

Open Water Report

The 2023 Western Zone Open Water Championship was held at lake Coeur d'Alene in August. Over 160 athletes made their way to the event to compete in either the 1.25, 2.5, or 5K distances. CAST did a great job hosting the event. The top 3 male and female finishers in the 5K distance are automatic qualifiers for the national open water 5K event to be held in Sarasota FL, May 3-5, 2024.

The Zone level championships also serves as a qualifier for the 2024 Junior National Championships. 16-17 year old athletes finishing in the Top 10 and 15-under athletes finishing in the Top 15 of the Open 5K races earn automatic spots at next year's Junior National races. A lot of swimmers who do not have the current pool times for have not been to a National level race will get their first opportunity next spring.

IES had 52 splashes over the 6 individual distances for male and female swimmers. Multiple athletes qualified for either Nationals or Junior Nationals. Michael Hochwalt qualified for the National 5K and placed 2nd overall in the 5K, Michael Mamola and Owen Bennett qualified for the Junior National 5K. On the ladies side, Makena Mamola, Pema Anain, and Tillie Sobek qualified for the Junior National 5K.

Lastly, IES bid on the 2025 Western Zone Open Water Championship and was awarded the bid. CAST will be the host team again. Date of the event will be determined at a later date. Reports from the coaches and officials was very positive for how the meet was ran and for the beautiful scenery surrounding the open water meet. Many of the officials and coaches are excited about coming back to Lake Coeur d'Alene

Jeff