



Competition Framework Improvement Plan – Phase 2 Provincial and Developmental Level Competition Recommendations

Overview:

As a next step in Competition Improvement Plan – recommendations have been developed for Provincial and Development level competitions as outlined in the original Competition Improvement Plan – National Events. This Phase 2 document is the result of collaboration of Provincial Technical Leads from the Provincial Sections, CSCTA members, Swimming Canada staff and LTAD experts.

Key goals and outcomes of this review:

The key goals and outcomes of this review include:

1. Provide Clubs and Provincial Sections with Swimming Canada recommendations for the hosting of local provincial, invitational and developmental competitions;
2. Align the recommendations to the Long Term Athlete Development Plan and Athlete Development Matrix, with focus on the FUNdamentals, Learn to Train (L2T) and Train to Train (T2T) stages;
3. Align the Phase 2 recommendations to support the Phase 1 National Meet changes.

Key Recommendations:

1. Periodization and Preparation for Competition

Rationale: The introduction of periodization and preparation for competition should be introduced for the Train to Train (T2T) level swimmer. Prior to the T2T stage, the Fundamentals and Learn to Train (L2T) stages, should include a regularly-monitored, well-structured program with proper progressions.

Key points:

- FUNdamentals and L2T should have no periodization, but contain blocks of programming September – December; January – March and March – June. Preparation for Competition is not appropriate at this stage;
- Double periodization introduced at the T2T level with 2x24 macro cycles;
- Introduction of preparation phase for competition that aligns with peak performance windows of March/April and July/August for T2T swimmers.



2. Competition Types and Number

Rationale: The number and competition types should be geared to the appropriate LTAD stage.

Key points:

- FUNdamental level swimmers should be introduced to participation in introductory, club based competitive events with an introduction to rules, ethics and fair play. Recognition and design of safe environments for all participants. Formal competition is not necessary. FUN non-traditional competition that focus on skill development using SCM, SCY or non-traditional width swimming is encouraged;
- 12 & under swimmers compete in timed finals events only at developmental and invitational competitions. Heats and Finals may be introduced for Provincial Championship competitions when the event/qualifying is as 13 & under;
- Introduction of heats and finals for swimmers 13&over at the L2T level, but competition should also include single session timed final meets;
- At the L2T level SC racing opportunities are encouraged to promote skill development;
- At the T2T level swimmers may attend more heats and finals competitions for 13&over swimmers, 12 & under swimmers remain as timed final events only, except as noted above for Provincial Championship competitions. Single session timed final competitions should still exist. A combination of SC and LC racing is appropriate;
- Competition types at the T2T level should progress toward performing during peak performance windows;
- Provincial Championships meets should be conducted in the Peak Performance Windows in a Long Course format;
- As swimmers move towards recommended training volumes, the total number of competitions is likely to reduce significantly towards a maximum of 12 per year.
 - FUNdamentals – club based, non-traditional competition, up to 2 per month
 - L2T – 12 – 18 single session meets (eg 2 to 4 hour club meets)
 - T2T – 12 – 18 competitions per year, may include weekend 3 or 4 day meets.

3. Competition Profiles

Rationale: To provide an overview of competition profiles appropriate for swimmers at the Fundamentals, L2T, and T2T level with a focus on the level and award and recognition at events.

Key points:

- The FUNdamentals level swimmer should gain an understanding of the principles that govern competition by participating in in-house, club practice events where the focus is on skill development. Awards recognizing skill improvement ranging to awards for best time will be introduced;
- The L2T swimmer should focus on skill and process development at this stage in a mixture of practice competitions (club events) and sanctioned competitions. Disqualification to the rules will be introduced at any sanctioned event. Awards should be based on skill improvement and best time. Progression at the end of this stage will include meets with scoring and placing (1st – 8th);



- At the T2T stage, swimmers should compete at a variety of events, some below the athlete's current level, some racing at their level, and others where they will race above their current level.

4. Competition Events

Rationale: Competition events should be built to support the LTAD and the Competition Improvement Plan – Phase 1 – National meets ensuring the progression of events takes place across all stages of development

Key points:

- FUNdamental level swimmers should compete in short speed events up to 25m, with further skill component events including dolphin kick, streamline racing, kick races. Events will include fun team activities. As progression occurs there will be a shift to age/stage appropriate mini-swimming events;
- L2T events should be based on key skills and distances. Short speed events will continue with an equal multi-stroke technical emphasis. Middle distance, multi-stroke technical emphasis for 200m events and Individual Medley racing at 100m and 200m. Gradually increasing swim distances for technique – technical based distance swimming. Relays will be at the 4x25 and 4x50. Racing SCM is preferred to reinforce skill development;
- At the T2T level, a key focus on Olympic events. Strategic placement of stroke 50s will be used when appropriate. Introduction of 4x100m and 4x200m relays. Racing during the peak performance windows should be LC.

5. Paralympic Program

Rationale: Competitions and planning should integrate para-swimming across all LTAD stages.

Key points:

- In general, all changes noted are applicable for para-swimming as well;
- Para-swimming should see a double periodization introduced at the T2T stage;
- Para-swimming should include a rest and preparation phase for 2 competitions per year at the T2T stage;
- A recognition and design of safe environments for all participants in all programming begins at the FUNdamentals level;
- Full para-swimming integration with all other swimmers and events should take place until classification occurs later in the L2T or T2T stage;
- Focus on Paralympic events should occur at the T2T stage of competition;
- Provincial Sport Classification should take place at the end of the L2T stage with National Sport Classification taking place toward to the end of the T2T stage, with some exceptions.



6. Open Water Program

Rationale: Introduction of Open Water swimming at stage appropriate time with maintenance of pool training and competition.

Key points:

- Exposure to swimming in an open water environment should take place nearing the end of the T2T stage;
- All provincial sections are encouraged to hold appropriate Open Water competitions;
- Appropriate incremental distances introduced with progression to 5km events in the Train to Compete (T2C) stage;
- Maintenance of pool distance events is imperative to avoid early specialization.