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YMCA of the USA Conduct of Closed Competition YMCA Meets Frequently Asked Questions

By following standard meet rules and protocols, we ensure that all YMCA swimmers are provided with fair and consistent competitive opportunities and that all times achieved in YMCA meets are achieved under consistent standards. Maintaining this consistency also prevents confusion for swimmers, coaches and volunteers.

The following are some of the more frequently asked questions concerning the conduct of YMCA competitive swim meets. These rules and explanations are also found in the Swimming Addendum to the Rules That Govern YMCA Sports and the YMCA Sanctioned Meet Guidelines document.

Under what rules are YMCA competitive swim meets to be conducted?

All YMCA competitive swim meets are expected to be conducted under USA Swimming technical rules (Rules 101-105, the so-called blue pages).

In order for any YMCA meet to be considered, or used, as a qualifying meet for YMCA Nationals or any YMCA sanctioned meet, it must be conducted under the USA-S technical rules.

The only YMCA deviation from the USA-S technical rules is that the minimum water depth at the starting end of the pool for any YMCA meet must be at least five feet for the swimmers to perform racing starts off the blocks or from the deck. If the water at the starting end is less than five feet, the swimmers must start in the water. (The same requirement holds true at the turn end of the pool for 100 yard/meter relays; if the water depth is less than five feet, the swimmers must start in the water.) This five foot depth rule follows the YMCA of the USA standard for racing starts and is more restrictive than the USA-S rules which allow racing starts in four feet of water.

Under what rules are the national championship meets conducted?

The national championship meets are conducted under the USA-S technical rules (Rules 101-105, the so-called blue pages).

The only YMCA deviation from the USA-S technical rules is that the minimum water depth at the starting end of the pool for any YMCA meet must be at least five feet, as discussed above.

For any issues arising during the conduct of the meet which are not covered under the technical rules, the meet committee will first look to the Meet Invitation or Handbook. If that document is silent on the issue, the default would be USA-S Rules 201-207, which deal with the conduct of a meet.

Must YMCA sanctioned championship or invitational meets be conducted under the USA-S Technical Rules?

YMCA sanctioned championship or invitational meets must be conducted under the USA-S technical rules in the same manner as the national championship meets, as described above. Once again, issues not covered by the technical rules must be decided based on the Meet Invitation or League Constitution, or absent guidance in one of those documents, USA-S Rules 201-207.

In order for any YMCA meet to be considered, or used, as a qualifying meet for YMCA Nationals or any YMCA sanctioned meet, it must be conducted under the USA-S technical rules.

Must YMCA sanctioned championship and invitational meets be approved meets under USA-S Rule 202.6?

It is strongly recommended that all YMCA sanctioned meets seek approval from the relevant USA-S LSC and that the times be entered into the USA-S SWIMS database. However, this is not required.

Note that the host YMCA's Meet Director or Head Coach must follow the local LSC's requirements for submitting an application for USA-S approval of the meet.

Must YMCA closed competition dual meets and non-sanctioned invitational meets be conducted under the USA-S technical rules?

Yes. For a YMCA closed competition dual meet or non-sanctioned invitational meet to count as a qualifying meet for entry into a sanctioned championship meet or national meet, or for times from such a meet to be valid for entry into such higher level meets, consideration for YMCA National Records or consideration for YMCA National Top Ten Designations, the dual or invitational meet must be conducted under the USA-S technical rules, as described above.

Can times from high school meets be used as qualifying times for entry into YMCA Sanctioned and National Championship meets?

High school swim meets are swum under NFHS rules, which differ from the USA-S technical rules in a number of areas. For a time from a high school meet to be accepted, that meet must have been observed by USA-S or YMCA officials in accordance with USA-S Rule 202.7. The printed results of the event must show the USA-S Observed Meet number issued by the LSC and must be signed by one of the USA-S or YMCA observers. As a note of caution here, most high school meets are

not observed meets, and arrangements for such a meet to be observed must be made before the meet. Coaches hoping to use a time from such a meet should contact the meet director in advance to determine that the meet is being observed.

How many officials are required for a YMCA closed competition dual meet in order for it to serve as a qualifying meet?

A YMCA closed competition dual meet must have three certified officials, including a YMCA Level II certified official who acts as the meet referee, and at least two additional certified officials, at least one of whom is a YMCA certified official. In addition, one of the officials must be a certified Administrative Official. In this scenario, the referee and the starter can also serve as stroke & turn judges, finish judges and relay take-off judges. The Administrative Official cannot also serve as a deck official, or as the timing console operator. However, the Administrative Official may also serve as the Hy-tek or Team Unify computer operator.

The above represents the absolute minimum number of officials required for a dual meet. When additional officials from the host YMCA or the visiting YMCA are present and available, they should be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

How many officials are required for a YMCA closed competition invitational meet in order for it to serve as a qualifying meet?

A YMCA closed competition invitational meet must have a minimum of four certified officials, including a YMCA certified Level II official who acts as the meet referee, and at least three additional certified officials, at least one of whom is a YMCA certified official. In addition, one of the officials must be a certified Administrative Official. In this scenario, the starter can also serve as stroke & turn judge, finish judge and relay take-off judge. The Administrative Official cannot also serve as a deck official, or as the timing console operator. However, the Administrative Official may also serve as the Hy-tek or Team Unify computer operator.

The above represents the absolute minimum number of officials required for an invitational or championship meet. When additional officials from the host YMCA or visiting YMCAs are present and available, they should be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

Can a YMCA certified Level II official function as the Administrative Official?

YMCA certified Level II officials can serve as the Administrative Official, as they have the basic training needed to fulfill that role. The YMCA certified Level II official serving as an Administrative Official cannot also serve as a deck official. However, the Administrative Official may also serve as the Hy-tek or Team Unify computer operator, but not as the timing console operator.

Can USA-S certified officials be used at YMCA closed competition meets?

USA-S certified officials can serve at YMCA closed competition meets as long as there are at least two YMCA certified officials, one of whom is a YMCA Level II certified official who acts as the meet referee.

Can a USA-S certified Administrative Official work at a YMCA closed competition meet?

A USA-S certified Administrative Official may serve in that capacity at a YMCA closed competition meet as long as the requirement for two YMCA certified officials, one a Level II certified official who acts as the meet referee, is satisfied.

What can we do if we do not have two YMCA certified officials on our team who can fulfill the roles noted above for our dual and/or invitational meets or if we do not have a certified Administrative Official?

If your team does not have the requisite number of YMCA certified officials, or an Administrative Official, you can ask the visiting team or teams if they have officials who can fulfill those roles. Unless those roles are filled, the meet cannot serve as a qualifying meet and the times recorded at the meet cannot serve for entry into other meets or consideration for YMCA national recognition.

What constitutes a valid qualifying meet?

For a YMCA closed competition meet to serve as a qualifying meet, the following minimum conditions must be met:

- At least two (2) teams from different YMCA associations (different association numbers) take part
- At least six (6) competitors from each team participate, except sanctioned championship meets
- At least six (6) individual events and at least one relay event are contested in the meet.
- 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.

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.

If a meet runs over several days, can it be counted as two qualifying meets?

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.**

Merely scheduling an invitational meet over two days to have it count as two qualifying meets, when such a meet could easily be completed in one day, is not acceptable.

In order to take advantage of this special allowance, the swimmer must compete on at least two separate days of the meet.

This allowance for a multiple day meet to count as two qualifying meets is not the norm, but is intended for teams that are located at a significant geographical distance from other YMCA teams.

A dual meet cannot serve for two YMCA qualifying 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.