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Northern Lights players assemble on a Metro Green Line platform for a team photo. With them are (back row) Sheriff's deputies Daniel Dail and Victor Locklin and Rail TOS Ruben Ramirez.



PHOTO BY RICH MORALLO

## Canadian Wheelchair B-Ball Team Finds Green Line a Winner

By RICH MORALLO

(Feb. 10, 2004) Cheap. Convenient. Good fit.

Those were the reasons seven Canadian wheelchair basketball players chose to travel on the Metro Green Line to their tournament in Norwalk, Friday, after flying into LAX.

"Usually we lease a van when we travel," said point guard Jordon McEachern of the Alberta Northern Lights. "But we thought we should try public transportation since a shuttle could take us from the airport to Metro, the fare is only 45 cents, and our wheel chairs fit through the coach doors."



The players, accompanied by two coaches, arrived at the Aviation Station by way of LAX Shuttle G, at about 3:30 p.m. They were escorted on their rail journey by Sheriff's deputies Daniel Dail and Victor Locklin and assisted by Rail TOS Ruben Ramirez.

Later, on the train, equipment manager Earl Nordell glanced at the system map overhead and observed, "This ride is smooth. The train has reached three stations already and I didn't even

A Northern Lights wheelchair basketball player purchases a ticket to ride the Metro Green Line.'

notice it."

Their 26-minute ride was just a little tight for the Canadians as the afternoon rush hour crowd boarded and left their train cars.

The players, ranked No. 1 in the 200-member National Wheelchair Basketball Association, had collapsed their extra wheelchairs and kept them close at hand.

"These are our game chairs," explained Jordon, adding that the customized chairs with inward bent wheels let them turn faster and keep better balance on the court.

All in all, the team's trip to Los Angeles turned out well.

The Northern Lights won all three games of their in the tournament, held at the Norwalk Arts and Sports Complex.

The team remains undefeated in the league – and impressed with LA public transit.

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