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SWIMMING ADDENDUM TO THE RULES THAT GOVERN YMCA COMPETITIVE SPORTS

The Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports must be followed at all levels of YMCA competition. The rules are written for all competitive sports in the YMCA and not specifically for swimming. This addendum provides additional explanation of the rules as applied to YMCA Swimming. Coaches, athletes and YMCA supervisors are responsible for knowing and abiding by the Rules That Govern including this Addendum.

SWIMMER ELIGIBILITY

YMCA Membership

A member of a YMCA swim team must have a full-privilege YMCA membership that entitles him or her to the same activities and services as other full-privilege YMCA members, not special limited-access memberships available only to swim team members. (Rule I)

Many YMCAs recognize reciprocal membership benefits with other YMCAs in a given state or region. While these reciprocal agreements grant access to each participating YMCA's facilities, for the purpose of competition a swimmer may represent only the YMCA or branch designated as his or her home branch. That is, where his or her membership originates.

A swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **30 days** prior to the first day of a YMCA meet in which they compete. The swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **90 days** prior to the first day of a district, regional, state or national championship meet in which he/she competes. (Rule III Sec.1a) The membership status must be valid through the end of the competition.

Dual Representation (Rule III)

Rule I defines dual representation as occurring when "an athlete represents more than one team in a particular sport during the current season." Rule III further explains that "A YMCA athlete may represent a non-YMCA team in the same sport, provided that the non-YMCA team could not compete against the athlete's YMCA team in open competition," (eg. A high school team). Because it is possible for YMCA teams to be members of USA Swimming, and thus compete against non-YMCA teams in USA Swimming meets (which are considered open competition), it is a violation of the dual representation rule for a swimmer to represent a YMCA team and a separate USA Swimming team during the current season. The word "could" in the permissible dual representation statement refers to the *possibility*, not the actuality of whether or not a YMCA team is also a member of USA Swimming.

USA Swimming competition is open because although all teams and swimmers must be members of USA Swimming, teams with other affiliations (YMCA, prep school, college) are permitted to join and participate.

YMCA Swimming competition is closed because only YMCA teams may participate. Other examples of closed competition include interscholastic (e.g. high school) competition and summer league competition in which only member teams of a local summer league compete.

In the case of a transfer from one team to another during the current season, please see Transfer rules below.

When a YMCA team is not also registered with USA Swimming, a member of that YMCA team may participate in USA Swimming competitions as an *Unattached* swimmer. A member of a YMCA team may practice with a separate USA Swimming club, if permitted by the YMCA team's coach/director, but needs to be aware of the YMCA dual representation and transfer rules. YMCA leagues, states and regions have the right to further restrict such dual participation.

A swimmer may represent only his/her YMCA in closed or open competition for a period of at least 90 days prior to the first day of a YMCA championship meet. The only exception is for closed interscholastic competition. A swimmer may represent his or her high school in closed interscholastic competition and not be in violation of this rule. When an interscholastic institution, usually a prep or boarding school, offers a swimming program which also competes in open (USA Swimming) competition, a YMCA swimmer may not represent the school in open competition and still be in compliance of the permissible dual representation rule. He or she may compete in the open competition but must be unattached.

Transfers

YMCA Team to YMCA Team

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. A Transfer by Consent Form may be found in the Rules That Govern and must be signed by the executive directors of both YMCAs involved. However, the athlete must still be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for 30 days prior to the first day of a YMCA meet in which they compete and be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for at least 90 days prior to the first day of a YMCA district, regional, state or national championship meet in which they compete.

Non-YMCA Team to YMCA Team

A swimmer may not represent both a YMCA team and a separate USA Swimming team during the current season unless a permanent transfer (lasting the remainder of the current season) occurs from one team to the other. A swimmer who wishes 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 in the Rules That Govern. To be eligible to compete in any YMCA championship meet, including a YMCA National Championship meet, a swimmer may not have represented any organization other than his/her YMCA team (with the exception of closed academic competition) for at least 90 days prior to the first day of the YMCA championship meet.

YMCA Team to Non-YMCA Team

A swimmer may transfer from a YMCA team to a non-YMCA team at any time but once he or she represents that non-YMCA team in competition, he or she may not represent the YMCA team again during the current season.

Amateur Status

Applying the definition of an amateur (Rule I), an individual may not have represented a college, university or other post-high school institution in any competition and may not have accepted pay or compensation for competing as a swimmer.

Unattached Swimmers

There is no "unattached" designation in YMCA Swimming. All swimmers must compete as full members of a YMCA team and, thus, satisfy the YMCA membership requirements and be covered under that YMCA's insurance. See also the section titled, *YMCA Without a Swim Team*.

YMCA Meet Participation

In order for an athlete to be eligible to compete in sanctioned YMCA championship competitions, he or she must have competed in a minimum number of closed inter-association YMCA meets during the current season. That number is determined by the league, region or other entity sponsoring the championship meet. For YMCA National Championship meets, an athlete must have competed in three closed inter-association YMCA meets plus one sanctioned YMCA championship meet since September 1 of the current season.

