

Canterbury Silver Squad Tour Report Auckland Championships 18/12/15 – 20/12/15

The Auckland Champs tour with the Silver squad was very successful.

The Silver Squad team members that toured were: Leah Berquist, Kaylee Jackson, Ruby Wagenvoord, Bailey Tait, Max Clark, Quinton Hurley, Henri Rollinson, Bryn Rumble, Ben Smith, Riley Taylor. Other Canterbury Squad Platinum and Gold Squad Members were Zac Clark and Jordan Rahurahu. Chris McFadden also travelled to the meet but stayed with friends and met us at the pool each day.

The flights had to be altered as Air New Zealand cancelled the original flight that everyone was on. We flew Friday morning arriving in two groups at 9.35am and 11.25am. Upon arrival it was very straight forward to collect the vans and we headed towards Auckland and stopped for lunch and a supermarket shop on the way.

Due to the later arrival than originally intended we decided not to have a training session as we were restricted for time. The accommodation was very good. It is very handy to the pool and the athletes were two to a room. There was a big area where we could eat and athletes could hang out together.

The food was excellent. As we had a very late finish on Friday night the caterers delivered enough food for two meals 4.30pm and 9.30pm. The athletes organised their own breakfast which they all handled well. All of lunches and dinners were delivered and set out and cleared away by the delivering chef. The food was very tasty and there was plenty of it so this worked very well especially on the Saturday when we only had short turn around. As we had to leave the motel on Sunday morning we ate at the restaurant next to the pool which was very satisfactory.

There were some very good swims over the whole weekend from the group. The coaches emphasised the need to make the most of the opportunity to race long course against different opposition and the need for consistency. We both felt that the Silver Squad delivered in all of these areas.

The team achieved 25 Podium Finishes with first placings to Kaylee Jackson (5), Henri Rollinson (1), Ben Smith (1) and Quinton Hurley (1). Second placings to Kaylee Jackson (2), Bryn Rumble (1), Ruby Wagenvoord (3) and third placings to Riley Taylor (3), Bryn Rumble (3), Henri Rollinson (3), Quinton Hurley (1) and Kaylee Jackson (1). Due to the Auckland regions rules around visitors not all podium placegetters get medals as they only have 2 Visitors medals per event. They also ran out of Silver visitors' medals and these will be sent to us. Both of the coaches felt that much of the quality opposition came from visitors from outside of Auckland in particular Northland and Counties Manakau. The team had an overall PB % of 74.74% with a mean average improvement of 1.69% which was very high. However this is the first long course meet that all had swum since the first quarter of 2015.

It was also a highlight to witness the breaking of two Para World Records by our own Sophie Pascoe in the 200 Freestyle (2.12.35) and the 400 IM (4.28.48). Sophie and coach Roly are based in Auckland as they prepare for Rio in 2016 and these are fantastic results for her.

The sheer fact of going up on the Friday and back the Sunday is also something for these athletes to get used to as competing outside the region and internationally will be important in their on-going development. It is also important for them to realise that you can travel, swim and travel again without it having to take a lot of days away so we can maximise the experience while minimising the cost and interruption to school and university. We believe that exposure to competition like this would be really beneficial two to three times through the year. It is also important for the athletes to realise they need to get straight back into training when they return and work with their coaches on active planned recovery. It is very noticeable in world swimming that athletes such as Katinka Hossu are racing multiple days every week for extended periods with large training blocks in between.

The team were a great bunch. We had not one issue to deal with which was brilliant. They all got on extremely well and supported each other both at and away from the pool. We have an awesome group of athletes that we can be extremely

proud of. These swimmers are part of the next wave of our elite Canterbury Squads and swam and acted professionally throughout the weekend.

Dave Prattley and Oscar van Stekelenborg
Coaches