



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

2011 YMCA Short Course National Championship Welcome

Congratulations on making it to the 2011 YMCA National Swimming Short Course Meet! This accomplishment represents a great deal of time, dedication and hard work – traits that will continue to serve you well throughout your lives. We hope you swim fast, but even more important we hope you maintain the friendships you have made and the lessons you have learned in and around the people for the rest of your lives. The times you swim and the scores you achieve in diving are to be celebrated, but as the year's pass they will pale in comparison to the relationships you have developed and the values you have strengthened along the journey.

Swimming is often called an individual sport. It is true that no one can get up on the blocks and swim your race. What you do in practice has a direct bearing as to how you compete. The time on the scoreboard when you touch the pad at the end of the race is yours. There is no saying, "if they had only passed me the ball or if the coach had only put me in the game." We own our performance and that is an important part of our sport. However, we should never think we got here on our own. This is a great time to thank your coaches, parents, siblings and team mates for the roles they have had in your success. Always be accountable for your actions, but never forget that when good things happen, there is always a supporting team who helped make it possible. Remember that you are role models on your team, at your Y and in your community. Please model the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility as the younger kids on your team are watching you. Excel in the classroom and in your community as well. Swimmers have a reputation and a tradition of being outstanding students and great citizens. Carry that forward as those that went before you have. Commit to leading a healthy lifestyle for the rest of your lives. We face an inactivity crisis in this country. Swimming is one of the few truly lifetime sports, so you chose a good sport to commit to!

Please note that The YMCA of the USA and your National YMCA Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee is developing an initiative with the goal of teaching every child in the US to swim. Some of the proceeds from this event will be used to fund this new powerful plan. Also, for the first time in history, proceeds from this meet have been used to assist swimmers on a needs based qualification system in attending and participating in our meet. As a YMCA movement, we are proud to have been a part of helping you grow from strong kids to strong young adults. We are proud of the role that swimming and diving play in our Y's as great family programs and in helping to build stronger communities.

Finally, you have all noticed the facility changes in and around the pool this year. I can assure you that due to the unforeseen circumstances that we faced our committed group of meet volunteers, coaches and City of Fort Lauderdale staff worked tirelessly to insure a successful experience for OUR swimmers. Thank you for your participation and cooperation as our 2011 Y Championship experience unfolds. Cherish this moment: you have earned it. Be an ambassador for the sport, for your Y and make sure you pay it forward by helping the next young person who needs some encouragement or help. Keep things in perspective this week and recognize the journey it took to get here and the memories you are making along the way. Have a great meet, have fun and make it happen.

Sincerely,

Bob McDowell, Chairman
National YMCA of the USA Swimming & Diving Advisory Committee
Jim Weaton, National Director of Events
YMCA of the USA