

Swimming Canada's decision on 2015 Eastern and Western Competitions

As a normal course of operations Swimming Canada completes a post competition review of each event it categorizes as a "designated competition". These reviews typically address competition structure, hosting, officiating and CSCTA feedback. This year particularly close scrutiny has been paid to the systemic impact the Eastern and Western meets have as a 'championship short course competition' positioned in the third week of February. In particular, the net effect the competitions have as an influence on training behaviours and potentially delaying long course preparation for an April Trials and summer competitions was examined.

HP Director John Atkinson brought forth the following key points in addressing the review of the East / West meets:

High Performance and Performance Development preparation must be characterized by:

- SC racing September to December while in full training
- LC racing opportunities in preparation for an April trials starting in January
- A training focus is critical – no resting, no shaving until trials – resist the temptation (ie/ Eastern / Western / CIS). Doing this compromises training impact, trials results and summer competition results.
- Two tapers per year – April Trials and Summer Competitions. Multiple races or competitions off one taper are encouraged (ie/ 3 championships in the summer)
- A world-class focus must be developed and systemically rehearsed over several preparation cycles.

Likewise, several issues were addressed from an operations perspective, namely:

- The purpose of holding Swimming Canada SC Championship meets
- The type of swimmers and clubs attending Easterns and Westerns
- The draw on local organizing committees and national officiating resources
- Long term scheduling impacts
- Swimming Canada hosting and sponsorship agreements
- Potential impact any changes may have to membership

The review of Easterns and Westerns indicated the current format, a SC Championship Meet hosted roughly 10 weeks after what logistically should be the end of SC season, **does not provide the training direction Swimming Canada requires to advance LC swimming.**

Several solutions to amend this issue were reviewed and changing the meets to Long Course was deemed to be the most acceptable amendment. The decision maintains the current time frame clubs and coaches are accustomed to, and does not interfere with existing plans for competitions at local, regional and provincial levels. Further, a regional / national long course competition in this time frame provides a bump in in-season competitive opportunities above regional and provincial LC competitions creating a positive 'step-wise' LC preparation progression towards Trials and Summer competition.

Decision: The 2015 Eastern and Western competitions will be reframed as Long Course competitions. They will remain four-day heat and final meets in the same format as the 2014 meets, however Olympic events only will be offered. Dates will remain the same, there will be no championship categorization and therefore no championship banners. Swimming Canada intends to run this format for 2015 and 2016 pending a successful review of the 2015 meet.

Clubs and coaches normally attending the Eastern and Western meets with an "end of cycle" SC preparation focus are encouraged to attend the 2015 competition prepared to swim fast "in-season" LC times.