

# RULES THAT GOVERN YMCA COMPETITIVE SPORTS

Everyone wants, and should have, an equal opportunity to compete and a fair chance to win. Rules are needed to specify conditions that must be met by all players, coaches, managers, and administrators.

The following rules apply to closed formal YMCA sports competition. When a YMCA athlete or team enters open competition, the eligibility requirements of the governing body of the sport concerned apply.

These rules provide definitions and procedures for holding sports competitions.

We look to the integrity of the player, coach, manager, and administrator to follow the spirit of the rules developed for healthy competitive sports in a Christian setting. Lapses in this spirit may be considered on an individual basis.

## FAIR PLAY

Interpretation of the “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports” is based on the fair play concept. The YMCA believes that fair play is the very essence of competition. This fundamental virtue is a special attribute of sport and inherent in it. Competition should be marked by a spirit of truth and honesty, with strict observance of all rules, whether written or unwritten. Fair play implies respect for oneself, one’s opponent, and others involved in conducting the competition. Players, coaches, officials, and spectators share a responsibility for fair play: Fair play sets the game above the prize.

Competition can provide an excellent means of developing a predisposition to play fairly. As this virtue develops, it can influence behavior in everyday life. It is for the development of such virtues that the YMCA promotes competitive sports.

## CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN YMCA SPORTS

Values are basic beliefs about what is good or ought to be, that actually serve as guidelines for decision making and action. Values education is the process of helping people develop values, becoming conscious of those values, and using them to make decisions.

**The YMCA believes that character development, focusing on the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility, is an essential element of its sports program.**

**Caring:** To love others and be sensitive to the well being of others involved in the sports program.

**Honesty:** To have integrity, making sure that one’s actions match one’s values through participation in sports.

**Respect:** To value the worth of every person, including oneself, one’s teammates, opponents, and officials.

**Responsibility:** To be accountable for one’s behavior and obligations.

YMCAs have a responsibility for training staff, volunteers and participants to be sensitive to the appropriate values which may be developed through sport, and to create an environment conducive to character development.

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International Competition

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**Section 1: An Amateur**

An amateur is one who engages in sports solely for the pleasure

## RULE I: DEFINITIONS



of competition and physical, mental, and social benefits derived from participation.

**Section 2: A YMCA Member**

A YMCA member is a person, who, after due application, is enrolled by the Association, entitled to full privileges, activities and services of that Association. In Metropolitan YMCAs where association wide memberships entitle the individual to full privileges, activities and services of more than one unit, the person must compete for the unit in which he/she enrolls for the membership or designates at the time of enrollment the unit for which he/she will be competing.

**Section 3: Dual Representation**

An individual or team has dual representation when representing more than one organization during the current season.

**Section 4: Current Season**

Current Season is defined by each sports National Event Committee.

**Section 5: National YMCA Competition**

National YMCA competition consists of the championships authorized by the Program Development Division of the YMCA of the USA.

**Section 6: District/Regional/State Competition**

District/Regional/State YMCA competition consists of the championships authorized by YMCAs in those groupings desiring such competition.

**Section 7: Closed Competition**

Closed competition occurs when individuals or units of the YMCA movement (recognized members of the YMCA of the USA) compete among themselves.

**Section 8: Open Competition**

Open competition occurs when individuals or units of the YMCA compete with representatives of non-YMCA organizations or units.

**Section 9: Formal Competition**

Formal competition is closed or open contests in which teams or individuals are officially designated by a local YMCA to represent that YMCA and for which entry fees are charged, standings are kept, awards given, and records and championships are contested.

**Section 10: Competition Other Than Formal**

Competition other than formal is that in which fellowship, recreation, and practice are the principle objectives. It includes events and activities in which no championships or officially recognized titles or standings are at stake, no entry fee is

charged, no award is given, and no admission is charged for spectators. It may be intramural competition (contests within an Association or branch), inter-Association competition (social competition between neighboring Associations or Branches), competition under YMCA auspices, or supervision or competition with Non-YMCA groups.

**Exception:** Any competition conducted solely for members of one Branch or single-unit Association may be considered other than formal even though championships of officially recognized titles or standings are at stake, entry fees are charged, awards are given, or admission is charged for spectators. For example: house leagues, church or Sunday School leagues, industrial leagues.

**Section 11: Eligibility**

Only certified Associations are eligible to compete in events involving other Associations.

**Section 12: An Association**

An Association is a YMCA unit which is certified by the National Board, holds an Association branch, or unit number, and is eligible for separate listing in the YMCA Directory. A Branch, Department, or Center of a Metropolitan Association shall be considered an Association for the purposes of competition.

