

Team Manager Report  
Liverpool  
2023

We would like to thank CBTF for selecting us to be team managers for these events this year. It is always an honor to represent Canada and assist the athletes and coaches on this stage.

Overall, having 2 team managers for both Nations Cup and World Championships worked well for the time in country. We were able to coordinate practices times, registration, competition days, etc effectively with two people to oversee.

While the information from the host country was helpful, it was very late in coming out and ultimately this impacted some of the decisions we had made and required some adjustment in our plans. There were also challenges initially with getting the correct person to contact for various aspects of the planning.

Some of the things that worked well:

1. Practice days- Practice days worked very well this year. Despite having limited information and photos of the facilities, the gyms that were booked were generally sufficient for the contingent needs. We had 2 days of longer practices that the whole contingent participated in and 4 days of shorter practices for the World Championship athletes. We feel that the time spent on teams/groups vs. individuals/duets was sufficient for everyone to get their run throughs in. It was difficult for those athletes that competed in almost every event to have down time during the practices. While the practice days for the WC athletes did take them away from the competition facility, it was important they had an opportunity to practice prior to their event starting. We did try to organize an extra practice time for the Artistic Group as they had not had the opportunity to practice all together due to different arrival times for their athletes. There was a miscommunication between organizers and the gym facilities and the time we had booked ended up not being available. We were able to get time instead, in the actual competition facility in exchange for the mix up, which we were able to share with the whole contingent.
2. Welcome Party- Once again, it presented a challenge to find a facility that would accommodate our large group, that was also reasonable in cost. The facility we were able to secure was a 20-minute walk from our hotel, which was manageable for most. We used an UBER to transport those that could not walk that distance. The venue was another hotel on the waterfront and all athletes and coaches were all able to be seated. We had almost all the athletes attending (both NC and WC athletes). The menu offered a diverse selection of food, and it was a great opportunity to welcome everyone to Team Canada.
3. Meals- The breakfast included at the hotel was excellent and offered plenty of options for all dietary needs. Going forward, where at all possible, having a substantial breakfast included at the hotel is strongly recommended. Suppers were arranged at the hotel for the majority of the evenings we were competing, and this was a welcome option for athletes and parents as it was very difficult to find restaurants in Liverpool for quick meals in the evening. While there was some confusion initially with the hotel around the tickets, we were able to resolve this, and things went smoothly after. The hotel was not able to accommodate

everyone in the same room for the meals at the same time, which did not seem to be a problem, however, it did mean that some days parents were unable to eat their meals with their athlete, as was their wish, however, this did not seem to cause too many issues.

4. SIM cards- Both team managers had international SIM cards, which was essential at this event as the host country was communicating results, etc through messaging. It was also very helpful for the managers to be able to communicate effectively with each other.
5. Hotel- Having all the athletes in the same hotel this year was a tremendous asset. All athletes were dealing with the same rooms, meals, etc. and having the contingent in one hotel also made planning departures and returns to practice facilities and other planned events easy to manage. The proximity to the hotel was also a big asset. This meant we did not require transportation to and from the competition daily. The only downside to the proximity to the hotel was it was easy for athletes to leave the competition venue throughout the day. We did try to mitigate that as much as possible to ensure that there were still many athletes at the venue to support the Canadian athletes still competing. Limiting the number of parents in the hotel with the contingent also seemed to work, as it seemed to decrease confusion and issues that we have had in the past. Athletes were still able to focus and do what they needed to do, as the onus was put more on coaches to ensure athletes were following rules.
6. Athlete's Party- This was one area that would have been helped by earlier communication from the host country. However, given past experience, we knew that food for the athletes would be a challenge, so we had arranged to have supper at the hotel for the athletes prior to the athletes' party. We also decided to arrange for a bus for the athletes- which was a good decision. While the venue did not permit chaperones into the party, there was a space right across the road for the chaperones to congregate, so it was easy for the athletes to find us. We would like to acknowledge and thank several of our more experienced athletes- Julee, Laura, Brooke and Brianna, who assisted us in ensuring we had all of the athletes from inside the party.

