event, all swimmers thereby authorise the Event Director/MSQ/North Mackay Sinkers Masters Swim Club volunteers to take whatever action is deemed necessary in the event of an emergency, and persons involved accept responsibility for all costs arising from such action.

Tickets and programs

Tickets are limited to swimmers, event organisers, officials and volunteers. There is a limited (50) capacity for spectators that may be adjusted upwards. Past this, spectators may of course arrange their own transport to and from the island.

Warm-up start time

Subject to weather and arrival at Whitehaven beach.

Warm-up will commence approximately 30 minutes before the first event. The course will close 10 minutes before the first event, but swimmers may continue to warm up outside and clear of the course to allow event 1 easy access. After a swimmer finishes their event, they may warm down outside the course to allow finishing swimmers access to the finish line.

Self-Marshalling

All swimmers will be required to self-marshall. People who are not swimming or officiating should not be near the starting/finish line of the event.

- Swimmers are responsible for knowing the event they are competing in, and for being aware of what event is currently in the water. The Announcer will be calling the respective event/wave to the line in readiness for the beach start.
- An entrant who fails to report to the Registration/Marshalling area prior to their event being called to the start may be deemed withdrawn.
- The Marshal will be an assistant who can verify a swimmers' event, answer questions, and direct swimmers to the event start.

Results

Results and statistics will be posted on the MSQ website meet event page and Race Results following the meet.

Competition results for men and women will be separated and Individual events: 18-24 and then in 5-year groups, i.e. 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, etc.

Records

No records are applicable for this event.

Meet awards

Awards will be presented at the conclusion of this meet.

Each event will have overall male and female podium awards.

Age groups results will be recognised and advised but not awarded.

Full meet results, statistics and rankings will be made available in the days following the meet.

Photo/video release

All attendees agree that they may be photographed or videoed, and that the material may be used by MSQ or its affiliated clubs at their discretion, or by others to promote activities of a club or branch, or for personal use including social media.

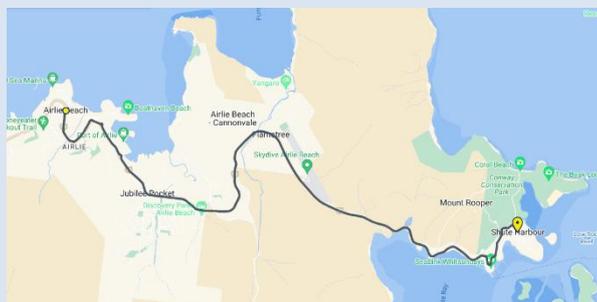
Event Details

Other important information

- Paddles and other aids are not permitted to be worn during the event, including warm-up and swim-down.
- Under MSA OWS rules **jewellery, including watches** are not to be worn
- Swimmers must comply with island signage and directions.
- **NOTE** – Access to the vegetation line is limited.
- Swimmers must wear only one pair of World Aquatics approved swimwear. In accordance with MSA Inclusive Swimwear Policy swimsuits may be modified or alternative swimsuits may be worn to accommodate a swimmer's individual needs, provided any modification or proposed alternative swimsuit is approved by the Referee prior to the swimmer's first event at the competition.
- See MSA Swimwear Rules for more information.
- The water temperature is expected to be in the range between 24° – 26.9°C
- This is not a wet suit event.
- Wet suits as such are at swimmer discretion for comfort but will relegate placings to after non wetsuit swimmers in the results.
- Swimmers may wear stinger suits and wildlife deterrent devices with no penalty.
- Starts and finish will be out of water but in line with MSA guidelines (from/onto the beach). Subject to review.
- The starts will be from the water's edge in three waves.
- MSQ notes that the information provided is correct at the time of publishing. However, some aspects are subject to change, including changes required in the event of too many entries being received for the allowed duration of the meet.

How to get to the Shute harbour

Buses run to the departure point regularly



Severe Weather Policy

MSQ recognises the dangers of extreme weather in Queensland and the need to ensure that all staff and participants take the correct precautions in the event of extreme weather.

Extreme weather includes unexpected, unusual, severe, or unseasonal weather that may pose a safety risk to users including rain, drought, wind, flood, storms, dust, hail, and extreme temperature.

If the meet is affected by extreme weather, a mandatory safety suspension of events will be imposed. This may require a shortened or relocated event format which will be determined by the Event Director, MSQ staff and the vessel operator.

No refund of entry fees will occur under such circumstances.

A secondary swim location is also available in the advent of more northerly weather.

First aid

Both the main vessel and the support vessel/s are well equipped for an emergency. Ashore a first aid station will deliver treatment to any minor issues.

Any accident or injury should immediately be brought to their attention and to the attention of the Event Director.

Venue: Whitehaven Beach

Participants need to be sun smart with suitable hats, long sleeves and sunscreen application. You can expect to be ashore for up to 4 hours and will need to self-cater for snacks and hydration.