**Section 13: Terminated Association**

A terminated Association is one that has failed to meet the standards established by the National Board of YMCAs and has been removed from the list by action of the National Board's Committee on Member Associations. It is no longer considered a YMCA.

**Section 14: Disqualified Association**

A disqualified Association is one that has been removed by the District/Regional/State or National Event committee responsible for the competitive activity in which the Association was involved. The Association shall be removed from the list of the Associations eligible for sports competition in one or more sports at the District/Regional/State or National level because of violations or negligence in sports administration.

**RULE II: ELIGIBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS**

**Section 1**

An individual who fulfills the following conditions shall be eligible to represent his/her Association in formal closed competition:

- a. A YMCA member in good standing 30 days prior to the competition (90 days for District/Regional/State/National Championship ( See Rule IV, Section 3)

eligible for representation in formal competition:

- b. An amateur athlete in the competitive season in the sport in which the individual desires to represent the YMCA. A competitor may be a professional in another sport.
- c. Eligible under the Permissible Dual Representation Rule (See Section 2).
- d. Not in violation of any of the provisions of Rule V.
- e. Certified by an authorized staff member of the Association as meeting the above conditions.

### **Section 2: Permissible Dual Representation Rule**

Dual representation shall be permitted when:

- a. An individual is eligible to represent his/her YMCA in closed competition, in addition to other organizations he/she has represented or is representing, providing he/she has not competed for another YMCA **in that sport** during the previous four months.
- b. An individual is eligible to represent his/her YMCA in open competition, provided he/she has not represented another YMCA **in that sport** in open competition during the previous four months and meets the eligibility requirements of the governing body of the sport concerned.

**Note: Event Committees may reserve the right to restrict dual representation. National Event Committees must have the written approval of the YMCA of the USA Program Committee.**

### **Transfer by Consent**

An individual wishing to transfer from one YMCA unit to another is eligible to represent the new YMCA **immediately** upon the written consent of the YMCA unit he/she previously represented. This includes transfer from one metropolitan branch to another. The membership transfer must be completed before the individual competes for the new Association. **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.**

### **RULE III: ELIGIBILITY OF ASSOCIATIONS**

An Association that fulfills the following requirements shall be

- a. Is a certified YMCA.
- b. Is in good standing with its own State/District/Regional Committee/Individual administering the YMCA sports program.
- c. Confines its formal YMCA competition to Associations that are certified and comply with the provisions set forth in the “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports.”

## **RULE IV: CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **Section 1**

State/District/Regional and National Championships must be conducted as formal competition. (See Rule I, Section 9).

### **Section 2**

**Event Committees or groups of YMCAs** which operate State/District/Regional/National Championships shall have the authority to establish rules and regulations governing such sports competition **so long as they remain in accord with the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports (established November, 1996 and as amended from time to time). Any changes in such rules and regulations shall be made known at least 90 days in advance of any competition to which they apply. Where there is a conflict between those rules and the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports, the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports take precedence.**

### **Section 3**

For State/District/Regional or National YMCA Championships, each competitor shall have represented his/her Association in formal competition during the current season in the same sport and been a YMCA member in good standing for a period of 90 days prior to the date of the event entered **except as provided in Rule II, Section 2, Transfers by Consent.** In instances where an Association does not sponsor representative teams in formal competition in a certain sport, an athlete of that Association may be permitted to enter State/District/Regional or National competition in that sport provided the entry is approved by the committee or individual administering that State/District/Regional/National competition.

## **RULE V: VIOLATIONS**

### **Section 1: Violations Which May Lead to Disqualification of an Association.**

The District/Regional/State or National Event committee responsible for any competitive activity in which an Association is participating may disqualify that association for:

- a. Failure to enforce and maintain the “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports” as herein set forth.
- c. Being suspended by the National Board for failure to meet requirements for recognition as a member Association.
- d. Misconduct or poor sportsmanship by athletes, coaches, or other local Association officials preceding, during, and after the competition.

**Section 2: Violations Which May Disqualify an Athlete from Representing a YMCA in Sports Competition.**

- a. Exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. Competing under an assumed name.
- c. Misrepresenting facts regarding eligibility or performance.
- d. Involvement in substance abuse.
- e. Failing to meet the conditions stated in Rule II, “Eligibility of Individuals.”

