

Travel Guidelines for Cascade Swim Club

In an effort to help our members better understand the expenses they pay to have their swimmer travel to competitions, the club has come up with the following guidelines to better explain our standard operating procedures.

When coordinating travel for various events the performance of the athletes is of paramount concern. Our members incur a great deal of expense preparing themselves for competitive opportunities; whether that expense is in dollars, time or other committed resources, we respect the effort that goes into your athletes getting themselves ready to compete at swim meets.

With that said we are different from most other clubs in Calgary in that we are not organizing our travel with the primary consideration of saving a dollar. There is a club in Calgary that currently targets their meet charges to be considerably less than ours – they do not take the same considerations in determining their travel plans for events as we do. In many cases planning that way can be a “false economy” that has the potential to result in wasting the previously mentioned resources that went into preparing for the event.

Our competitive calendar is determined first and foremost by the Canadian National Championships (Trials, Senior, Western & Age Group) calendar, which is based off of the FINA international event calendar. SNC (Swimming Natation Canada) went through a number of years where their calendars were in a constant state of flux but this has now been remedied and is much cleaner and appears to be set for the next couple of years.

Next, the Provincial calendar is layered beneath the National calendar with Swim Alberta’s Championship meets (Age Group Trials, Age Group Provincials, AB Open 1 & 2, Alberta Summer Championships).

Finally, the coaching staff work to put together their own calendar of events that reflect preparing their swimmers for these Provincial or National level meets. For different parts of the program this means different things. If we look at our novice competitive group, Olympic Way, the calendar is pretty simple and includes the Junior Circuit of events that is organized by the “Southern Region” of clubs and is a fixed circuit of meets held every 4-6 weeks throughout Southern Alberta.

This leads us now to organizing the event itself and this section is organized with the following general considerations:

- Travel & Accommodation
- Staff & Support Staff (IST, Chaperones, etc.) Complement
- General Travel Guidelines and Procedures

Travel & Accommodation:

1. For team travel meets, transportation and accommodation will be booked through the Cascade office.
2. For accommodation & travel, the Cascade office will consider location (proximity to competition and training pools), amenities and competitive fares when booking.
3. Team Travel is booked in consultation with the Director of Swimming as well as attending Senior coaches to ensure that athletes are on site long enough in advance of the competition to properly acclimatize to the location. At different events, different times of the season and different times in the build up to major championship trials or events, this can mean different things.
 - a. For example, when the team travels “East” for major competitions they will generally be on site at least one full-day for every time zone they cross (i.e. on-site two full days in advance of the start of the meet for competitions in the Eastern time zone). For the same city out “East” but during the training part of a season the club may opt to show up the day before the meet.
4. Flights are booked considering a number of factors.
 - a. Is the flight direct? While a direct flight is not always an option it is always preferable as it generally means less can go wrong going direct than making a stopover along the way.
 - b. What time do we arrive? Does arrival time allow for pre-meet training or early check-in to the hotel?
 - c. For departure can we possibly get home in the evening on the last day of the event? Leaving on the last night avoids another day of hotel and staff expense.
 - d. Can we book and travel in a large group – what is then the amortized ticket cost (as a note, you will almost always be able to find a one-off ticket sale at a better price than we will ever with a group fare as our group fare, may include one ticket at the special sale price but it also likely includes a number tickets at the higher farer rate)?
 - e. Once we are booking as a group, what do WestJet or Air Canada offer in terms of group discounts (if any) and what is the cancellation policy for groups?
 - f. All of the above are factors in considering travel to the event.
5. Hotels are chosen based on the amenities they provide, as well as proximity to the competition site and include considerations such as: individual room-type (are there enough beds for one-bed per swimmer?), kitchen facilities if required), available team/meeting room (there may be other factors not listed that change from time to time), flexibility in terms of early check-ins / late check-outs. When placing staff and support staff in the hotel, generally at Championship events the rooms are one occupant per room to allow for

both at least some down time for recovery on their own as well as in the worst case scenario when for reasons of illness or other an athlete has to be moved out of their own room and needs a place to stay.

Staff & Support Staff:

6. When travelling to championship events we try and ensure we have coaches at the meet for all groups of swimmers in attendance (i.e. at the AB Age Group Provincials it is foreseeable that we may only have a small number of younger swimmers at the event but would look to send the coach of that group of swimmers to the meet). At championship meets it always better to be there with a full complement of staff than to short change our swimmers by not having enough coaches.
7. We have the same policy for chaperones at championship meets. Chaperoning is time consuming job that requires the chaperone to be available at all times while at the event. Cascade will always try to have an appropriate staff complement to ensure we have the best possible scenario for our athletes.
8. Like coaches, as previously mentioned, it always better to have a full complement than to find yourself short a chaperone.

General Travel Guidelines and Procedures

1. Meet Management Fee Air Travel: Each swimmer entered / participating in a Team Travel out-of-town meet will share proportionately in the total cost of airline tickets for the team coaches and chaperones.
2. Meet Management Fee Bus Travel: All swimmers entered / participating in a Team Travel Team Travel out-of-town meet will share equally in the round trip cost of the bus and any other expenses incurred by the bus driver. It is expected that all swimmers will travel to the meet on the team bus. Parents who elect to drive their swimmers home at the conclusion of the meet will still pay "round trip" costs for the bus.
3. When booking your own swimmer's flight (i.e. through points or other available means) and if your swimmer is not on the team flight the club does not take responsibility for those athletes until such time as those athletes meet up with the team. When possible the team will facilitate this but ultimately if a member decides to make their own flight arrangements they are responsible for ensuring that their swimmer gets to team's location either at their accommodations, training or competition location.

Meet Management Fees

1. Management fees are defined as "staff" or "team" fees and may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following:
 - a. Staff Expenses (Travel, accommodations, meals (per diem)).
 - b. Any team travel costs (i.e. bus or vehicle rental).

- c. Any team room costs (i.e. meal or meeting room at the hotel).
2. Meet management charges are shared equally by all swimmers attending the event whether participating fully in all team functions or not.

Meet Charges

1. All swimmers pre-pay an estimated meet charge in advance of the swim meet as defined in the meet information sheet published prior to the event. Due to certain timing issues of our accounting system charges may be posted prior to or immediately after the event has occurred.
2. All swimmers are charged their meet fees as defined by the meet organizing committee of the event.
3. All swimmers are charged a "Meet surcharge" which is used to offset any team relay charges at the event.

Definitions

1. "Staff" are coaches, ancillary support (IST or health care), or chaperones.
2. "IST" is the integrated support team which may include massage therapists, physiotherapist, chiropractic therapists, sport psychologists, nutritionists or others as defined by the Director of Swimming.