

**Age Group Chair Report**  
**House of Delegates**  
**April 26, 2008**

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Age Group Chair for the last year. I am still on the learning curve, and I want to thank all of the veteran MSI Board members who have helped me through this process to be sure that all of the duties involved have been performed correctly and in a timely manner. I also want to thank our Zones Coaching Staff for all of their fine work in representing Minnesota Swimming.

The last two seasons (Summer 2007 & Fall/Winter 2007-2008) have gone fairly smoothly with meet attendance being solid. The large size of some meets continues to be an issue with host teams being forced to cut relays in some sessions, but that is far preferable to there not being enough athletes.

The Summer 2007 Long Course State Meet has some continuing issues with the timeline, particularly on Friday when the declared start time for the 12 & Under session was moved up and that session moved so quickly that it finished over 35 minutes ahead of schedule including time trials. I would recommend for that session that we eliminate flyover starts, start the meet on time and not early, and cut the published heat interval down to 30 seconds to be more realistic than the 45 second interval listed.

One concern that I see coming to a higher level of attention in the near future is the issue of expensive high-tech suits. It is my intention to propose legislation that has been in place in Southern California for quite some time to limit the bodily area that suits may cover for Age Group competition. The Southern California legislation limits suits to where they may not extend below the top of the kneecaps and may not extend beyond the top of the shoulder. The purpose of this legislation is two-fold:

1. Keeping the sport more affordable for our families.
2. Insuring that our swimmers are able to attribute their improvement to their improved training and technical skills rather than to the "magic bullet" of the fast suit.

As we head into the Summer of 2008, I want to wish all of our athletes the best in their performances, particularly to our Olympic Trials qualifiers. It is my hope that all of our top athletes will recognize their position as role models for all of our young swimmers who are coming up through Minnesota Swimming. I also hope that the Coaches of those athletes will be sure to highlight those accomplishments, not just to their own Team, but to the entire LSC. I hope you all embrace your opportunity to be a beacon of hope and opportunity for Minnesota Swimming!

Billy Howard  
Age Group Chair