

## The Maggie Fischer Great South Bay Cross Bay Swim Fact Sheet



The Maggie Fischer Memorial Great South Bay Cross Bay Swim is a 5.5 mile open water swim from the Fire Island Lighthouse to Brightwaters, NY. It was first established in 1927 for Gertrude Ederle, a local woman who was the first woman to swim across the English Channel. It is one of the longest open water swims in the country, a single person event that requires athleticism and navigational skills. In 1999 the event was renamed to honor Maggie Fischer, one of 15 athletes registered to swim that year. Maggie died tragically just before the swim date. Today the event is limited to about 130 participants who come from around the country to be in a friendly but serious competition, considered one of the safest and best run events of its kind.

Email: [CrossBaySwim@Yahoo.com](mailto:CrossBaySwim@Yahoo.com) ; Website: [www.GreatSouthBaySwim.com](http://www.GreatSouthBaySwim.com) ; Contacts: Mary or Bob Fischer.

### Statistics:

- Limited to about 130 swimmers by course logistics. \$200 entry fee. Sponsorships and tee shirt sales cover the costs of tee shirts, towels and gifts for each swimmer, insurance, timing and tracker services, tents, etc.
- The tidal calendar determines the date and time each year.
- Dept. of Homeland Security and USCG controls the Great South Bay course during of the swim.
- 501c(3), all donations are tax deductible. In 2025 distributed \$100,000 to Hospice Care Network Children and Family Bereavement of Bay Shore, \$20,000 to St. Anthony's High School scholarship fund.
- 35% female, 65% male. 15% less than 20 years old; 35% 20 to 40; 40% 40-60, 10% 60+
- 35% are Bay Shore/ Brightwaters, 50% from the nearby area; 15% from around the country. Many generational legacies.
- Record time of 1:38:59 set in 2018 is held by a 19 year old.
- Trophies given to overall winners and age/sex categories.
- 100% volunteer. 98% of funds raised go to charity.
- Coverage provided by News12, Newsday, local magazines, papers and radio stations.
- Draws hundreds of fans to Gilbert Park, Brightwaters. Many more using Internet coverage.
- Each swimmer has a kayaker for support.
- Requires over 300 volunteers.
- Support provided by Coast Guard, Suffolk County Police / Emergency Services, Fire Island Lighthouse,
- Fire Island Ferries, local fire departments, National Park Service,
- Town of Islip and Village of Brightwaters, many others.