

Tallinn to Host Nordic Masters Swimming Championships for the First Time – Among Participants a 91-Year-Old Former Olympic Swimmer

On October 10–11, the Nordic Open Masters Swimming Championships will take place for the first time in Tallinn, at the Kalev Spa & Water Park. More than 500 athletes from 14 countries are expected to compete, with over 1600 individual starts and more than 120 relay starts.

The competition will be officially opened on Friday, October 10, at 16:15 by Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Estonian Olympic Committee.

In addition to numerous recreational and former elite athletes, several Olympians will be taking part, including Peter Mankoč, Martti Aljand, Martin Liivamägi, and Andres Olvik.

The oldest participant is 91-year-old Ulla-Britt Öberg from Sweden, a former Olympic swimmer representing SK Neptun. Her participation symbolizes what masters swimming truly stands for – a lifelong love of sport, dedication, and the joy of movement at any age.

Erkki Susi, President of the Estonian Swimming Federation:

“Swimming is a sport you can do from birth to the very end of life – everyone at their own level and pace. Adult swimming training has become more popular than ever, and it’s not always easy to find a spot in a training group. Swimming truly is a value for life.”

“The Nordic Championships are always a major event. They’re not just a competition for former top athletes but an emotional, community-driven celebration of swimming. This year’s event brings together more than 500 competitors, which sets high expectations for the organizers, especially since Estonia doesn’t yet have an international-standard aquatics complex. Still, our swimming community is strong and dedicated to making this event a success.”

Kristiina Arusoo, head of Estonia’s largest masters swimming club, U-Klubi, says the participants’ motivations vary widely, but the shared spirit of the swimming community brings everyone together:

“We currently have 58 swimmers registered from our club, each with different goals. Some come to reconnect with friends and enjoy the competition atmosphere, others to test their form or go after Estonian records.”

“It’s the first short-course competition after summer and an important stepping stone toward the European Masters Championships in December. We also have several para swimmers joining under our club banner, for whom this is a chance to experience a major international event. The most important thing is the joy of participation and inclusion.”

History

The first Nordic Open Masters Swimming Championships were held in 2001 in Helsingør (Elsinore), Denmark. Since then, the event has taken place every October, rotating annually between the Nordic countries.

The competition's official title, "*Nordic Open Masters Championships*," reflects its open status, meaning that swimmers from outside the Nordic region are welcome to participate.

This year's participants come from Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Germany, Italy, France, Switzerland, Serbia, and Great Britain.

Hosting the Nordic Masters Championships in Tallinn marks an important milestone for Estonian swimming. It is the first time Estonia has hosted the event, demonstrating international recognition of the strength and dedication of the local swimming community.

Masters swimming brings together generations and offers inspiration to everyone who values movement and a healthy lifestyle. Whether you are 30 or 90, swimming remains a lifelong passion that keeps people returning to the pool again and again.