There is limited shade available at the venue, no structures exist for this. Some natural vegetation above high tide exists but be mindful not to trample vegetation. You may bring your own shade structure.

Shade tents will be provided **only for** a first aid station, officials, volunteers and fruit/water station for after the event.

This will not cater for participants.

No glass is to be brought on site.

The beach will remain open to the public during the swim events. Please respect other patrons as they utilise the beach and limited facilities.

Food such as tea, coffee, cold drinks, and snacks will be available aboard the transport ferry.

What you need to bring

Water, snacks, broad brimmed hat, long sleeves, sunglasses, sunscreen and a sense of fun and adventure.

Vessel Details

The main transport vessel is a fast 30m ferry and will deliver participants to Whitehaven Beach.

A secondary vessel will transfer guest to shore via a ramp and back to the main vessel at the day's conclusion.

Event Details

Ability to cater for mobility issues and balance is limited and should be considered prior to entering. Please engage with the Event Director to discuss arrangements.

Event and vessel registration: 6:00am

Departure: Shute Harbour 7:00am, boarding from 6:45am

Return: Shute Harbour approximately 3pm.

Whitehaven arrival: approx. 8:30am (transfer ashore)

Whitehaven Departure: Approx 1:30pm (1pm to vessel)

Whitehaven Beach: approximately 4 hours.

Notes: Parking exists for vehicles at Shute harbour as well as being serviced by a bus. **Plan to arrive 6:00am.**

After Swim Event

[Northerlies Beach Bar and Grill](#) - Airlie Beach from 5pm.

Join the Sinkers at this venue to unwind and relive the great day of swimming at Whitehaven. A large space has been booked, and a theme will be advised

(It's a long weekend and the venue is expected to be busy.)

Contacts

Event Director wows@sinkers.au

MSQ Business Manager... admin@mastersswimmingqld.org.au

Director of Recording... recorder@mastersswimmingqld.org.au

MSQ web site <https://mastersswimmingqld.org.au>

Meet Entry [online portal](#)

Meet Entry address..... <https://sinkers.au/whitehaven>

Entries open as follows

Early bird Masters and their guests only..... March 2026

General Entry plus guests (All swimmers 18+)..... April 2026

Closing date..... 20th September 2026

Entry list available..... on or before 28th September 2026

Program available on or about 1 October 2026

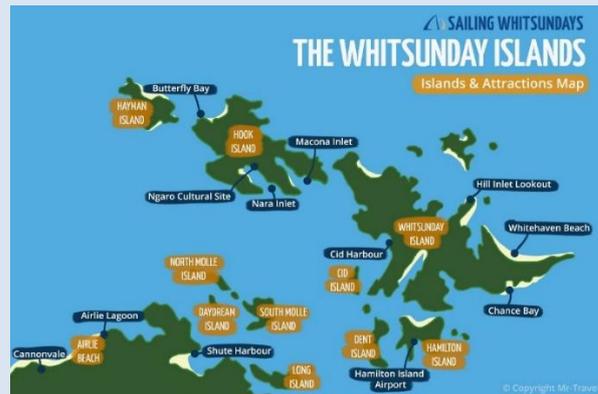
Whitehaven OWS..... Sunday 4th October 2026

Accommodation Sponsor

Great News! Club Croc have confirmed their continued support of our Whitehaven OWS. They are offering a 15% discount on accommodation.

But, You must book direct by email only and mention the discount clubcroc.res@mantra.com.au

2 night minimum stay required.



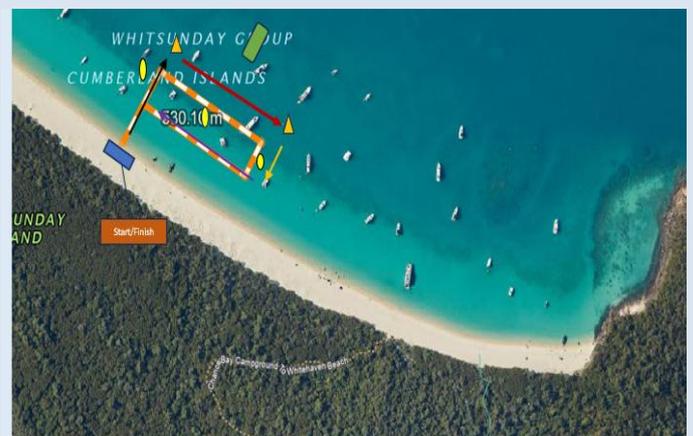
About the Course

This is a 500 m loop course.

- 500m event – Once around
- 1000m event – Twice around
- 2000m event – Four times around.

The loop course

- minimises impact on other waterway users.
- Allows for excellent supervision of swimmers.



Alternate adverse weather course

Chance Bay, also on Whitsunday Island is the adverse weather course.

Event Details

Masters Swimming Queensland and the North Mackay Sinkers would like to thank our sponsors.

