

YMCA of the USA Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee



YMCA Competitive Swimming Black Book



2006-07

Introduction

YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving is a program that is endorsed and supported by the YMCA of the USA and delivered by local YMCA units. As a YMCA program its goal is to promote the YMCA mission and core values through competitive swimming and diving. The focus is, first and foremost, on the development of healthy, confident, values-centered individuals. Training and competition are the vehicles by which these developments occur. Everyone involved in the delivery of the program plays a critical role in this process. Coaches, YMCA leaders and volunteers assist individuals in their development by building positive relationships, acting with integrity and leading by example.

This booklet is a resource for all YMCA competitive swimming programs. It outlines the rules, guidelines and best practices for the conduct of YMCA competitive swimming programs of all sizes and competitive levels. It is updated at least yearly and made available on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) by November 1 of each current season. This booklet is *not* the meet handbook for the YMCA National Championships; although portions of this booklet are repeated in that handbook. All YMCA competitive swimming coaches, program administrators and YMCA professionals who supervise competitive swimming programs are responsible for knowing the information in this document.

Rules

All YMCA competitive sports, including swimming, must comply with the *Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports*. This document is published by the YMCA of the USA and does not change yearly. It is posted on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

Additional rules apply to the YMCA National Championship meets and the recognition of YMCA National Records and YMCA Top 16 status. These rules are established by the National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee, hereafter referred to as the National Advisory Committee. These rules may change from time to time. The National Championship Meet Handbook, YMCA National Record Rules and YMCA Top 16 Rules are posted on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

The National Advisory Committee has adopted the USA Swimming Technical Rules, as modified, for the conduct of the National Championship Meets. These rules also apply to all closed competition meets serving as qualifying meets for the National Championship Meets, including dual meets and league, district, cluster, state, area or group championships.

Guidelines

The rules that are established by the National Advisory Committee for the YMCA National Championship meets, YMCA National Records and YMCA Top 16 also serve as guidelines for local league, state and regional committees. While these local league, state and regional committees are not required to follow the National Advisory Committee's rules, they are strongly recommended to do so. In order for closed competitions to be recognized as National Championship Meet qualifying competitions, they must follow the same rules established for the conduct of the National Championship Meets. These guidelines may be updated from time to time by the National Advisory Committee. The National Championship Meet Handbook, YMCA National Record Rules and YMCA Top 16 Rules are posted on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

Best Practices

The YMCA of the USA has issued the *Technical Assistance Paper for YMCA Competitive Swimming Programs*. This document establishes the best practices for the conduct of YMCA competitive swimming programs, as indicated by YMCA of the USA departments including programs, finance and legal services. The Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Course Text also contains best practices and related documents for the conduct of the program. YMCAs and YMCA competitive swimming programs are strongly encouraged to follow these best practices. These best practices are not updated yearly. The Technical Assistance Paper is posted on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org). The Principles of Competitive Swimming and Diving Text is available through the YMCA Program Store (1-800-747-0089).

****The rules established by the National Advisory Committee for the conduct of the National Championship program are strongly recommended for adoption and use at all levels of YMCA Competitive Swimming. This will prevent confusion as coaches, swimmers and volunteers move up through the levels of YMCA competition. This will also ensure that times achieved at all YMCA meets will be valid for consideration as YMCA National Championship qualifying times, YMCA Top 16 times and YMCA National Record times.***

Structure of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving

YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving is structured to provide organization, resources and collaboration at all levels. The YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving program is overseen by the YMCA of the USA's Program Director for National Competitive Sports Events, guided by the National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee and managed by local and regional YMCA competitive swimming and diving bodies.

Program Director for National Competitive Sports Events

This person is a member of the YMCA of the USA national staff. He/she oversees the conduct of all YMCA sports. This position is currently held by Mike Eubank (mike.eubank@ymca.net or 800-872-9622).

The YMCA of the USA Competitive Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee (National Advisory Committee)

Comprised of twelve members who serve three (3) year terms and who represent many facets of the program – coaches, officials, volunteers, executive directors and CEOs. The National Advisory Committee provides interpretations of the rules, guidelines and best practices. It establishes rules for, and operates the three YMCA National Championship Meets (short course, long course and masters). It also maintains the YMCA National Records and yearly YMCA Top 16 lists. The list of current members and their contact information is on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org). As an advisory body the National Advisory Committee consults with the YMCA of the USA on the training of local YMCA program staff and the conduct of the National Championship meets. It also advises local YMCAs on the conduct of competitive swimming and diving programs and competitions.

