



York YMCA Competitive Swimming Program Handbook

YORK YMCA - TEAM OF CHAMPIONS

This handbook is intended to provide resources that can answer some of the more frequently asked questions that parents have about our program and swimming in general

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York YMCA Swimming Program Overview

Drawing from a long-standing tradition of excellence, the competitive swimming program at the York YMCA prides itself on developing great swimmers and strong citizens! Our overall philosophy is grounded in the classical Greek concept of *arête*.



Arête is often defined as excellence, virtue or goodness. However, a more appropriate meaning is striving for excellence in everything one attempts in life: education, work, relationships and of course, sports. We use competitive swimming to teach life lessons. This includes the important idea that "reaching your highest human potential" is an honorable and worthy pursuit.

We take this lofty concept and bring it down to earth with our team motto: Self Discipline Breeds Excellence! We strongly feel that self-discipline, which is another way of saying the daily choices one makes, is at the heart of success in all aspects of a life well lived!

To achieve this we strive to:

1. Support the development and growth of each swimmer to their maximum human potential in swimming and in life.
2. Teach life lessons while developing self-discipline and character through the sport of competitive swimming.
3. Provide opportunities for our swimmers to compete in the sport of swimming at appropriate levels as they develop.
4. Field teams that will become among the best in the nation.

YMCA COMPETITION GROUP (NOVICE & ADVANCED SWIM GROUPS)

The YMCA Competition Group is open to swimmers of all levels & abilities. It is the perfect program for those who love to swim but have never competed on a team before, those who enjoy competitive swimming but want a low pressure, relaxed atmosphere, or high school swimmers wishing to stay in shape during the off season. Swimmers compete in local swim meets that give them friendly Competition and teach them sportsmanship and teamwork. We are different from other swim teams in that we offer a fun, relaxed atmosphere, but are also very focused on teaching stroke and technique, as well as self-discipline. Swimmers must be members of the YMCA of York and York Co, York Branch.

YMCA Competition Group Practice Schedule / Location

Practice is held at two locations, the York YMCA Graham Aquatic Center, located at 543 N. Newberry Street in York, Monday and York YMCA Southern Branch 1000 Constitution Dr Shrewsbury Pa. There are no attendance requirements; however, the number of practices attended should be determined by the swimmer's expectation of improvement and success. Three practices weekly are recommended. Visit www.swimyorky.org team information for the current schedule for each location.

YMCA Competition Group Fees

Fees are determined by the YMCA and are communicated to the team by the coaching staff. The fees and forms can be found on our website at www.swimyorky.org.

All payment forms and paperwork must be taken to the York YMCA main branch located at 90 N Newberry St York PA for processing where a convenient payment schedule is available. (Copy all documents for your records)

YMCA Competition Group Equipment

Competition Requirements:

For swim meets, swimmers are required to wear their designated age group swimsuit and YORK swim cap (if wearing a cap). Visit www.swimyorky.org for the current swimsuit requirements that are purchased directly from Toad Hollow Athletics @ www.toadhollowathletics.com using code YORK.

Training Equipment Requirements:

All swimmers may wear any suit they desire during training. The YORK cap (if wearing a cap) must be worn. Advanced swimmers must bring the following training equipment:

- Jr. Size Kickboard
- Paddles
- Pull Buoy
- Short Blade Fins
- Equipment Bag

Novice swimmers must bring the following training equipment:

- Jr. Size Kickboard
- Pull Buoy
- Short Blade Fins
- Equipment Bag

Loaner equipment is available for temporary use until personal equipment can be purchased. Be sure to label ALL equipment with your full name or initials.

YMCA Competition Group Swim Meets

The YMCA Competition Team (novice and advanced) competes in local league, YMCA dual meets and local invitational meets. These meets offer a fun, low-pressure atmosphere, where swimmers can race others of similar ability and see just how much their skill and ability has improved since the last meet. Some swimmers may also compete in larger meets such as YMCA Districts, States, and Nationals. The coach will work with swimmers to determine their swimming track. The current swim meet schedule can be found on the www.swimyorky.org website.

