MS Top 10 Recognition Program
(Proposed By Jan Cartmill, May 2008 HOD)

It is proposed that the current MS Top 16 recognition program be changed to follow the lead of the new USA T10 program for the same reasons that USA changed its National recognition program. (Primarily to provide greater recognition in each single year age group, to eliminate unnecessary and potential harmful recognition in the 10 and Under Age Groups). This change would allow MS to continue to model our Recognition and State Record procedures after procedures in the USA Programs. In the last four years our MS LSC procedures have been modeled after the USA procedures (posting preview lists, etc.) and I have found that this has worked quite well.

The paragraphs below provide details on why the T-10 recognition program does not begin to include swimmers until they are age 11.

From the USA Swimming Times & Recognition Committee

Age Group Recognition Program – Single Age Recognition
With the recommendation from the National Age Group Development Committee to begin a recognition program at age 11, the USA Swimming Times and Recognition Committee voted to use that age in its new single age recognition process. The committee also took into consideration information received from discussions at convention. Coaches that were polled in various meetings both at convention and in the LSCs about the age level also agreed that 11 would be reasonable as it would help prevent undue pressure being put on young swimmers. Club Development staff members and volunteers also supported the initial recognition to begin at age 11. Here are some of the reasons for the decision:

- Research has suggested that kids do not have an understanding of the competitive process until approximately age 12.
- The focus for swimmers in the 10 & Under age groups should be on good work ethic, sportsmanship, having a good attitude and having fun.
- Psychologists do not recommend the comparing of times to other swimmers at an early age – the children get the wrong ideas about self-worth. The swimmers should work on the skill development process of the swim performance.
- More attention should be given to individual improvement goals (win the heat, win the event, make finals, breathe correctly, take the correct number of strokes, etc.).

Using the public site look up features for SWIMS it is possible to check the times in any event for any age group or single age. USA Swimming will just not be awarding a certificate for a Top Ten performance to swimmers under

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the age of 11. An LSC can continue to offer top times lists for any age group desired. USA-S is not providing formal recognition until age 11.

ASCA's use of the T16 as a coach measurement was brought up as a deterrent to a change in the Top 16 program. The committee felt that if ASCA rates its coaches on numbers of athletes in the Top 16 as a criteria of a total coach rating, they could change their criteria to match up to the program we have now put in place.

The USA Swimming web site will be adding a feature to the Times/Time Standards page: There will be a list of the "all time" Top 100 times in each event and this list will use age 10 as a beginning age. The Top 16 lists are all archived as well and can be researched for time achievement as desired.

The recognition of many more swimmers in each single age will hopefully provide encouragement to the athletes and help them transition when they move up to a new age group of competition in the pool.