#### Areas for improvement:

1. Buses- While the buses worked out really well in Liverpool, communication with the bus provider leading up to the event was very challenging. They were very slow to respond to requests and it was difficult to finalize arrangements with them. Additionally, after we had made payment to the company, multiple emails and even phone calls were made to us stating we had an outstanding balance. The office and administrative end of the bus company seemed to be very disorganized. However, once in Liverpool, the buses worked extremely well, and we had no issues with them. The bus drivers themselves were fantastic.
2. Money for appeals- This year, IBTF required payment for any appeals that were filed (\$100 USD or equivalent). We did anticipate this and had \$100USD available to us and we did end up filing 2 appeals (One was successful, and one was not). So, there was a cost of \$100USD. We would

recommend that CBTF provide these funds to the team managers in advance of the event to ensure there are no issues when filing appeals, as time is critical.

3. Organization with CNBTA- While there were overtures of wanting to do things as a unified contingent in the lead up to the competition, in the end, very little ended up being unified. There had been discussion of CNBTA joining the Welcome Reception, secret pal, practice times, busses, etc. However, CNBTA pulled out of most plans prior to the event. There was little cohesion between the 2 organizations while at the championship as well. We each had separate practice times, hotels, even the jackets that were supposed to be the same weren't. For the 2 groups to truly present as 1 nation at the international championships, a single qualifier event should be done within Canada. This will allow the athletes to mingle and get to know each other while in Canada, and the organization of the trip can be done and arranged in a cohesive manner if done so from the beginning and as one group.

For Consideration:

One thing that came up for discussion at this event was that some consideration may need to be given to having different expectations or guidelines for the different events. For many athletes, the Nations Cup is their first experience at an international level, yet we place the same rules, guidelines, expectations on them as we do for our World Championship athletes. Perhaps some discussion should take place on "loosening" some of the guidelines for our Nations Cup athletes. We, as a country, would still look after their accommodation (for athletes), arrange practice gyms, and facilitate various aspects around the competition, but some of the more stringent rules could be lifted. Then, for the World Championship athletes, they would be entitled to all the "perks", but also the more stringent rules surrounding contingent/team support?

Example:

Nations Cup

- Flights booked by athletes and families on their own. The arrival date is recommended by CBTF; however, Coach can accept a later date if they choose.
- Transfers from airport to hotel arranged on own
- Hotels arranged by CBTF for athletes and coaches (like this year)
- Transportation to practice and competition facilities arranged by CBTF.
- Practice times arranged by CBTF. Athletes' participation in practice is determined by coaches. Ie: which practices and for how long they attend determined by coaches ahead of arrival.
- Meals arranged by CBTF (breakfast, and certain nights for dinners if indicated)
- Emergency or urgent first aid only provided, limited taping, etc available.

## World Championships

- Flights booked by CBTF. This ensures the same arrival date and time for the full contingent.
- Transfers from airport to hotel arranged by CBTF.
- Hotels arranged by CBTF for athletes and coaches.
- Transportation while in country for practices and competition arranged by CBTF.
- Practice times arranged by CBTF and expected to attend at all times.
- Dedicated treatment times available (if manager is qualified to do so)
- Meals arranged by CBTF (breakfast and dinners)

While it was a long 2 weeks, we had a tremendous group of athletes and coaches to work with. The coaches were all extremely supportive and worked with us extremely well. The athletes were all amazing and presented as a unified team Canada throughout the week. It was so nice to see our more experienced athletes helping with our younger athletes. It was truly an honor to manage this group this year. Thank you for the opportunity.

Steven and Nancy

PS

I would like to thank my co-manager, Nancy. Having a long-lasting friendship and being managers together for so many years has made these trips run smoothly and what appears on the outside flawless. This is due to the strengths we both have and off set for each other. Thank you for our talks, and our rants, and our laughs.

I would also like to thank Nancy for stepping up and taking on the last few days of the championship by herself. I, unfortunately, had to leave early to attend to a family matter back home and the support and assistance received from Nancy, all the coaches, Joanne and the CBTF was greatly appreciated. I truly love this sport, and the role that I get to continue to play in it to assist the athletes, coaches, and supporters to have an outstanding championship and experience. And I am even more grateful for the friendships and support that I have received over the years. I hope to continue to be able to give back to this sport and organization in the coming years.