YSCAP League Swimming

League swimming involves approximately five dual meets, some home and some away, and a series of championships with YMCA teams within close proximity to York PA. Swimmers must compete in at least three dual meets to be eligible for the championships. The swimmers age is determined in the same method as YMCA swimming.

YMCA Swimming

Because we are a YMCA affiliated swim team we have the opportunity to compete in a unique championship program at the regional, state and national level. A swimmer's age is determined as of December 1st.

- **YMCA Districts** – YMCA teams in the eastern portion of PA compete against each other. Eligibility requirements include qualifying times and a swimmer must compete in three “Closed Y” (Y team vs. Y team) meets. This meet is held in mid-March.
- **YMCA States** – The top six swimmers and relays from each event at Districts advance to compete against their counterparts from PA's western district. This meet is held in late March.
- **YMCA Nationals** – Held in early April, YMCA Short Course Nationals has relatively tough qualifying times and swimmers must have competed in the three “Closed Y” meets and a “Closed Y” Championship (for our purposes, either Winterfest, our Tournament of Champions, or Districts).
- **Dual Meets** – Due to the “Closed Y” meet requirement detailed above we work to schedule Y vs. Y meets with some of the more competitive Y's in our area.

Meet Sign-Up Policy

For all meets the coaches will sign up the swimmers and post a “preliminary” meet entry report. Parents will have about a week to let their coach know if they plan to attend or not. Provide meet attendance in writing so there is less chance for confusion. Coaches choose swimmer's events per swim meet based on their individual track.

Escrow Policy

To cover meet fees, swim caps, other team apparel and other costs, the club requires that parents establish, and keep funded, an escrow account with the Aquatic Club Treasurer. For YMCA Competition Team members the account minimum is \$50. Accounts are managed by the AC treasurer or assistant treasurer and kept private. Only when an account is in severe default, is the account information shared with the AC President and swimmer's coach with the intent to make a collaborative effort to bring the account into the positive.

USA COMPETITION GROUP (JUNIOR & SENIOR SWIM GROUPS)

USA Competition Group Practice Schedule / Location

Practice is held at the York YMCA Graham Aquatic Center, located at 543 N. Newberry Street in York, PA, Monday through Saturday. There are no attendance requirements; however, the number of practices attended should be determined by the swimmer's expectation of improvement and success. Depending on training group 4-6 practices per week are recommended. Visit www.swimyorky.org team information for current schedule.

USA Competition Group Team Fees

Fees are determined by the YMCA and are communicated to the team by the coaching staff. The fees and forms can be found on our website at www.swimyorky.org.

All payment forms and paperwork must be taken to the York YMCA main branch located at 90 N Newberry St York PA for processing where a convenient payment schedule is available. (Copy all documents for your records)

USA Competition Group Required Equipment

Competition Requirements:

For swim meets, swimmers are required to wear their designated age group swimsuit and YORK swim cap (if wearing a cap). Visit www.swimyorky.org for the current swimsuit requirements that are purchased directly from Toad Hollow Athletics @ www.toadhollowathletics.com using code YORK.

Training Equipment Requirements:

All swimmers may wear any suit they desire during training. The YORK cap (if wearing a cap) must be worn. All other training group specific equipment requirements are posted on our website www.swimyorky.org. Loaner equipment is available for temporary use until personal equipment can be purchased. Be sure to label ALL equipment with your full name or initials.

USA Competition Group Swim Meets

The York YMCA Competition Team competes in primarily USA sanctioned swim meets. Depending on training level, local league, YMCA dual meets and local invitational could be swum instead. Both are described below. The coach will work with swimmers to determine their swimming track. The current swim meet schedule can be found on the www.swimyorky.org website.

USA Swimming

USA Swimming is clearly the future of both age group and senior level swimming in the United States and it offers many benefits to member clubs and swimmers. Indeed, YMCA Swimming has recognized this fact and is quickly moving towards adopting USA Swimming technical and operating rules. Also, USA Swimming has made the process easier for YMCA Championship meets to get USA sanctioning or approval.