To compete is defined as swimming in at least one meet event to completion (without taking a declared false start). Time trial meets do not satisfy this YMCA meet participation requirement.

COACH ELIGIBILITY

Safety Certifications

In the interest of maintaining the highest level of safety, the YMCA of the USA requires that all coaches who work with YMCA swimmers maintain current certification in the following areas.

1. Professional Rescuer CPR

- American Red Cross
- American Heart Association
- American Safety and Health Institute
- National Safety Council

2. First Aid

- American Red Cross
- American Heart Association
- American Safety and Health Institute
- National Safety Council

3. Safety Training for Swim Coaches

- If the full Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches course certification is used, no additional training or certification is required in this area.
- If a coach has a Lifeguard or YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant certification, the coach must **also** pass the online Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches test (found at www.redcross.org/takeclasses, www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org or www.usaswimming.org) and the expiration date is the earliest date on either the

lifeguard certification or the Safety Training for Swim Coaches e-mail test verification. Acceptable courses include:

- American Red Cross Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED (2 year certification)
 - YMCA Lifeguard (2 year certification)
 - YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant/YASA (2 year certification)
 - International Lifeguard Training Program (Ellis & Associates) Pool Lifeguard Training (1 year license) or Special Facilities Training (1 year license)
 - Starfish Aquatics Institute Starguard (1 year certification)
- 4. Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving**
- This course is offered online through the Learning and Career Development Center (LCDC) on the Y Exchange site (www.yexchange.org). Course is complete when course workbook is submitted to the coach's regional representative.

Coaches must hold current certifications in these courses in order to be permitted on deck at any YMCA sanctioned meet including the YMCA National Championship meets. An instructor's certification by itself does not satisfy the requirement for current certification.

Concussion Awareness

Some states mandate that all adults who work with a youth sports program complete a concussion awareness course or seminar. The YMCA of the USA encourages participation in concussion awareness training as well and has implemented two measures at the National Championship Meet in regard to concussions. All parents and athletes read and sign the Concussion Awareness Form during the meet entry procedure. In addition, there is a specific protocol in effect during the meet when any head injury occurs. More information may be found at www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org or www.yexchange.org.

Annual YMCA Team and Coach Registration

Each year, YMCA teams and coaches complete an online YMCA Swimming registration. This process creates an important communication and data collection link between the national, regional and local levels of YMCA Swimming.

Deadlines: December 1 (Short Course Season); July 1 (Long Course Season)

Certifications will not be verified and coach's cards will not be printed after these dates.

Team Registration

- \$50, payable to YMCA of the USA
- Required for team participation in any YMCA sanctioned meet

Coach Registration

- Required for coach participation on deck at any YMCA sanctioned meet
- Upload electronic copies of current required certifications
- Coach may choose to receive a YMCA coach's card as proof of registration
- For ALL coaches involved with the YMCA team, regardless of whether a YMCA coach's card is needed or desired

USA Swimming recognizes Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving on its coaches' credentials. USA Swimming member coaches may submit a copy of their Principles certification to their LSC registrar with their other safety certifications. A "Y" will be placed on the USA-S card to indicate that the coach has completed the Principles course. YMCA coaches may upload this card for verification or required certifications and may show this card, or their YMCA coaches' card, at YMCA meets including Nationals.

Important: All YMCA coaches still need to complete the online YMCA registration. Coaches who do not complete the online registration will not be permitted on deck at any sanctioned YMCA meet.

ELIGIBILITY OF ASSOCIATIONS AND TEAMS

Definition of an Association

As defined in Rule I, an Association is certified by the Board of Directors of the National Council of YMCAs, holds an Association branch or unit number and is eligible for separate listing in the YMCA Directory. For the purpose of competition only, an Association branch, department or center of a Metropolitan Association shall be considered an Association. A Metropolitan Association must decide whether to operate one competitive swimming program that represents the association as a whole, or to have each of its branches operate its own team. A YMCA team must compete under one name and association number during the given season. A YMCA team may not represent a branch (having one association number) during part of the season and the association (which has a different association number than the branch) as a whole during another.

USA Swimming Team and YMCA Name

Each YMCA team may hold only one USA Swimming team membership. A YMCA team may not be part of more than one USA Swimming team membership (Cannot be comprised of swimmers of more than one USA Swimming team). YMCA teams MUST have their official YMCA name as listed in the national YMCA directory on their USA Swimming Certificate of Insurance.

A YMCA team does not have to register all of its swimmers with USA Swimming, but a YMCA team may not have two separate entities within one team (e.g. a YMCA component and a USA Swimming component) where only those who compete in YMCA meets are YMCA members. All members of a team registered as a YMCA team must be members of that YMCA.