**RULE VI: PROTESTS**

**Section 1**

Protests affecting the eligibility of any individual or Association must be made in writing and **must** be made within 30 days of the conclusion of the event. Whenever possible, issues that may lead to protests should be discussed and resolved prior to competition.

**Section 2**

Protests shall be considered by the Event Committee in charge of the competition.

**Section 3**

A protested player or Association may be permitted to compete under protest.

**Section 4**

The Event Committee shall have power to reject any entry.

**Section 5**

Upon receipt of protests supported by reasonable proof alleging violations by an Association, the State/District/Regional/National Event Committee responsible for the competition in which the Association was participating, or the Program Development Division of the YMCA of the USA, upon recommendation of the National Event Committee, may declare the Association

- b. Being a party to or condoning violations which disqualify an amateur under these rules.

concerned not eligible for formal competition in any sport until such time as a thorough investigation is made and final decision rendered.

**Section 6**

The Event Committee responsible for the competition in which the individual or Association was participating shall render judgment regarding further eligibility at that competitive level in that sport. For example, a District Event Committee cannot render eligibility decisions that affect events at other competitive levels, such as at the Regional or National level.

However, when an individual or association is ruled ineligible, this decision shall be reported to Event Committees at other levels. These Event Committees are authorized to support the eligibility ruling if they so choose.

**Section 7**

Awards or trophies acquired by individuals or Associations under conditions for which they are subsequently disqualified shall be returned to the proper committee.

**RULE VII: REINSTATEMENTS**

**Section 1: Reinstatement of Associations**

- a. Any Association which has been disqualified may apply for reinstatement by writing to the committee issuing the sanction, stating reason for such application.
- b. Reinstatement of an Association that violates Rule V, Section 1c, may be made by the committee issuing the sanctions when requirements for recognition as a member Association of the National Board of the YMCA of the USA have been met.

**Section 2: Reinstatement of Individuals**

- a. Applications for reinstatement must be approved and signed by the Chairperson of the local YMCA committee related to program and the Executive Director of the Association of which the applicant is a member in good standing.
- b. The committee issuing the sanctions shall pass upon all applications for reinstatement of individuals.
- c. An athlete shall be ineligible to compete while his/her

application for reinstatement is pending.

- d. An individual whose application for reinstatement has been rejected initially may apply again for reinstatement, subject to the policy developed by the

**RULE VIII: RULES FOR DISTRICT/STATE/REGIONAL/NATIONAL COMMITTEES CONDUCTING INTERASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

**All Interassociation Championship Events must be conducted in accord with these “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports.”**

**All funds accumulated by the committees for the purpose of administering the championships must be maintained in custodial accounts of local YMCAs or in the case of National Event Committees in custodial accounts of the YMCA of the USA. Committees will be self-supporting.**

**All Interassociation Championships should be hosted by local YMCAs. Committees should not assume responsibility for conducting the championships themselves.**

**Issues involving eligibility of individuals and associations should be resolved by the committee related to the event in accord with these “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports.”**

**Any new National YMCA Championship must be approved by the YMCA of the USA Program Committee.**

**Where there is interest in particular sports for interassociation championship events by groups of districts or states, committees should be appointed to administer and coordinate the championships.**

- a. **All districts or states desiring to participate in the championships should be represented on the committee.**
- b. **All representatives to the committee from the districts should be appointed by either the district level organization of physical and program directors or of executive directors.**
- c. **The committee members should have one year terms and may serve consecutive terms but should not serve more than three consecutive terms.**
- d. **The chairpersons of the committees must be appointed by a YMCA of the USA Membership & Program Consultant who services the designated**

committee issuing the sanctions.

area.

- e. **All events should adhere to the national rules set forth by any National Event Committee.**

**RULE IX: AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS**

**Section 1**

Any proposed amendment must be submitted to the YMCA of the USA Program Committee.

**Section 2**

The YMCA of the USA Program Committee will review any proposed revision to the “Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports” at its regular meeting. These will be subject to approval by the National Board of the YMCA of the USA or authorized committee of the Board.

**INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION**

The Amateur Sports Act, approved by Congress in 1978, designates the United States Olympic Committee as the official coordinating body for amateur sports in the United States.

The Sports Act further provides that each sport included in the Pan American and Olympic Games be controlled by a National Sports Governing Body with authority to sanction international competition in that sport.

YMCAs either sending teams abroad or hosting foreign teams in sports competition (whether involving YMCA or non-YMCA teams from abroad) should comply with the sanction procedure of the appropriate National Governing Body for the particular sport.

Questions about sanction procedures should be addressed to the Program Development Division of the YMCA of the USA.