USA Swimming is the governing organization of 59 LSC's, or Local Swimming Committees. Ours is the Middle Atlantic LSC. Other LSCs in our Eastern Zone (the next step up in terms of geographic

organization are 4 Zones: Eastern, Southern, Central and Western) include: Maryland, Potomac Valley, Virginia, Allegheny Mountain, New Jersey, Metropolitan, Niagara, Adirondack, Connecticut, New England and Maine. Visit www.usaswimming.org for more information.

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Escrow Policy

To cover meet fees, swim caps, other team apparel and other costs, the club requires that parents establish, and keep funded, an escrow account. We ask that you keep \$100 in the account per swimmer at all times. Accounts are managed by the AC treasurer or assistant treasurer and kept private. Only when an account is in severe default, is the account information shared with the AC President and swimmer's coach with the intent to make a collaborative effort to bring the account into the positive.

Travel Assistance Policy

The USA Competition Group participates in many high-level, championship national meets around the country. Being a member of our travel teams is both a privilege and a responsibility. This policy confirms USA Competition Group “Travel” meets and the amount of financial travel assistance provided by the AC associated with each of these meets. Middle Atlantic Swimming may provide additional financial assistance to USA Competition Group swimmers, provided certain criteria are met. The coaching staff reserves the right to revise the meets deemed as “Travel” meets as required or set volunteer goals for USA Competition Group swimmers to achieve in order to receive travel assistance. Further, financial assistance associated with any “Travel” meet is in no way guaranteed and is entirely dependent upon having adequate funds in the York YMCA Aquatic Club's general account. Go to www.swimyorky.org team information – travel policy for more details.

Coaching Staff

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • <i>Head Coach York</i> | <i>John Nelson</i> |
| • <i>Assistant Coach</i> | <i>Brian Strathmeyer</i> |
| • <i>Assistant Coach</i> | <i>Brandon Flynn</i> |
| • <i>Assistant Coach</i> | <i>Abby Braswell</i> |
| • <i>Volunteer Coach</i> | <i>Clyde Vedder</i> |
| • <i>Head Coach Shrewsbury</i> | <i>Kyle Morrison</i> |
| • <i>Assistant Coach</i> | <i>Micah Metzel</i> |

York YMCA Aquatic Club

The York YMCA Aquatic Club is the parent organization that supports the swim team. An executive committee made up of both elected and appointed officials governs the Club. The process for filling these positions can be found in the Aquatic Club By-laws found at www.swimnyorky.org. Similarly, numerous other committees are detailed in the Club By-laws. Below you will find the committees with a brief description of their duties.

COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the president, vice-president, secretary, treasure and assistant treasurer, Aquatic Club officers. To receive, discuss and channel all information, ideas and requests to the proper committee within the Aquatic Club. Foster strong relationships with the York YMCA Aquatic Director to forward the values and traditions of the York YMCA. To keep, maintain and update the Parent's Handbook and by-laws. At any time the Aquatic Club sees fit it may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present, delegate to the Executive Committee the decision-making power to decide any pending issues.

Competition /Officials Committee

To plan for and administer all swim meets hosted by the York YMCA. To work in conjunction with York YMCA personnel to organize and administer large invitational and championship meets. To encourage and facilitate obtaining USAS and YMCA meet Director Certification for one or more Aquatic Club members. To provide certified officials for swim meets hosted by the York YMCA and other meets where officials are requested. To secure rulebooks and other materials that will enable the Aquatic Club to conduct official certification clinics for the training and certification of officials. To encourage Aquatic Club members to become USAS and YMCA certified officials.

Finance Committee

To oversee the organization and administration of the Aquatic Club finances. To create an annual budget and insure that the committees operate within the budget. To suggest and outline ways of securing additional revenue. To manage the escrow accounts. To present financial statements to the York YMCA Financial office for audit.

