



## Long Term Athlete Development Strategy & SNC LTADS Policy

The implementation of the Swim Ontario LTADS has been a success over the past four years. Now, Swimming Canada (SNC) is in the process of finalizing a national LTADS policy which will take effect September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The following information provides some background on the Swim Ontario LTADS; as well, it outlines any (minor) impact the SNC LTADS will have on Swim Ontario members.

To address the different rates of growth which occur between males and females, the Swim Ontario Junior Provincial competition has differentiated age categories between genders. To better address the physiological capabilities and needs of our athletes at each phase of their development, there is a differentiation in what events are offered to each age category.

To reduce the physiological age disparity that 2 year age increments bring, and to provide a fairer playing field for all, single year age increments have been introduced at Junior Provincials for all Girls 14 yrs of age and under and all Boys 15 yrs of age and under. Because scientific research indicates that athletes lock in their skills during the first three to four years of swimming, the emphasis should not be on how fast you swim but how well you swim. Skill development is far more important than winning!

To ensure that swim programs focus on avoiding soft tissue injury caused from repetitive freestyle workouts, improve motor learning skills, increase interest and benefit long term development; Individual Medley (Multi Stroke/Multi Skill) pre-requisite qualifying events were introduced at Junior Provincials. (The 200 IM for Girls 11 yrs & under and Boys 12 yrs & under; and the 400 IM for Girls 12, 13, 14yrs and Boys 13, 14 and 15 yrs.)

Sports physiologists have discovered that age group swimmers are pre-disposed to aerobic training, and derive far greater benefits long term by developing their aerobic capacities as opposed to their anaerobic capacities; an Aerobic oriented pre-requisite event has been introduced at Junior Provincials. (The 400 Free for Girls 10 yrs and under and Boys 11 yrs and under; and the 800 Free for Girls 11, 12, 13 & 14 and Boys 12, 13, 14 & 15.) For tracking purposes, clubs are encouraged to run Sanctioned Time Trials in the 400 and 800 Freestyle for all their age group swimmers.

Swimmers must attain both an Individual Medley (IM) and an Aerobic Free pre-requisite time and at least one (1) Junior Provincial qualifying standard in order to participate at Junior Provincials. (Girls 15-17 and Boys 16-17 are exempt.)

It often takes between 10 and 15 years of the best possible preparation to reach Individual Peak Performance levels. With such a long career ahead, it is far more beneficial to allow swimmers 12 yrs of age and under the free time necessary to participate with friends and family in other sports and social activities, and reduce the unnecessary fatigue that accumulates from participating in heats and finals throughout the season.

Therefore, all 12 & under events for all sanctioned Invitational's and Time Trials within the province of Ontario will be TIME FINAL EVENTS only (see 12 & under rules below).

### Swim Ontario 12 & UNDER RULES

1. Regardless of meet format or age categories, all individual and relay events for 12 and under are TIME FINAL (no progression to second swim of the same event)
2. 12 & under may "Swim Up" on relays in both preliminaries & finals at Ontario Jr. Provincial Championships, Ontario Senior Provincial Championships, Ontario Team Championships and Ontario Regional Championships and any SNC designated Meets.
3. 12 and under who qualify, may swim heats and finals of individual events at Ontario Senior Provincials, Canada Games Trials or other SNC designated competitions.

### Additional LTADS Recommendations from Swim Ontario

- To achieve a province wide strategy it is recommended that Invitational and Regional Championships offer the same event selection as Jr. Provincials. Invitational's do not have to run their meets in the same event order nor do they have to run single year increments. All sanctioned meets need to comply with the 14 and under LTAD policy # 2 as described below.
- In order to recognize the need to re-charge our batteries, and re-focus on the Long Course Season, March has been identified as a Refocus/Revitalization Period. No Sanctioned meets or time trials will be permitted during the SO defined revitalization period. SNC or Swim Ontario designated competitions are exempt from this policy.

The recommended swim meet session length, excluding warm-ups, is 4.5 hours. If a meet exceeds this length, you are requested to report that to the Regional Development Programs Coordinator of Swim Ontario at [christy@swimontario.com](mailto:christy@swimontario.com).

For more information on any of Swim Ontario's Programs, including the "Long Term Athlete Development Strategy visit the Swim Ontario website at [www.swimontario.com](http://www.swimontario.com)

Please note Swim Ontario reserves the right to amend conditions of the LTADS policies.

## NEW: SNC National LTAD Policy - 14 & UNDER Rules

1. For pre-Peak Height Velocity (PHV - 14 years and under) age athletes, age groupings for entry time standards, national rankings and awards shall be based on single year increments.

**Impact:** Swim Ontario already has single age increment standards or "Time Levels" for 14 and under athletes.

2. For Club Invitational, Regional, Provincial and National sanctioning of competitions, a qualification system for swimmers aged 14 & under shall involve a pre-requisite or entry system that is based on individual medley and aerobic freestyle events only. Example: 200 IM AND 400 or 800 FR or 400 IM AND 400, 800 or 1500 Freestyle.

**Impact:** Swim Ontario's current Junior Provincial Championship qualification system conforms to this SNC LTAD policy. Club Invitational's will adopt a similar entry system; Clubs can choose the IM and aerobic freestyle events and time standard for the pre-requisite qualification. Please note that Swim Ontario regional sanctioning officers will not accept any sanction requests that do not comply.

3. For Swimmers aged 14 & under, at Provincial and National competitions: Award systems will include:
  - Overall scoring of multiple-event performance across individual medley and aerobic freestyle events using a SNC IM-FREE program.
  - Recognition of improvement from previous personal best (PB) performances.
  - Individual awards for individual event performances.

**Impact:** The Swim Ontario Junior Provincial competition conforms to bullets 1 and 3; however a form of recognition of improvement for PB's (bullet 2) will be developed.

4. For the purposes of obtaining sanction approval, estimated timelines for all competitive sessions be required on the sanction application, and these timelines must be included in the meet information.

**Impact:** All sanction applications will require estimated timelines to be included in the meet package and should be compliant with total session lengths, excluding warm up, that do not exceed 4.5 hours (see above).