Ontario MTB Provincial Athlete Pathway

The following is provincial pathway for a mountain bike athlete in Ontario and provides a guide as to the skills, behaviours, training expectations, and outcomes for each stage of development. It is important to recognize that athletes develop at different rates and may take longer to master certain skills. It must also be understood and accepted that there is no fast tracking physical maturity. Athlete development is a process -- use this information to help guide your training and focus. We've also highlighted where Ontario Cycling provides support at each stage and encourage athletes and coaches to utilize those opportunities as they are designed with each stages' outcomes in mind.

OC Development Stage: Rising Stars

The "Rising Stars" stage provides an introduction into the performance pathway. During this stage athletes are becoming more aware of their training and working to acquire the physical and tactical skills for competitive success in the sport. A primary focus is learning to be an athlete through development of quality training habits, off-bike training, and general life-skills (cooking, organization, etc.).

Age Range

Approximately ages 12-14

Support in Place

- *Structured training (coach or club program)*
- *Regular access to trail systems*
- *Efforts towards gap identification and mitigation strategies*

On-Bike Skills Required

- *Building fitness base*
- *Ready position*
- *Smooth shifting*
- *Braking modulation*
- *Introduction to obstacles (15cm)*
- *Small obstacles at speed (10cm)*
- *Small drops (30cm)*
- *Wheelies (20ft)*

Additional Skills:

- *Road riding skills (group/pack skills and etiquette, descending, cornering, pedal stroke*
- *CX basic skills and racing*

Off-Bike Skills Required

- *Health hygiene habits (washing hands, cleaning equipment/gear)*
- *Bike maintenance basics (changing tires)*
- *Stretching/activation plan for mobility*
- *Engaging in S&C*
- *Meal planning for training/competition and Cooking Basics*
- *Social Media*

Tactics

- *Hole shot*
- *Drafting*
- *Positioning in group*
- *Positioning in final stretch/finish*

Training Expectations

- *10-15hr/week incl riding, running, gym*
- *Local endurance camp*

- *Local skills camp*

- *Ontario Cycling Rising Stars Camps*

How Ontario Cycling Supports this Stage

- *Rising Stars MTB Camps*

- *Rising Stars Endurance Camp*

- *MTB Assessment Camps (benchmarking)*

- *Sport Science Education and Group Training*
  - *Introduction to Strength and Conditioning*
  - *Fuelling Education*
  - *Meal Planning and Cooking Basics*
- *Parent/Coach Webinars*

OC Development Stage: Provincial Development

The "Provincial Development" stage is where athletes will begin to be identified for their potential in the sport and be offered advanced development opportunities through camps and projects. An athlete should not be discouraged if they are not selected upon entering this period and is encouraged to continue training/racing to be identified in the future. During this stage athletes will be challenged to improve their overall training capacity through riding volume, exposure to obstacles/jumps/drops, and race starts. Off-bike training will also be expanded to include regular access to strength and conditioning activities (running, gyms, etc.). Athletes will become proficient in the soft skills for travel and multiweek training camps (groceries, cooking, hygiene, recovery).

Age Range

14 - 17

Support in Place

- *NCCP Certified Coach in place*
- *Annual Training Plan*
- *Regular access to trail systems*
- *Access to gym/strength equipment*

On-Bike Skills Required

- *Building aerobic capacity [increased riding volume]*
- *Refined cornering*
- *Maximize line selection*
- *Manuals*

- *Obstacles (45cm+)*
- *Obstacles at speed (30cm)*
- *Medium/large jumps*
- *Larger drops (90cm)*

Additional skills:

- *Road skills including refining cornering and descending skills, pedal stroke*
- *Maximize line selection, momentum with single speed*
- *Staying loose on the bike*
- *CX skill refinement and increased competition*

Off-Bike Skills Required

- *Health hygiene habits continue to evolve (staying healthy)*
- *Bike maintenance (basic tuning of bike)*
- *Suspension set up*
- *Increasing mobility training*
- *Increasing S+C using load*
- *Meal planning – grocery shopping knowledge*

- *Cooking balanced meals*
- *Mental performance integration - goal setting and self evaluation*
- *Packing bicycles for travel*

Tactics

- *Reading a race course*
- *When/where to pass*
- *Developing/Executing a race plan*

Training Expectations

- *12-18hr/week including riding, running, weights*
- *Domestic endurance camp*
- *OC Victoria MTB Skills Camp*

Race Experience

- *8 - 10 starts/discipline (XCO + CX)*
- *OCups*
- *Provincial Championships*

- *Canada Cups in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta*
- *Nationals Championships*
- *US XCO & XCC(1-2), CX(6+)*

Stage Outcomes/Targets

- *Proficiency in key skills [Ability read race courses; learn opponents' strengths/weaknesses, style; fully self sufficient living away from home]*
- *Race day preparation*
- *Process driven; training goals and performance goals*
- *Secondary focus on results for selection*

Estimated Budget

$15,000+

- *Bike and maintenance*
- *Travel*
- *Competition entry*
- *Training Camps*

How Ontario Cycling Supports this Stage

- *Team Ontario Camps/Projects*
- *Ontario Cycling Endurance Camp*
- *MTB Assessment Camps (benchmarking)*
- *Targeted Athletes Services*

  - *Group-based Strength and Conditioning and Programming*
  - *Group-based Nutrition Services (Individual consultations as needed)*
  - *Physiological Testing (as identified)*

- *Training and Competition Subsidies (in-alignment w. YTP)*

OC Development Stage: Provincial Performance

The "Provincial Performance" stage is where there is greater focus on optimizing training to compete at the international level. As with the "Provincial Development" stage, talent identification is difficult during this age range and athletes will develop at different rates. Athletes will be working to increase training capacity while challenging themselves to perform technical and tactical skills proficiently at elevated heart rate and while fatigued. Sport science integration is crucial to address physical and mental improvement areas. Athletes will be working to achieve quality results at national level events and competing at international events, specifically in US Cups and European races. At this stage, athletes should be very self-sufficient in meal planning, sleep hygiene, recovery, and bike packing and maintenance.

