

# **Saskatchewan High Performance Development Program**

**'a renewable source of clean, prairie energy, focus and determination'**

## **About our Program**

The provincial program comprises youth and young adult cyclists and other endurance athletes from the sports of running, skating, skiing, and triathlon. 20 to 30 hours a week are directed toward individual and group training efforts on valley hillsides, wind-swept highways, indoor training facilities, and warm weather training locales. At home or away training, our athletes attend school, work at jobs, and help our local clubs develop other young cyclists. Away racing, they face the immense physical and mental effort to focus, stay healthy and race well, and proudly represent our province and our sponsors. They are tough and determined. Personal goals are clear: medal performances at the 2009 Canada Summer Games in P.E.I. in the short term; representing the Canadian National Cycling Team at World events in the medium-term, like Saskatchewan team-mate Andrew Thomas-age 20; and finally, represent Canada as an Olympian like female team-mate Alex Wrubleski-age 25.

Our athletes are supported by a system of 'personal coaches', local clubs and races; an in-province race series in the disciplines of mountain bike, road, and cyclo-cross; and a series of development race trips and camps organized through the High Performance Development Program.

## **About Cycling**

Competitive cycling is a twelve month process beginning with: a brief rest period for some in November; a local, provincial and national race season from March through August; World Road and Mountain Bike competitions in September; and World Cyclo-Cross in January. Ten years of intense training and competition are required to develop a competitive cyclist. As training on Saskatchewan highways doesn't start for most cyclists until they are young teenagers, this translates into noteworthy high performance goals and associated funding rewards reached at the age of 23 to 25 years or older. And this means that many talented young cyclists are largely supported by their parents and have scarce resources to assist them through their University years and requisite period of athlete development.

## **Business Side of Cycling**

Cycling is entirely sponsor-driven. There are no University scholarships to provide support, nor is there an organized National Development program for young, talented athletes. Through the provincial sport organization, each athlete works with a private coach, and based on their own medal performances, strives to develop his or her own product and financial sponsors. Some level of support comes from signing on to a 'Pro-team'. Cycling receives a comparatively low level of provincial funding because our athletes peak performance years are not reached until young adulthood, and by then many will have left the sport due to financial restrictions: low medal numbers convert to low financial support.

The SCA has a registered non-profit number and access to a registered charitable donation number through SaskSport.

**Canadian Cycling Demographics** (from CROP Research: Profile of Cyclists in Canada by Groupe SportDecision Inc):

- 37% of Canadians cycle: the majority between 18 and 44 years of age
- Cycling enthusiasts are more affluent: 41% have an annual household income of more than \$60,000
- Cyclists are more educated: 41% have a university education