

History of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving

- 1885 The first "swimming bath" opens at the Brooklyn, N.Y., YMCA. It was 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and five feet in depth.
- 1901 Lifesaving instruction is developed in the United States under the direction of the YMCA and the United States Volunteer Life Saving Corps. Most of this work follows the pattern established by the Royal Life Saving Society in England.
- 1902 Australians Alec Wickham and Dick Cavill develop the Australian crawlstroke from Neolithic origins. The crawlstroke begins to be used in America in 1904.
- 1906 American swimmers narrow the wide-leg action of the Australian crawlstroke to what was then called the flutter kick. This becomes the American crawl, and with some modifications remains the fastest stroke.
- 1909 The YMCA cooperates with the American Red Cross to develop a program of swimming and lifesaving instruction on a national basis.
- 1916 The first school for aquatic instructors is conducted by the Boston YMCA.
- 1923 The Brooklyn, N.Y., YMCA wins the first National YMCA Swimming and Diving Championships.
- 1937 The first National YMCA Aquatic Conference is held at George Williams College in Chicago from which developed the "New YMCA Aquatic Program." By this date, there are 684 YMCA swimming pools in use.
- 1967 The Ferguson-Ritenour YMCA of St. Louis wins the first National YMCA Women's Swimming and Diving Championships in Indianapolis.
- 1975 The National YMCA Swimming and Diving Championships conducted at the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., becomes the world's largest swimming championship, with more than 1,200 boys and girls participating.
- 1979 A national YMCA competitive swimming survey shows that there are more than 700 YMCA swim teams in the United States, with more than 50,000 boys and girls participating.
- 1980 The York YMCA wins the first National YMCA Masters Swimming and Diving Championship in York, Pa.
- 1986 The first National YMCA Long Course Swimming and Diving Championships are held in Cincinnati and are won by the Collier County YMCA in Naples, Fla.
- 1995 A new training program is introduced for swimming coaches and administrators that includes the Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving, the YMCA Swimming Coaches course and the YMCA Advanced Swimming Coaches course.