

YMCA Masters National Swimming Championships Eligibility Rule

September 24, 2009

An individual shall be eligible to represent his/her Association in competition if they are a Full Privilege Member in good standing 90 days prior to the last day of competition. All swimmers must be registered with USMS as this YMCA National Masters Swimming Championships will be a sanctioned event.

In 2010 for the first time, the YMCA National Masters Meet will offer the opportunity for YMCA Program Members (Non Y Members) to compete in the YMCA Masters National Meet. The Program fee for Program Members will be a minimum of \$75 for those Program Members who are joining the local YMCA 90 days prior to the last day of the meet. The individual must also register with USMS. Local YMCA's may determine a different program member fee, but not lower than the minimum of \$75. Participation will require the signature of the Executive Director. **Program Members will not be permitted to set or break YMCA Masters National Individual or Relay Records.**

The coach and Executive Director will be responsible for listing full privilege members separately from Program members.

- *A swimmer must be an amateur athlete in the competitive season in swimming and be age 18 or older on the last day of the meet.*
- *All swimmers are strongly encouraged to have a physical examination/medical evaluation prior to competing in the meet.*

There are three Member types that are eligible for Master's participation:

1) **Full Privilege Member** - Participant either pays YMCA membership rate and an additional monthly fee to participate in your masters program or a second option could be that masters is included as a part of the full privilege membership.

2) **In-Service Area Program Member**— An individual participant lives in your service area and pays a monthly fee or specific program fee that totals a minimum of \$75 to practice and compete with your team. They only have access to your YMCA services in relation to your Masters program.

3) **Out-of-Service Area Program Member** — An individual lives *out* of your service area but wants to compete with your team at YMCA Masters. This fee must be at least \$75. These program members will not be using your facility. They will receive coaching at the meet and perhaps some email correspondence from you before the meet. Most Y's will likely be delighted to receive \$75 for a membership which will require no services other than time from the Masters coach at the meet.

All Out of Service Area Program Members **must sign up with a YMCA Masters team** that will be bringing a team to the Championship meet and will have a Y coach on deck. This means a US team cannot find a YMCA that does not have a Masters program and simply take that YMCA's name and compete as a US team at a Y meet. They must be connected to a YMCA team who is sponsored by a YMCA.

- No YMCA is required to take this type of program member, but if they do, they must charge at least \$75. Whether it is 90 days or 300 days should not matter to the Y, as they are not actually rendering facility use. If the Y has an issue with the Out-of-Service Area Program type of member, that Y can opt out of this type of membership category (which has been established to be consistent and is only for out service area members).
- These program members will count in team scoring and may swim on relays. They cannot set YMCA individual or relay records.
- They may only swim with a team that is bringing a coach to the meet and will swim under that coach and with that team.

FAQ's

Some questions have come up regarding types of membership allowed to compete at the Y Masters Nationals and we will continue to answer and clarify them as necessary. The *Out of Service Area Program Membership* described above has been established exclusively to accommodate situations where a person lives out of a YMCA's service area, but he or she still wants to swim at Y Masters Nationals with your team. Most YMCA's will have the three member type categories noted above..

- 1) **Can I represent my local YMCA without an official program or coach?** Yes you can represent your local Y. Example: I am a member of the High Point, NC Y. They **do not** have a Masters program. (This is just an example, so they may have a program). I train on my own and want to attend Y Masters Nationals and do individual events. No problem.
- 2) **Given #1 above, would I be able to swim relays and be a part of a team?** You could pay the \$75 to swim with another YMCA that has a Masters program and will be attending with a coach rather than swimming for the local High Point YMCA. What you cannot do is swim for a US Masters team or another outside team and talk the High Point Y into letting you pay \$75 per swimmer and allowing the US Masters team to represent the High Point Y as their nonexistent team, just to get into the meet. There must be some real connection to a Y. The least connection allowed is to hook up with a YMCA coach and team from another community and that coach would be responsible for connecting you to that community of swimmers and the Y values.
- 3) **If a YMCA Association has a Master's Program at 1 Branch and our intention is to sign up at a different Branch without a Masters Program, and the monthly member cost is \$20/month can we participate as a team?** Yes dependant on the following suggestion. First, we cannot and do not want to dictate what a local Y charges for a full privilege membership. Having said that,

we don't know how this Y Association can stay in business with its \$20 full privilege membership if it is good across the association. It seems to us, everyone in the service area would pay the \$20 and use whatever branch they chose to. We would want to validate that this membership does provide full access to all facilities. We would say that to make this legal there must be an official Y team formed through the local Y that it is a listed program of that Y. The coach would be an official employee or volunteer representing the Y. Many Y teams are also USMS teams. Dual affiliation is very common. Is there anything keeping you from making this an official program of the Y and further helping what appears to be a struggling Y? If this is simply a USMS team wanting to swim in the meet with no real connection to the Y, that is not allowed. We have created some opportunities and ask that swimmers and teams use those options.

- 4) **We have a group of swimmers from different parts of the country, who used to swim together at the YMCA or in High School or in college, that would like to participate as a team; can we compete at Masters for a YMCA that is 200 miles away?** You can if you follow the guidelines we have established above along with a \$75 fee to a Y with an existing program that is bringing a coach to the meet. We are trying to avoid having US teams with no real connection to the Y come in and swim in the meet. We love USMS and are requiring all of our members to be USMS members, but if this going to be a *YMCA* meet, we can't behave as if it we're an *open* meet.
- 5) **Is this a permanent rule change?** We are trying this for the 2010 year and will evaluate it after the meet. (Note: this past spring of 2009 we bought together a group of coaches to provide input and counsel in coming up with these revisions and clarifications).



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