



Open Water Swimming – Tips for Swimmers Before the Plunge

with Coach Sara McLarty

Swim-Like-a-Pro.com



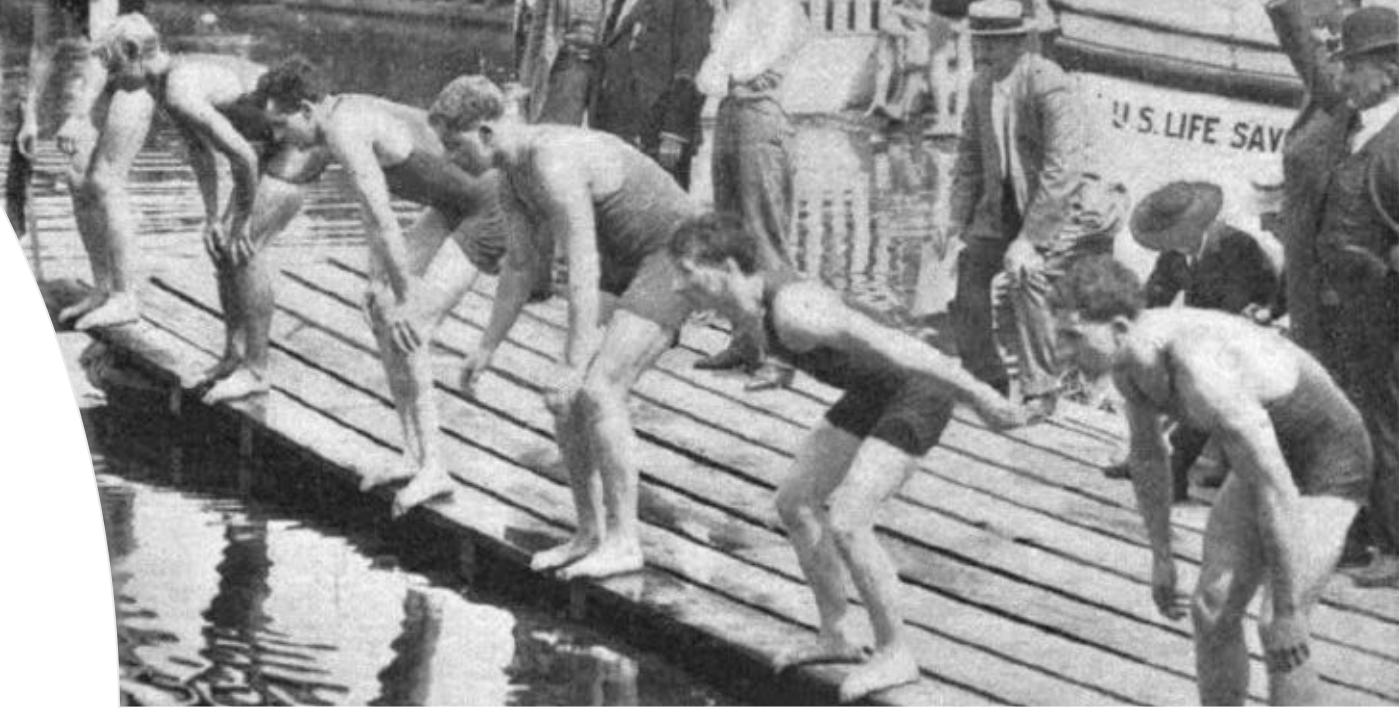
Coach **Sara McLarty**

- Head Coach of SLAP Masters Team & SLAP Tri Team in Clermont/Central Florida.
- Professional/Elite swimmer, open water swimmer, triathlete, and more!
- Coaching and writing articles about swimming and open water swimming since 2008.
- I support fun and creative training for longevity in the sport.



Open Water - The Original Swim

- A great [history of the sport](#) is written on WOWSA (World Open Water Swimming Association).
- The first modern Olympic Games in Greece in 1896 held the swimming competition in open water.
- Resources for open water events:
 - <https://openwaterswimming.com/>
 - <https://globalswimseries.com/>
 - <https://www.usms.org/>





Know EVERYTHING about the water

- Currents
- Tides & rips
- Dangerous wildlife
- Clean water
- Water temperature
- Boat traffic
- Water depth
- Submerged obstacles
- PERMISSION TO SWIM



Bring the right GEAR

- Safe-swimmer buoy
- Bright color cap
- Anti-chaffing cream
- Nutrition & hydration
- Wetsuit/neoprene
- Lights/glow sticks
- A safety boat
- A SWIM BUDDY



Be PREPARED for anything

- Know your limits, don't test them in open water
- Stay shallow and close to shore
- Cramps, out of breath, waves, lose goggles, etc
- Have a plan for when sh*t hits the fan!



In open water, MORE is always merrier!

- Swim with other people
- Start a group, invite teammates
- Plan regular workout times
- Utilize the ease of social media
- Safety in numbers
- Alternate safety boat paddler
- Better training with other people
- Accountability and visibility

Know
WHERE
you are
going



- Have a route planned
- Use easy to see landmarks
- Sighting and navigating skills/technique
- Sight frequently and efficiently
- Garmin & other GPS devices for open water

FUELING in the open water



- Eat ~30 minutes before
- Drink LOTS before starting swim
- Carry fuel with you
- Use a pier/dock
- Have a paddler carry your fuel
- Liquids are best to consume quickly
- Beware losing garbage



Have FUN and be SAFE!

- Your first swim doesn't have to be more than a quick splash
- Always stay in your comfort zone
- Explore local options and destination swims
- Use social media to maximize swim experience and meet other people



**U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING**

Questions for Coach Sara?
Or share your open water ideas,
thoughts, experiences, & suggestions.

Use the Q&A button in the Zoom app.