

# 2009 High Performance Road Program



**Canadian Cycling Association**  
**Association cycliste canadienne**



**Prepared on March 5, 2009 by Vincent Jourdain**  
**National Road Coach**



## Introduction

Following the Canadian Cycling Association (CCA) presentations made to our funding body, Own The Podium, the CCA has received a budget increase of more than fifty percent. For the sport of road cycling, this increase is reflected primarily by a substantial investment in the women's road team. This decision is based on the potential of our female athletes, among others, to reach the podium at the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

The national women's road program is designed to provide our athletes with a targeted annual performance at the World Championships and, ultimately, the Olympic Games. Alexandra Wrubleski is the highest International Cycling Union (UCI) ranked Canadian athlete and will race primarily with her professional road cycling team. Two other targeted athletes, Erinne Willock and Julie Beveridge, will be eligible for assistance from the national team.

As we are at the beginning of a four year Olympic cycle, we must prepare a larger number of female athletes eligible for the 2012 Olympics. The CCA will invest more in developing this next group of athletes through training camps and competitions.

On the men's side, all targeted athletes are part of the professional circuit (Pro Tour and Continental Professional teams) and have access to high levels of competition. The budget will be used only to support Canadian athletes at World Championships.

Finally, as in past years, all development programs for Under-23 (U23) and junior men will be self funded by the athletes. The CCA will only financially support U23 athletes at World Championships. However, the CCA recognizes its role in the development of these athletes and will be proposing a number of activities.

## Women's Program

The CCA has enjoyed a successful women's campaign in recent years, especially during the past two World Championship road races where Alexandra Wrubleski finished twice in the top ten. These successes are in large part due to the investment in a national team tour in Europe so that the athletes gain experience, develop into a cohesive team and adequately prepare for major events.

Most Canadian athletes are not part of professional teams with a well structured calendar of high level events. Therefore, the CCA is required to play a greater role in preparing targeted athletes. Own the Podium has acknowledged these shortcomings and has decided to invest in programs for female road athletes.



As mentioned in the introduction, we are at the beginning of an Olympic cycle .

The CCA, in collaboration with the Hamilton Foundation, will invest in development projects with two training camps and competitions . There is currently a talented group of athletes across Canada who have the potential and desire to progress. The best athletes of this group will then be incorporated into projects with the elite national team. This will allow them to continue their development as well as support the performance objectives of the national team.

Currently, the womens program has two European phases, one early in the year (April-May) and the other later in the season with the aim to prepare for the World Championships. The program also includes the UCI races in Canada (World Cup, Tour du Grand Montreal and the Tour de PEI). Participation in the Pan-American Championship is also being considered in the context that many UCI points are available. The length and composition of the European phase will vary depending on the availability of athletes and invitations to events.

## **Proposed program**

See 2009 National Road Team calendar click here:

[http://www.canadian-cycling.com/cca/nat\\_team/pdfs/road\\_overview09.pdf](http://www.canadian-cycling.com/cca/nat_team/pdfs/road_overview09.pdf)

## **Details on the proposed program**

### JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

Targeted athletes are training with their professional teams.  
Discussions with targeted athletes to finalize the national team program.

### MARCH

A first training camp for development athletes will be offered in Tucson, Arizona (March 15 to 23). The objectives of this camp are:

- Consolidate and identify all athletes who wish to eventually represent Canada at major events
- Assess the potential of each athlete
- Introduce athletes who meet the requirements to compete at the international level, especially in major races on the international calendar
- Discuss training plans
- Establish short, medium and long terms;

Following the camp, 8 athletes will be selected to take part in the Redlands Bicycle Classic in California from March 26 to 29. This project will provide the



opportunity to assess the athletes in action. Athletes will then be selected to participate in the first block of the team project in April and May.

### APRIL AND MAY

The first block of the project will begin in mid-April with preparation / adaptation in Europe prior to the UCI races in northern Europe. Races such as the Women's Flèche Wallonne and the Tour de Berne in Switzerland, two rounds of the World Cup, are included in the program. Le Tour de l'Aude, which will take place from May 15 to 24 in France, is also part of the program.

The objectives of this first European block are:

- Provide our best riders international experience
- Further development in an international field
- Provide quality training between races
- Prepare athletes to perform at the World Championships and ultimately other major games

The fact that Canada is only the thirteenth highest ranked national team (UCI rankings dated 20 February 2009) lowers Canada's chances of entering a team in these races. The UCI classification states that the organizers of a World Cup shall invite the first ten national teams and the top fifteen UCI registered teams before they can offer places to other national and professional teams. Under these circumstances the CCA will offer a B plan probably around the Pan American Championships to be held in Mexico from May 8 to 10. Continental Championships are an excellent opportunity to collect valuable UCI points. A number of UCI races are held in El Salvador following the Championships and this represents an interesting alternative.

A visit to the site of the 2009 World Championships is also being planned. This will allow targeted athletes to become familiar with the road circuit around Mendrisio; especially the course for the individual time trial where pre-inspection will assist with preparation and lead to better performance. If the program changes, the site visit can be held in August.

### JUNE

The UCI sanctioned races in Canada, including the World Cup in Montreal, provides a great development opportunity for our athletes. Although many of our targeted athletes may be supported by their professional teams to participate in this event, there are always athletes who are without teams. In addition, participation in these events is a great showcase for Canadian athletes.