Fundraising Committee

To lead or delegate all fundraising efforts for the Aquatic Club. Work with the Executive committee to develop fundraising goals and initiatives which support the needs of the team. To work with the York YMCA Marketing department to arrange a cooperative relationship. To develop relationships with vendors to sell merchandise at York YMCA swim meets on a percentage basis. To oversee operations of the team store and the snack bar.

Marketing/Public Relations Committee

To promote the York YMCA Swim Team and attract new swimmers to the team. Promotional activities shall include advertising, circulation of brochures and videos, hosting of Open House events, updating the team website and social media, sharing newsworthy information to media outlets. The committee shall orientate new families and keep the handbook up to date with current forms. They shall publish and update the, handbook, website, brochures, videos and all swim communication. To prepare advertisements, in conjunction with the York YMCA PR staff, promoting the swim team

Properties Committee

To be responsible for all Aquatic Club equipment and property by taking an “ownership interest” in such property. To keep an inventory of all property. To see that Aquatic Club equipment is maintained at a high performance level. To have equipment repaired or replaced when necessary. To insist upon proper care and usage by persons using Aquatic Club property and equipment. To communicate inventory to the head coach for the purposes of reporting to the York YMCA Aquatic Director.

Social Committee

To plan and prepare and oversee all social activities of the Aquatic Club, including but not limited to the End of Season Party, various parties during the season, team breakfasts, birthday celebration, etc. Receive and annual spending budget from the AC Treasurer and obtain funds from the club to purchase supplies. Plan and administer the annual college signing celebration.

Team Travel Committee

Work with coaches to plan for the travel associated with swim meets that require overnight accommodations and or group transportation. To arrange and communicate the air travel, ground transportation, hotel and team meals for swim meet requiring long-distance travel. To arrange for team hotels for swim meets within driving distance.

Volunteer Committee

Plan volunteer needs with coaches, Competition /Officials chair, publish sign-up sheets, insure all key positions are filled and check in volunteers the day of for all hosted and away swim meets where volunteers are required. Track volunteer hours for travel team compliance. Report to Coaches the families who repeatedly provide no explanation for not volunteering at their child’s swim meets.

VOLUNTEERISM

Parental Involvement– Even more so than many youth sports, the success of our team depends not only on the swimmers and the coaches but also on parent participation. Parents run swim meets. Parents are needed to officiate, time, operate the computer and the timing system and run the concession stand, among other duties. As our team continues to grow at our new facility we have begun hosting major USA and YMCA meets. Hosting these meets requires the help of all team parents. Below are some of the areas where you can help by volunteering your time, energy and talent. [Click here to review the York YMCA Volunteer Policy.](#) Here are some some ways that you can help the team:

Timer at swim meet	Meet official	Snack bar cashier
Timing system operator	Meet safety	Snack bar server
Set up or clean up	Donate items for meets	Help plan a team party
Jump in and help out	Fold fliers for distribution	Label thank you notes for supporters
Chaperone a travel meet	Head up a sub committee	Be someone’s proofreader
Be a committee chair	Look for ways to volunteer	Be the meet announcer
Work the admissions table	Design t shirt or publication	Ask how you can help

COMMUNICATION

Team information is communicated in a number of ways:

- Group Email Distribution - The coaches have developed swim team e-mail distribution lists for critical, time sensitive info. Please be sure to register your families email addresses by clicking [here](#).
- Team website - The team website www.swimyorky.org is updated regularly with new and significant information, including electronic versions of most info that is put in the MAIL FILES (see below), meet results, swim schedule changes, news about our college swimmers etc.
- Team calendar - click [here](#) to view the team calendar.
- Family File Folders - Every swim family will have a MAIL FILE in the file boxes located in the GAC Lobby or at the Southern Branch YMCA. Important printed documents are dropped into these files as are ribbons and medals from previous swim meets. Please check your file DAILY!

- **Monthly Aquatic Club Meetings** - Monthly parent meetings are held in the lobby of the GAC on the second Monday of every month. Many important team business items are decided and important information conveyed. One or both parent should attend meetings. The meeting starts at 6pm and concludes by 7pm.

Contact List

The current contact list for the coaching staff along with the executive committee and committee chairs is located on our website www.swimyorkey.org

Swimming Terms – A Glossary

- **Age Group** – Most meets group swimmers as follows: 8 & Under, 9 – 10, 11 – 12, 13 – 14, 15 – 18
- Some meets will also have an “Open” age group for swimmers 11 or 12 & Over
- Winter League and YMCA meets use age as of December 1st; Summer League uses age as of June 1st. USA Swimming Competition uses the swimmers age as of the first day of the meet.
- **Colorado System** – Electronic timing system that automatically gives a swimmers’ time and place on the score board when the touch pad (or push buttons) is activated at the completion of a race.
- **Competitive Strokes** – The four competitive strokes are Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle.
- **Daktronics** – See Colorado System.
- **DQ** – Disqualification. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of a rule; for example a one-handed touch in butterfly or breaststroke. A “DQ’d” swimmer is not eligible to receive an award nor is the time considered official.
- **Divisionals** – The league (summer or winter) championship meet held on a Saturday at the completion of all league dual meets. Each league division holds its own championship
- **Entry Fee** – The money paid by the parent or club for a swimmer to compete in an invitational meet; usually a USA or championships meet.
- **Exhibition** – When a swimmer participates in a race but does not receive points. The time IS considered an official time.
- **False Start** – A swimmer leaves the block early or moves before the starter’s signal which usually results in disqualification. Eight & Under swimmers are allowed one false start.
- **Flip Turn** – Somersault type turn used in freestyle & backstroke.
- **Free Relay** – A relay race (100, 200, 400 or 800) in which all four swimmers swim freestyle.
- **GAC** – Graham Aquatic Center
- **Heat** – The grouping of swimmers in an event according to time.
- **IM** – Individual Medley. An event (100, 200 or 400) where a swimmer swims one quarter of the race using each of the competitive strokes in the following order: butterfly, back, breast and free.
- **League Meet** – a dual meet between league members for the purpose of team competition.
- **Medley Relay** - A relay race (100, 200 or 400) in which each or four swimmers swim one of the competitive strokes in the following order: Back, Breast, Butterfly and Free.
- **Official** – An individual with certain certifications which allow him/her to participate in running a swimming meet.

- **Qualifying Times** – Time standards required for participation in certain USA and YMCA championship meets.
- **Referee** – Head official whose has ultimate authority at a swimming meet.
- **Seeding** – To rank swimmers according to time in heats.
- **Starter** – A certified official who has control over the swimmers once they are called to the starting blocks. It is the starters' responsibility to do his/her best to ensure a fair start.
- **Stroke & Turn Judge** – A certified official whose responsibility it is to watch for infractions and impose a disqualification penalty if required.
- **Swimming Courses** – There are three competitive swimming courses:
 - **Long Course Meters** – A 50 meter pool. Most big national and international Competitions, such as the Olympics, take place in this course.
 - Short Course Meters – A 25 meter pool.
 - **Short Course Yards** – A 25 yard pool. Most high school and college Competitions take place in this course.
- **Timer** – A person who works in a particular lane to record a swimmers' time.
- **USA Meet** – Meets sanctioned by USA Swimming.
- **YMCA Districts** - YMCA teams in the eastern (Eastern District) and western (Western District) portion of PA compete against each other in separate meets. Eligibility requirements include qualifying times and a swimmer must compete in three "Closed Y" (Y team vs. Y team) meets. This meet is held in mid-March.
- **YMCA States** - The top nine swimmers and relays from each event at the Eastern District Meet advance to compete against their counterparts from PA's Western District. This meet is held in late March.
- **YMCA Nationals** - Held in early April in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, YMCA Short Course Nationals has relatively tough qualifying times and swimmers must have competed in the three "Closed Y" meets and a "Closed Y" Championship (for our purposes, either Winterfest, our Tournament of Champions, or Districts).