Age Range

16 - 20

Support in Place

- *NCCP Certified Coach in place*
- *Annual Training Plan*
- *Regular access to trail systems*
- *Access to winter warm-weather training opportunities (endurance/trails)*
- *Access to gym/strength equipment*
- *Access to health and physiological testing*

On-Bike Skills Required

- *Building aerobic capacity [increased riding volume]*
- *Increase cornering speed and improve balance*
- *Obstacles/jumps/drops at elevated HR*
- *Obstacles/jumps/drops at increased speeds while maintaining control*

XCO Bonus = single speed

Additional skills:

- *Road racing and pack movement skills*
- *Dealing with mechanicals or race incidents*

- *CX racing to win skills*

Off-Bike Skills Required

- *Hygiene, bike maintenance, mobility, S&C, meal planning and prep, mental performance skills a 7/10*
- *Booking flights, accommodation*
- *Communication with coaches, staff, mechanics*
- *Route making while travelling*
- *Sourcing S&C locations/equipment while travelling*

Tactics

- *Refine race plan*
- *Experiment with various race plans and tactics*
- *Racing from the front, racing from the back*
- *Learning to Win*

Training Expectations

· *15-20hrs/week incl riding, running, weights*

· *European endurance camp*

- *OC Victoria MTB Camp*

Race Experience

- *10 - 12 starts/discipline (XCO + CX)*
- *Canada Cups in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, US; Nationals*
- *US CX racing, Christmas CX, CX Worlds*
- *XCO Racing project in EU*
- *US XCO & XCC(2-3), CX(10+)*

Stage Outcomes/Targets

- *Mastery of skills [read race courses; learn opponents' strengths/weaknesses, style; fully self sufficient]*
- *Process driven; training goals and performance goals*
- *Secondary focus on results for selection and funding*

Estimated Budget

$20,000 - $25,000

- *Bike and maintenance*
- *Travel*

- *Competition entry*
- *Training Camps*

How Ontario Cycling Supports this Stage

- *Team Ontario Race Projects*
- *Ontario Victoria MTB Camp*
- *Ontario Cycling Endurance Camp*
- *Targeted Athletes Services (sport science, testing, health)*
  - *Athlete health assessment*
  - *Strength and Conditioning Individualized Monitoring and Programming*
  - *Nutritional Consultation and On-going Support*
- *Training and Competition Subsidies (in-alignment w. YTP)*

OC Development Stage: National Transition

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The "National Transition" stage is where athletes are focused on the process and trusting that is will lead to performance results at the highest levels. This stage can require adjustment as athletes learn to be full-time athletes training with a focus on consistent improvement (skills, aerobic capacity, tactics, health, lifestyle habits, travel, etc.). Athletes will be working with Team Canada and/or trade team programs to access international competitions. Ontario Cycling provides supplementary support services to assist athletes demonstrating progress towards national team programming.

Age Range

19 - 23

Support in Place

- *NCCP Certified Coach in place*
- *Annual Training Plan*
- *Regular access to trail systems*
- *Access to winter warm-weather training opportunities (endurance/trails)*
- *Access to gym/strength equipment*
- *Access to health and physiological testing*
- *Access to World Cup level racing*

On-Bike Skills Required

- *Hygiene, bike maintenance, mobility, S&C, meal planning and prep, mental performance skills a 9/10*

- *Travel efficiency*
- *Strong communication with coaches, staff, mechanics*
- *Ability to establish your DTE by route making while travelling and accessing S+C facilities to maintain training*

Off-Bike Skills Required

- *Hygiene, bike maintenance, mobility, S&C, meal planning and prep, mental performance skills a 9/10*
- *Communication with teammates, coaches, staff, mechanics, agent, partners/sponsors*

Tactics

- *Ability to adapt race plan during the race*
- *Maximizing positioning and getting to key positions*
- *Racing from the front, racing from the back*
- *Understanding what it will take to win today*

Training Expectations

- *18-25hrs/week incl riding, running, weight training*
- *European endurance camp*

- *MTB Skills camps*
- *Altitude camp when possible*

Race Experience

- *15 - 20 starts/discipline (XCO + CX)*
- *XCO and CX racing in North America*
- *XCO Racing project in EU,*
- *Supplement Race Options: Christmas CX, CX Worlds*

Stage Outcomes/Targets

- *Mastery of skills, know common world cup race courses; learn opponents' strengths/weaknesses and race style;*
- *Become process driven*
- *Secondary focus on results for selection, funding, signing with a team*

Estimated Budget

$30,000+

How Ontario Cycling Supports this Stage


TEAM
ONTARIO
175

- *Sport Science Support (as required)*
  - *Strength and Conditioning programming*
  - *Physiological Testing*
  - *Nutrition Analysis and Support*
  - *Mental Performance Consultations*
- *Access to Skills/Endurance Camps (as a Ride Leader)*