



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

2011 YMCA FLAC Facility Update: 02/23/11

In our effort to keep everyone informed about the upcoming National YMCA Swimming/Diving Championships at the Ft. Lauderdale Aquatic Complex (FLAC), we share the following information regarding the National 2011 Championships. This and other important information can be found on the National Swimming & Diving Website. Please visit www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/2011SC for all information that will assist in planning for the upcoming national championship experience.

Since the last Communication Update, several common questions have been asked in addition to our effort to improve ticket and seating accommodations for the meet. Below, please find current answers and information as we know it.

TWO COMMON QUESTIONS:

- ***Didn't the Ft. Lauderdale Aquatic Facility Staff and/or City see this coming and could it have been prevented and remedied prior to the YMCA's National Event?***

It **IS** hard to imagine how the entire stadium seating could be shut down 'all of a sudden' without any prior warnings. But that is exactly how it happened. One week prior to the Y's notification, the facility was operating as it has been since last year's Y Nationals.

During the week of January 10, 2011, a significant section of the stadium seating understructure gave way and collapsed in one of the occupied offices. As this had not happened prior to this incident, there wasn't any indication that the potential for safety concern existed. Periodic city inspections of the stands had been done throughout the year since the initial closing of the 200 seats on the east end of the stands occurred.

When this incident occurred, the facility staff immediately notified city officials who initiated a thorough formal inspection of the stands and remainder of the facility. That inspection resulted in the closure of the entire stands due to these significant new safety concerns. YUSA was immediately notified of the decision on January 19, 2011.

In An emergency site visit conducted January 31 by YUSA and YMCA Swim Advisory Staff and Volunteers, the option and discussion to demolish and rebuild the grandstands were explored in depth. The drawn conclusions were there was no guarantee that the project would be completed in time and not disrupt the operation of the meet.

During the emergency site visit, three area facilities, that were identified as having the potential of hosting the meet were explored and found to be either non-compliant with seating requirements or faced significant logistical and contractual challenges that were deemed inadvisable.

That is how we arrived at the current plan now in place. It's not ideal, but it does accommodate our different audiences to the best of our ability this year. As indicated earlier, this is **only a one-year-fix**.

- ***Is it true that only certain teams 'were in the know' and able to unfairly purchase large amounts of tickets?***

The following sequence of events led to the release of all session tickets to be sold.

1. On 2/13, an email outlining the ticket process was sent to all registered coaches from teams who had previously participated in Long Course 2010, Short Course 2010 or both – approximately 1100 emails went out to coaches. We also sent the same email to YMCA Group Reps and our Swimming Advisory Committee Members.
2. On 2/13, we posted the ticket process message on the web site– **in bold red with a message that this was a must read for parents and spectators** – the message highlighted the date and time the ticket purchase was going to be open for purchase.
3. On 2/14, we posted the link to the tickets on the website. Until it was open, YMCA of the USA had a message indicating that tickets could be purchased on Wednesday, February 16. On 2/14, we also posted a message on the front page of the web site indicating that tickets could be purchased on Wednesday, February 16 beginning at noon eastern time.
4. On 2/16 YMCA of the USA opened the web site for ticket sales at exactly 12:00 Noon Eastern Time. At 12:14PM Eastern Time, all 8400 tickets were sold out.
5. Tickets sold were divided by women's prelims, men's prelims and combined finals session. Three sessions per day (700 tickets per session) were sold out in the 14 minute period.

We thought we had a fair procedure for everyone to follow. But, we too, are not satisfied with these results. That is why we are still attempting to address this situation and will continue to release additional plans as they happen leading up to the event.

TICKET RETURN/REFUND STRATEGY:

Our project team has evaluated the data from the ticket sales of February 16. We found that 450 different individuals representing over 80 different sections of the country purchased tickets in a 14 minute time span! Below you will find the next step in our plan to recapture tickets.

IMPORTANT: We are asking all people who purchased tickets to re evaluate their actual needs. **Beginning Monday, February 28 thru Monday, March 7,** anyone who has additional tickets no longer needed should please **CALL** Robin Lee at **(800) 872-9622 Ext. 8478** for a ticket return. Your return will be processed and amount returned to the credit card issued for purchase. **Please know that someone else will be the beneficiary of your return!**

TICKET EXCHANGE PROGRAM:

As we have indicated in an earlier update, we have reconfigured the facility to accommodate a total of 1,250 spectators (700 on deck, 100 sky box & 450 Jumbo-Tron) which is approximately the same amount of seating as in 2010.

With the gender split for prelims, we believe that the 700 on-deck seating will come close to meeting our seating needs. **But again, we will need your help!**

Those who have purchased a ticket for the prelims are being asked to **SHARE** their ticket with another spectator waiting to gain admittance. If you have finished viewing the session, you can either give it to another family member from your team or drop your ticket at the ticket sales table at the gate entrance. We will immediately redistribute any tickets to those waiting to get in.

Please remember that many teams come with only a few athletes/coaches and they need as much help in the ticket exchange as any of our larger teams. **THIS CAN BE A TRUE DEMONSTRATION OF THE Y'S CORE VALUES IN ACTION!** We give a HUGE Thank You to all who will participate in this Ticket Exchange Program. Together, we believe ALL will have a chance to see their athletes swim – whether one purchased on-line or not.

Video Display:

Many want to know more about the NEW Jumbo-Tron Area. As it IS hard to envision, here's what we do know. Based upon our effort to provide a '**close to being there experience**', the 10mm video board being used will provide highly detailed video imaging, virtual scoring, and detailed graphics. It is ideal for outdoor digital signage applications. The optimal viewing distance is between 25 to 150 feet. The 10mm Discrete LED video board is highly visible in full daylight or adjustable to light output for low light and evening applications. The pixel pitch is 10mm virtual/20mm physical. The screen is made up of 16 SLite 10xp tiles which use pixel sharing technology. This allows the virtual resolution of 10mm. The company selected has extensive event experience that includes the Daytona 500 and Coke Zero 200 in 2008-09-10, Super Bowl 44 and Pro Bowl, 2010 ESPN Sports Nation, and the Chris Evert Raymond James Pro-Celebrity Tennis Classic among others. 450 FREE seats are available in this area.

FINALLY AND MOST IMPORTANT - FINALS TICKET GUARANTEE:

Whether you were able to purchase a ticket for the finals or not, we are committed to ensuring that at least one person for each athlete **IS GUARANTEED** a seat on-deck to watch them swim. We are working on the logistical details to make that happen – but it will happen.

We'll continue to keep you updated as our work continues and new plans reveal themselves. We hope you have found this information helpful. Thanks again for your patience and understanding. See you in Fort Lauderdale!

John Mendell, YMCA National Swimming Short Course Championship Meet Director

Jim Weaton, National Director of Events, YUSA/MSPS