YMCA Group Representatives

Serve as resources for local leagues, teams, coaches and YMCAs. Groups are geographic regions designated by the YMCA of the USA to foster local cooperation and the sharing of resources in all program areas. In competitive swimming and diving, group representatives are a conduit of information between the National Advisory Committee and local coaches, teams and YMCAs. They arrange for the training of coaches and officials. They issue credentials for coaches, and forward sanction requests for championship meets to the national sanctioning officer. Group representatives are responsible for overseeing the operation of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving in their region. The list of current group representatives is on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA Regional Competitive Swimming Committees

Operate regional, district, and/or state competitions, provide training and organize YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving at the regional level. The members of these committees are appointed by the group representatives.

YMCA regional committees may establish their own rules, provided that they are congruent with the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports. ***The National Advisory Committee strongly recommends that all levels of YMCA competitive swimming and diving also follow the rules set forth at the national level.***

Local YMCA Leagues

Operate dual meets and championship competitions, provide training and organize YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving at local levels. The members of these committees are chosen by league members or appointed by group representatives. YMCA leagues may establish their own rules, provided that they are congruent with the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports.

The National Advisory Committee strongly recommends that all levels of YMCA competitive swimming and diving also follow the rules set forth at the national level.

YMCA Teams

At the most local level, individual YMCAs and coaches manage the daily operation of the program. All YMCA programs are conducted at the will of an individual YMCA branch or association. According to the Technical Assistance Paper, YMCA coaches should be employees of the YMCA. If a parents committee exists, it should be advisory, not policy-making. All money should be directed through the YMCA and not through any account outside of the management and oversight of the YMCA.

Eligibility

The Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports must be followed at all levels of YMCA competition. Some, but not all, of those rules are referenced below. Coaches, athletes and YMCA supervisors are responsible for knowing and abiding by the Rules That Govern.

Swimmers

YMCA Membership

A Swimmer must be a YMCA member who, after due application, is enrolled by the association as a member, entitled to full privileges, activities, and services of that association. This means that members of YMCA competitive teams must have full-privilege YMCA memberships that entitle them to the same activities and services as other full-privilege YMCA members.

A swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **30 days** prior to competing for that YMCA in a meet. The swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **90 days** prior to representing that YMCA in a district, regional, state or national championship meet. (Rules That Govern, Rule II Sec.1a) A swimmer may only represent his/her YMCA for at least 90 days prior to the YMCA National Championship Meet entry deadline in order to compete in that meet. The National Advisory Committee recommends that local, district, regional and state leagues and committees adopt the same rule for their championship meets.

Dual Representation and Membership Transfer

Swimmers who wish to change their membership from one YMCA to another may do so through **Transfer by Consent**. An athlete may transfer from one YMCA team to another YMCA team and be eligible to compete for his/her new YMCA team immediately upon the written consent of the YMCA that he/she previously represented. This includes transfer from one metropolitan branch to another. The membership transfer shall be completed BEFORE the individual competes for the new association or branch. This written consent must be in the form of a letter from the executive director of the YMCA association or branch that he/she previously represented. However, the athlete must still be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for 30 days prior to competing in any YMCA meet and be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for at least 90 days prior to competing in a YMCA district, regional, state or national championship meet. Once an individual transfers by consent to another YMCA, that person cannot transfer back and compete for the YMCA unit he/she previously represented for one year from the date of the original transfer. (Rules That Govern, Rule 2 Sec. 2)

Swimmers who wish to **transfer from a non-YMCA team** (USA Swimming team) to a YMCA team during the current season must observe the YMCA membership rules as stated above and in the Rules That Govern. To be eligible to compete in the YMCA National Championship meets a swimmer must not have represented any organization other than his/her YMCA team (high school excepted) for at least 90 days prior to the YMCA National Championship entry deadline. A swimmer must also have met the additional eligibility requirements for YMCA Nationals as stated below.

Collegiate competition

An athlete must maintain amateur status to participate in YMCA competition (Rules That Govern, Rule 1 Sec. 1). Any student who represents or has at any time represented an educational institution beyond Grade 12 in competitive swimming or diving shall be ineligible to participate in the National YMCA Swimming Championship Meet.

Additional Eligibility Requirements for YMCA National Championship Qualification

Age

An athlete must be at least twelve (12) years of age, and not older than twenty-one (21) years of age on the first day of the National Championship Meet.

Qualifying Time Standards

An athlete must achieve the minimum qualifying time standard for each National Championship Meet event in which he/she enters. Coaches must be prepared to show proof of this achievement at meet registration.

Any time achieved at an inter-association meet, or YMCA championship meet in which the swimmer competed under their YMCA name is acceptable. USA-S times and high school times are also accepted.

