

# HCY PHILOSOPHY ON OUR THREE TRACKS

## NORTHERN NEW JERSEY YMCA SWIM LEAGUE

[njymcaswim.org](http://njymcaswim.org)

All of our swimmers will compete in the NNJYMCA dual meet season as well as the appropriate championship-level meets. We will focus primarily on YMCA Swimming over the winter for several reasons:

1. The first reason we will focus primarily on YMCA swimming is that the New Jersey YMCA system is very competitive with its USA Swimming counterpart.

In most areas of the country, it is easier to qualify for the YMCA Championships, but there is a big gap between the competition at YMCA Championships and USA Swimming Championships. Because there is typically a significantly higher level of competition in USA Swimming, YMCA's feel like they need to use USA Swimming competitions to develop their top-level talent. In New Jersey, there isn't a big gap between the YMCA and USA swimming talent.

Let's look at an example:

### 2012 10&U Girls 50 Freestyle Time Standard and Results Comparison

NJUSA JO Time Standard

**31.49**

NJYMCA Gold Time Standard:

**32.89**

Results

1. 26.66
2. 27.69
3. 28.25
4. 28.46
5. 28.47
6. 28.84
7. 28.97
8. 29.23

Results

1. 26.48
2. 27.29
3. 27.50
4. 27.82
5. 28.40
6. 28.63
7. 28.70
8. 29.01

Not only is the time standard more easily achieved in YMCA, but the competition is just as good or better.

2. The second reason we will focus primarily on YMCA Swimming over the winter is similar to the first. The time standard for YMCA Nationals is easier to achieve than that of USA Swimming Junior Nationals, yet the swimmers are still exposed to Olympic Trials-level swimming.

Last year the USA Junior National Cut for Girls 100 FLY was 56.29 while the YMCA national cut was 59.59. The winner of Junior Nationals for girls 100 Butterfly last year went 52.98, while the winner of YMCA Nationals for girls 100 Butterfly went 53.26. So, the winner of YMCA Nationals was only .3 seconds slower than the winner of Junior Nationals, while the 8<sup>th</sup> place finisher was faster in YMCA Nationals than the 8<sup>th</sup> place finisher at Junior Nationals. Again, YMCA National Cuts are easier to achieve, yet the swimmers are exposed to the same competition level as USA Junior Nationals.

3. The third reason we will embrace the YMCA system throughout the winter is that embracing our league experiences will enable us to build better team bonds. When swimmers embrace and perceive swimming as a team sport, swimmers experience more sustainable progress, express more sport enjoyment, and remain in the sport longer. Our goal will be to progressively improve both individually and collectively. This progress will be evidenced by our improvement in both our dual meet and championship seasons.
4. The fourth reason we will focus primarily on YMCA Swimming is to simplify the process for our swimmers. When a swimmer competes multiple times in a month, it is mentally and physically draining on a swimmer. In addition, when a swimmer has multiple championship meets, he/she has trouble focusing and directing their energy and efforts to both meets. We will give our swimmers a better chance at achieving their potential if we simplify their championship experience.

In summation, the New Jersey YMCA system sets the rungs of the development ladder at more developmentally appropriate intervals than USA Swimming. In addition, the competition is adequate for optimal development. Since the NJYMCA system provides competitive experiences equal to that of USA Swimming, the value in our winter swimming experience will be seen through our team efforts and performance at YMCA meets.

## PENN JERSEY SWIM LEAGUE (PJS�)

**Website coming soon!**

While the PJS� is not as competitive as NJYMCA, there is great value in our participation within the league.

To understand the value of our participation in the PJS�, let's envision that our team is made up of three levels: novice, intermediate, and advanced.

The PJS� league serves as a great introduction to competitive swimming for our **novice** swimmers, families, and volunteers. In addition, it serves as a great place for our **intermediate** swimmers to hone their skills and see their improvement from year-year. Finally, competing in the PJS� will enable our **advanced** swimmers to give back as mentors and coaches. This will tie them into the team more than the typical club.

Because we compete in two leagues, we have a unique opportunity for team building. When each member contributes to the goals, practices, competitions and outcomes of our team, it promotes **responsibility, respect, and caring** for one another. When each member cares about the progress and well-being of all team members, a team can accomplish anything. To this end, we want all HCY swimmers to compete in the PJS� league as HCY Stingrays.

## **USA SWIMMING**

**[usaswimming.org](http://usaswimming.org)**

As mentioned above, the YMCA participation over the winter is more than sufficient for the full development of our swimmers during that time period. However, HCY will embrace USA Swimming over the summer as a means to enhance the swimming experience of our swimmers and to put them on a track that will help them achieve levels of swimming greater than that of YMCA Nationals.

Our USA Swimming track is not for all swimmers. The USA Swimming meets over the summer are in a 50-meter pool, which is twice as long as the pools that we compete in over the winter. If a swimmer is not ready physically and mentally for this, it could lead to a bad experience.

Our USA Swimming track is for our more developed and dedicated swimmers who are pursuing the highest levels of swimming through the highest levels of commitment and competition.

The swimmers who choose to do USA Swimming will also compete in the PJSL. When there are conflicts between our USA Swimming schedule and our PJSL schedule, USA Swimming may take priority.