

## So you want to be a Long Distance All Star!

*By Ali Hall*

Back in 1995, it was fairly easy to become a Long Distance USMS All-Star. All a swimmer had to do was accumulate points in the individual Long Distance Championships plus finishes in "mile" events in the pool according to the Top Ten list. To qualify for All-Star consideration, swimmers needed to swim in only one event.



These days it is a bit harder, but still very achievable!!! So, what must a modern day All-Star do to get the honor? Here's the current rule: "to become an All-Star, a swimmer must accumulate the highest number of points in a series of national championships held throughout the year; a swimmer must compete in at least three National Championship Long Distance Events, of which one must be an open water event and one must be a postal event. If a swimmer scores points in one age group and ages up to another age group in the course of a year, their points are transferred up to the new age group. Ties for All-Star status are allowed." Points are awarded from 1st to 10th in each event, on a continuum from 22 points for first place down to 2 for 10th place.

Some peculiarities happen every year, on the road to All-Star status...a swimmer might have a good deal of open water points from top finishes but no points earned in a postal swim...that's ok, as long as the swimmer competes in three USMS Long Distance Championship events and at least one is a postal and at least one is an open water event it doesn't matter. That's good news for some of us who do a lot of open water swims but come in at the end of our age group for the One Hour Postal! Similarly, a swimmer can do well in all the postals but not so great in open water...again, as long as you have the right balance of swims and you have the highest total points, you're the All-Star for that gender and age group.

And, if you age up during the year, you take your points with you...and if you age up during a postal event, you can swim it twice and enter it twice and earn the higher placing points.

It's worth a try!

Editor's note: The North Carolina Masters Swimmers who achieved Long Distance All Star status in 2012 are: Greta van Meeteren, James (Jim) Green, and Ole Larson. For a complete list of all 2012 USMS Long Distance All Stars follow this link: <http://www.usms.org/longdist/awards/ldas12.pdf>