YMCA Meet Participation

In order for an athlete to be eligible to compete in the YMCA National Championship meets, he/she must have competed in three closed inter-association YMCA meets plus one sanctioned YMCA championship meet since September 1 of the current season. See definitions and standards in *Competition* section below.

Coaches

Safety Certifications

The YMCA of the USA recommends that all coaches who work with YMCA competitive swimmers be currently certified in the following areas. Coaches must hold current certifications in these areas in order to be permitted on deck at the YMCA National Championship meets.

- CPR
- First Aid
- Lifeguarding or Safety Training for Swim Coaches
- Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving

*The YMCA of the USA recognizes certifications from the following organizations:

- American Red Cross
- American Heart Association
- American Safety and Health Institute
- National Safety Council
- YMCA of the USA

*The YMCA of the USA does not currently recognize Ellis certifications.

Team Registration and Coaches' Deck Passes

Group representatives distribute team registration information to YMCA teams in their geographic regions each fall. Teams return the registration forms, fees and copies of their coaches' current safety certification cards as listed above. Group representatives issue deck passes to coaches that are to be displayed for deck access at all sanctioned championship meets including YMCA Nationals.

Associations

Associations in Good Standing

According to the Rules That Govern, a YMCA association must be in good standing with its state, cluster and region in order to participate in YMCA competition. The National Advisory Committee recommends that leagues, districts, states and regions require current team registration with the group representative for the region. (Rules That Govern, Rule III)

USA-S Insurance - Team and YMCA Name

Each Association (Branch) may hold only one USA-S Certificate of Insurance. An Association (Branch) may not be part of more than one USA-S Certificate of Insurance (Cannot be comprised of swimmers of more than one USA-S). Associations MUST have their official YMCA name as listed in the YMCA directory on their USA-S Certificate of Insurance.

YMCA without a Swim Team

If an Association does not sponsor a swimming team, an eligible athlete from that Association may participate in the National Championship Meet representing his/her own YMCA, provided the entry is approved by the group representative in that region and by the National Advisory Committee. The National Advisory Committee recommends that leagues, districts, states and regions permit the same.

Competition

Age

For Short Course YMCA competition that is to be considered eligible for recognition of National YMCA Records and YMCA Top 16, swimmers must compete according to their age on December 1 of the current season. For Long Course competition the date is May 1.

Technical Rules

The YMCA National Championship meets are conducted according to the current USA Swimming technical rules, as modified by the National Advisory Committee as appropriate. The National Advisory Committee recommends that all YMCA teams, leagues, districts, states and regions follow the same rules for competitions.

Safety Regulations

The YMCA of the USA has established the following recommendations for the conduct of all YMCA competitions:

- A certified lifeguard should be on duty at all times and should have the sole responsibility of guarding the pool. Coaches who hold lifeguard certification should not be considered on-duty lifeguards.
- Pool depth should be at least five feet at any end of the pool where racing dives will be performed.

These recommendations are found in the Technical Assistance Paper and the Risk Management Paper in Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving text.

YMCA Inter-Association Meets

YMCA inter-association meets are closed competitions (Rules That Govern Rule I Sec. 7) in which:

- At least two (2) teams from different YMCA associations take part
- At least six (6) competitors from each team participate
- At least six (6) events are contested, including one four-person single-sex relay
- At least two (2) YMCA Certified officials are present for the conduct of the meet and the meet is conducted under YMCA rules

The National Advisory Committee does not recognize postal, paper or mythical meets.

YMCA Championship Meets

YMCA championship meets must be conducted as formal competition in which:

- Teams or individuals are officially designated by a local YMCA to represent that YMCA
- Entry fees are charged
- Standings are kept
- Awards are given
- Records and championships are contested
(Rules That Govern, Rule IV Sec. 1 and Rule I Sec. 9)

Sanctions

Sanctions are issued for YMCA League, District, Zone, Regional and National Championship meets only. Swimmers must compete in at least one sanctioned YMCA championship meet as an eligibility requirement for YMCA Nationals.

In order for a YMCA championship meet to be sanctioned it must follow these rules:

- USA Swimming technical rules are used
- Pool depth must be at least five (5) feet at all ends at which diving starts will occur
- A certified lifeguard must be present at all times, including warm up and warm down periods
- At least two (2) YMCA Certified officials must be used to conduct the meet under YMCA rules
- Coaches on deck must hold current certifications in CPR, First Aid and Lifeguarding or Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches.

To obtain a sanction for a YMCA championship meet, a coach or meet director completes a sanction request form (obtained from the group representative for that region) and returns it to the group representative with a copy of the meet information and a payment of \$5. After reviewing the request, the group representative forwards the sanction request to the national sanctioning officer who issues the sanction and sends the certificate to the meet director.