## JULY

Immediately after the national championships, a second block will address athlete development. A training camp will be offered in Bromont from July 1 to the 8. Following this camp, six athletes will be invited to take part in a European project with two UCI stage races, the Tour of Brittany and the Tour du Limousin. The camp and the European project will build off of the first camp in March and will further assist in identifying athletes who want to represent Canada at the Olympic Games of 2012 and 2016. The number selected for the camp in July will be between twelve to fifteen athletes. Some of the athletes who have participated in the first camp in March will be invited. Other athletes who have not had the chance to participate in the first camp will have the opportunity to apply. Please note that the athletes selected for the pre-World Championship preparation project in August, can participate in camp but should keep in mind the importance of balancing their competitive season. Based on the situation at this time, a decision will be taken by the national coach after talking with the athlete and her personal coach.

## AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

This period will be devoted to the second European bloc, preparing the team for the World Championships to be held in late September in Mendrisio, Switzerland. The type and duration of the program that the team will participate in during April and May will determine the duration of the programs in August and September. Because the athletes have access to fewer UCI races in August with their respective teams we will probably start the second phase earlier around the beginning of August.

The objectives of the second phase are:

- Prepare an optimal team for the World Championships by offering a program of competitions and a structured training plan
- Integrate, if possible, selected athletes who have made their mark at previous projects to give them additional experience

## **Elite Men**

The elite men's program focuses primarily on Road World Championships to be held Sept 23 to the 27 of September in Mendrisio, Switzerland. Although funding has increased from Own The Podium, the majority of these funds must be used for women's projects. It is currently difficult to predict the potential results of our targeted male athletes at 2012 Olympic Games in London. This is the main reason why there is less funding than there is for women. In addition, all our



targeted male elite athletes are currently under contract with professional teams and they do not need the national team to participate in high level events. However, some funding has been allocated to prepare some targeted athletes such as Svein Tuft, for the ITT World Championships in Mendrisio. A visit to Mendrisio will probably take place in early August to familiarize him with the course and help him adapt his preparation for the event.

Other events are planned such as the Pan American Championships in Mexico May 8 to the 10, which will be entirely self funded by the athletes. Since we will likely have a female team in Mexico, there will already be coaching staff there so the main cost attached to this project will be air ticket. The Pan-American Championships is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable UCI points in order to improve the classification on the UCI America Tour. This can possibly lead to more riders qualifying for the World Championships. We will encourage our best male athletes to participate in this project. However, we will prioritize in accordance with the national team list.

The same principle will be applied to the Tour de Beauce. Riders will not have access to any financial support for this project. Moreover, the majority of riders can participate with their respective teams and, therefore, the presence of the national team is not necessarily essential.

## **U23 and Junior Program**

As in previous years all U23 and Junior projects will be self funded by the athletes. The only exception will be U23 men selected to join the national team for the Road World Championships in Mendrisio, Switzerland. If a pre-World Championship project is to be held, it will be self funded by the athletes. The details of the project including a cost estimate and selection criteria will be published in advance. Prior to departure each athlete selected will be required to pay all fees for the project.

A spring European U23 program was proposed in the original program. However, following a consultation with targeted athletes representing Canada at the last World Championship, it appears they are not available. These athletes are part of continental teams and have access to a program of competitive events. In some cases, educational commitments are a priority over the spring program. The decision was made that the CCA would not participate this spring in order to reassess its future role. A review will take into account the appropriate role of CCA in the development of U23's for the future. This will take into account the role already played by some teams and provincial teams / clubs that are at a high level and offer a well structured program of training and competition.

The CCA will still maintain its project to enter a team in the Saguenay Nations



Cup scheduled for June 4 to 7. As host, Canada has the right to bring two teams to this round of the Nations Cup.

The objectives for this project are:

- Provide an opportunity to U23 riders to gain experience in an international event
- Score points in the Nations Cup, and perhaps add an additional road world championship spot
- Ensure a high calibre Canadian presence in an event restricted to national teams

The selection criteria and the financial conditions for participation in this project will be posted shortly.

A final preparation project may be held for the team that will participate in the World Championships in September. Again, this is self-funded by the athletes.

Completion of this project will depend on:

- The availability of the athletes selected for the World Championships
- Costs associated with this project
- Invitations to events

At the junior level, the CCA will focus mainly on the junior Road World Championships that will take place in Moscow between August 7 and 9. The Junior Nations Cup (men only) to be held in the Abitibi region on July 21 to 26 will be part of the program of preparation for the team to be selected for the World Championships. The CCA will be posting the selection criteria shortly for the Road World Championships and the preparation project. An estimate of costs related to participation in the Nations Cup will also be posted soon. Like the U23 Nations Cup in Saguenay, Canada has the right to bring two teams to this round of the Nations Cup.

Another event included in the program for the junior national team is the Tour of the Red River Gorge in the United States. It is a UCI race being held June 18 to 21. This project is funded entirely by the athletes and will take place if the following criteria are met:

- A minimum number of interested participants competitive enough to benefit from this project
- Recommendation from the Provinces
- A relatively affordable cost

Vincent Jourdain  
National Road Coach