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 regional representative in that region and by the National Championship Meet Eligibility Committee. (Rule IV) The athlete should also be under the supervision of certified YMCA coach from another YMCA. Leagues, districts, states and regions are encouraged to afford the same privileges.

COMPETITION

The YMCA of the USA views competition as a means by which the core values are taught and individual assets are developed. Healthy competition promotes a dedicated effort to reach one's potential with dignity, integrity and sportsmanship. At all levels, YMCA competitions promote this healthy competition and not a "winning at all costs" attitude. The structure of YMCA competition progresses from the local level to league, regional and national competitions, allowing for a natural sequence of goal setting for individuals and teams.

Closed and Open Competition

Closed competition refers to competition in which only YMCA teams and swimmers may compete.

Open competition refers to competition in which teams and swimmers representing any organization compete. This may or may not include YMCA teams and swimmers. (Rule I)

Current Season

The current season in YMCA Swimming season is September 1-August 31.

Age

For the purpose of recognizing YMCA National Championship qualifying times, National YMCA Records and YMCA Top 10 times, a swimmer's age is determined by his or her age on the first day of competition.

Technical Rules

The YMCA National Championship meets are conducted according to the current USA Swimming technical rules. In order for times to be eligible for the YMCA National Championship Meets, YMCA Top Ten and YMCA National Records, they must be achieved in meets that are conducted using USA Swimming technical rules.

Safety Regulations

The YMCA of the USA has established the following standards for the conduct of all YMCA practices and competitions:

- A certified lifeguard is on duty at all times and has the sole responsibility of guarding the pool. Coaches who hold lifeguard certification are not to be considered on-duty lifeguards.
- Pool depth is at least five feet at any end of the pool where racing dives will be performed. If the pool water depth at the starting end of the pool is less than the prescribed five feet, all swimmers must start their races in the water.
- These standards are found in *On the Guard - YMCA Lifeguard Program manual, The Parent/Child and Preschool Aquatic Program Manual, The Youth and Adult Aquatic Program Manual, YMCA Swim Lessons Administrative Manual, Principles of YMCA Aquatics, YMCA of the USA Aquatic Guidelines*. Failure to follow these standards may jeopardize the YMCA's insurance coverage.
- Changing into or out of swimsuits other than in locker rooms or other designated areas is not appropriate and is prohibited.

YMCA Inter-association Meets

The minimum standards of a YMCA inter-association meet include:

- At least two (2) teams from different YMCA associations (different association numbers) 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
- Officials (in all cases at least two officials must be YMCA Certified including one certified as a Level II Official who acts as the Meet Referee):
 - Dual Meets require at least three (3) officials including a Starter, a Referee and an Administrative Official. The Starter and Referee may also serve as Stroke & Turn judges, if necessary.
 - All other meets require at least four (4) officials including a Referee, a Starter (who may also act as a Stroke & Turn judge), a Stroke & Turn judge and an Administrative Official.
 - Any YMCA Level II Certified Official can function as the Administrative Official, but not in that role and another deck role (e.g. the Deck Referee cannot also serve as the Admin Official)

- USA Swimming Certified Officials may assist with the officiating at such meets, provided that there are at least two YMCA Certified Officials, one of whom is YMCA Level II certified and acts as the Meet Referee.

Additional regulations:

- Postal, paper and mythical meets are not accepted as valid YMCA meets. The National Virtual Invitational Meet is the one exception to this rule in light of its nature and purpose.
- A closed YMCA invitational meet lasting two or more days may be counted as two YMCA meets. In order to take advantage of this special allowance, a swimmer must compete in at least two separate days of the meet. **This is intended only for teams that are located at a significant geographical distance from other YMCA teams.** A dual meet cannot serve for two YMCA meets, even if it is scheduled over two days.
- A single meet, regardless of length of days contested, may not be counted both as one of the closed inter-association meets and a sanctioned championship meet for the purpose of satisfying those qualification requirements for YMCA Nationals.
- A single closed YMCA meet – a dual, tri, invitational, etc. – may not be counted as separate dual meets. For example, a tri meet may not be counted as two dual meets.

YMCA Championship Meets

YMCA championship meets must be conducted as formal competition (Rule I) 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

YMCA Sanctioned Meets

The purpose of a YMCA sanction is to verify that a YMCA invitational or championship meet is conducted according to the minimum YMCA meet standards. Dual meets are not eligible for a YMCA sanction.

A sanction ensures that:

- A meet is conducted according to National YMCA standards
- The meet has met the minimum standards to apply for USA Swimming Approval and have its results entered into the USA Swimming SWIMS database

Participation in a sanctioned YMCA *championship* meet is also a requirement for a swimmer to be eligible to participate in a YMCA National Championship meet.

Sanction applications, payment and supporting documents must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the first day of the meet.

Please refer to the YMCA Sanctioned Meets document for a checklist of requirements for YMCA sanctioned meets and an explanation of those requirements.