Following the competition the meet director must send a copy of the results to the group representative and the national sanctioning officer.

Results

Results (paper or electronic) of a sanctioned championship meet must be submitted to the group representative for that region.

Results should also be submitted to the USA-S local swim committee so that they can be loaded into the USA-S National "SWIMS" Database. Please see related information on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA Coaches Association

The YMCA Coaches Association is an organization representing all YMCA competitive swimming and diving coaches. There are no dues. All coaches are automatically members. There is an Executive Committee consisting of eight (8) members elected to three (3) year terms on a rotating basis. Elections are held each year at the Coaches Association meeting at the YMCA Short Course National Championship Meet. The Executive Committee advocates for, and provides resources to, YMCA coaches and swimmers. There is a Coaches Association page on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA Training Courses

Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving

Mandatory for all YMCA coaches in order to be on deck at YMCA Nationals. Recommended for all YMCA coaches, aquatics directors and parent group members. Covers YMCA competitive swimming and diving structure, YMCA program emphasis, principles of operating a YMCA competitive swimming program. There is no test at the conclusion of this course. 4 hours.

Prerequisites: 16 years old

YMCA Swim Coach Course

Recommended for all coaches. Covers stroke technique, introductory physiology, workout design and season planning. There is a test at the conclusion of this course. 8 hours.

Prerequisites: 18 years old, Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving, current certifications in CPR, First Aid and YMCA Lifeguarding or YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant

YMCA Swim Coach Trainer

Prepares an individual to teach Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving and YMCA Swim Coach Course. An individual must also take YMCA Training Others I in order to be a trainer.

Prerequisites: 21 years old, Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving, YMCA Swim Coach, current certifications in CPR, First Aid, Oxygen Administration and YMCA Lifeguarding or YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant

YMCA Swim Officials Course

Required for all volunteers desiring to serve as officials at YMCA meets. The course lasts 5 hours and requires a minimum 80% correct score on a test at the conclusion of the course. Following the course a new official is encouraged to shadow a currently certified deck official for at least two meet sessions.

The officials' certification must be renewed by taking a recertification test every 3 years.

Prerequisites: 21 years old.

*Please note that YMCA Officials Course will be modified into separate Level I and Level II courses by September 2007

YMCA Swim Officials Trainer

Prepares an individual to teach YMCA Swim Officials. An individual must also take YMCA Training Others I in order to be a trainer.

Prerequisites: 21 years old

Additional Rules and Definitions

Black Book

This document is the YMCA Competitive Swimming Black Book and contains the rules, guidelines and best practices for the conduct of YMCA competitive swimming at all levels.

Blue Pages

The common name for the USA Swimming Technical Rules. These rules are found in the USA Swimming Handbook on pages that are blue in color. Please see *Technical Rules* in the *Competition* section on page 6 of this document.

Closed Competition

Competition in which athletes of only one kind of organization compete. A closed YMCA competition involves only YMCA athletes and teams.

Current Season

The current season is defined by each Sports National Event Committee (Rules That Govern, Rule I Sec.4). The National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee is the National Event Committee for YMCA competitive swimming and diving. That body has determined that the season for YMCA competitive swimming and diving is September 1 – August 31.

Dual Representation

An athlete represents more than one organization at a time. An example is a YMCA swimmer who also represents a different USA Swimming team at the same time. This is not permitted, except as outlined in the *Swimmers' Eligibility* section on page 4.

Open Competition

The YMCA considers open competition to be competition in which athletes representing different kinds of organizations may compete. An example is USA Swimming meets because YMCA swimmers (who are registered with USA Swimming) and non-YMCA swimmers (who are registered with USA Swimming) may compete.

Organization

An organization is any body that sponsors competitive swimming competition. Examples include YMCA, USA Swimming, High School Federation, Summer Leagues.

YMCA National Championship Meet Handbook

The handbook containing all rules, procedures and information for the YMCA National Championship meets. There is a separate meet handbook for the Short Course YMCA National Swimming and Diving Championships, the YMCA Long Course Swimming Championships and the YMCA Masters National Championships.

Statistical Reports

In an effort to collect valuable YMCA Competitive Swim information, The National Advisory Committee will provide a statistical survey on the YMCA swimming website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) for all YMCA Coaches and Swim Teams after the 2007 Short Course Meet. Please plan on reporting information in the following categories at the end of the short course season:

1. Team Statistics including numbers of participants, their ages, sex and race
2. Staff Statistics
3. Parent and Volunteers Statistics
4. YMCA Statistics

Thanks for your support and participation in YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving.