

YMCA Swimming

Our team is a member of the Maine YMCA swim league. We swim in dual, closed and invitational meets throughout the winter season (Oct.-Mar.) At **dual meets** two teams swim against each other in a competitive format. **Closed meets** may have three or four teams participating. **Invitationals** are meets a YMCA offers open to any other Y teams that would like to participate; there is usually a cut-off on numbers participating as meets cannot exceed four hours.

YMCA meets are typically held Saturdays and last 2.5-4 hours. There are about a dozen YMCA meet opportunities during the winters season and 3-4 offered during the summer season.

YMCA swimmers compete in age classes: 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15 & over. For YMCA Swimming, a swimmer's age is determined by their age on December 1st of that winter season.

******A sign-up sheet is posted on the Dolphins' bulletin board a week before each Y meet. It's the swimmer's responsibility to indicate YES or NO on the form, as to whether or not they are planning on participating in the meet.***

If yes, they are then asked to check three events they'd like to swim. ***

The coaches use this list to plan meet events. Swimmers are not guaranteed the events for which they signed up; however, coaches will make every effort to try and honor at least one of the swimmer's choices. Sometimes the other events may be changed to provide better point opportunities for the team or a new opportunity for the swimmer.

Points are awarded to the team whose swimmers finish in high positions. The points are then tallied and teams are assigned finishing places for the meet. In order for the MMD team to have the best possible finish, it is sometimes necessary for coaches to place swimmers in a relay event, rather than in an event they've chosen, or to place the swimmer in another individual event where they may garner the team more points.

Coaches are sensitive to the fact that swimmers may have swims they want to accomplish. That is why when swimmers select their three choices, they are asked to number them in priority order, 1, 2, 3. Our coaches will do their best to help swimmers not just yield the best team results, but the best personal results as well.

Swimmers usually swim three events a meet. Ribbons are typically awarded 1st - 8th place and personal best times. Ribbons are filed in the black MMD ribbon box in a folder with the swimmer's name on it. Swimmers should check the ribbon box a few days after a meet. Ribbons should be taken home so the box doesn't get overfull.

There are **home meets**, held at the Alford Youth Center, home of the Dolphins. Warm-ups typically begin at noon and the meet usually starts at 1:00pm. **Away meets** may be swum at any of the other sixteen YMCA venues in central and southern Maine. Warm-up times vary from site to site. Directions will be posted on the bulletin board in the directions folder and warm-up and start times will be listed.

Parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from all meets. More and more carpooling is a valuable option. Your Swim Team Phone Directory may help you connect with those that live near you that may also want to carpool.

Dual and Home Meets are mandatory, unless given coach's permission to miss the meet. Other Y meets are optional. A swimmer must compete in three YMCA meets to be eligible to compete at the YMCA State Championships in March, at UMO. **All swimmers are expected to participate in the YMCA State Championship in March.** If you plan to spend the night for States, you should make a reservation at least one month in advance, as the Bangor/Orono hotels and motels fill up completely each March.

YMCA swimming offers swim opportunities beyond Maine if your swimmer has made the cut times (which are qualifying times needed to participate in a championship meet). In March, following the YMCA state meet, which is the culmination of the Y winter swim season in Maine, a swimmer may elect, if he/she meets the cut times, to participate in the YMCA New England Regionals.

YMCA New England Regionals (often referred to as New Englands) is a Y swim competition held in March, usually a week or two after Y States. The location alternates between Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Here the best in New England come to swim. It is a great opportunity, one which swimmers work hard to attain. Qualifying for New Englands is an exciting accomplishment in a young swimmer's career.

Nationals, is the next rung in the YMCA swim competition ladder. Hard work, season in and season out, may bring your swimmer to Nationals. This Florida meet is the goal of many age group swimmers 12 and older, but only a small number qualify each year. It is an elite competition group and an honor to accomplish.

Qualifying time sheets for both New Englands and Nationals will be listed on the team website and on the bulletin board. These times are fine-tuned and updated each year.

Transportation to these meets is the swim family responsibility.