

Long Term Athlete **Development Plan**

Together, let's ride towards a stronger, healthier, and more successful Bermuda.









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The Bermuda Bicycle Association's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Plan maps out the pathway for cyclists in Bermuda from their first rides to elite international competition. The plan is designed to ensure accessibility, inclusivity, performance development, and lifelong participation in cycling. It showcases the success of Bermuda's athletes on the regional and world stage and outlines the future roadmap for continued growth.

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INTRODUCTION & PHILOSOPHY

Cycling is more than a sport in Bermuda – it is a pathway to health, community, and excellence. The Bermuda Bicycle Association's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Plan provides a clear framework for how athletes can progress from their first rides as children to representing Bermuda on the world stage.

At the heart of this plan is the BBA's commitment to making cycling accessible, inclusive, and inspiring for every Bermudian.

Our philosophy is guided by four pillars:

- Accessibility Removing barriers by eliminating race fees for juniors, providing free coaching, and supporting athletes with equipment and travel when possible.
- Inclusivity Welcoming athletes of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds, including para-athletes, so that cycling reflects Bermuda's diverse community.
- Performance Development Offering structured coaching, testing, and competition opportunities that create clear pathways from local races to international success.
- Lifelong Participation Encouraging cycling for recreation, transport, and wellness, ensuring people of all ages can enjoy the sport.

The BBA has already produced medal-winning athletes at Caribbean, Pan American, and World levels. These achievements are not isolated successes but part of a sustainable structure designed to inspire and equip the next generation of Bermudian cyclists.



CYCLING GENERALITIES

Learning to ride a two-wheeled bicycle is a rite of passage for many young people, as well as for the parents and guardians who guide them. Countless families can recall the moment when a child finally mastered the balance and coordination needed to ride independently, gaining both freedom and confidence.

From these first rides, the bicycle can play many roles throughout a person's life, including:

- An early form of parental release and newfound freedom
- A practical mode of transportation
- A statement of sustainability against fossil fuels
- Preparation for operating motorbikes on public roads
- A tool for improving health and fitness
- A means of recreational travel and exploration
- · A platform for competition and performance

All of these experiences rely on the same fundamental skills of balance, coordination, and spatial awareness, which together allow individuals to ride safely and enjoyably.



COMPETITION **STRUCTURE**

Cycling competition takes place across many disciplines, though only some are currently offered in Bermuda. Globally, the most popular are: Road, Mountain Bike (MTB), Track, and BMX. Other recognised disciplines include cyclocross, trials, gravel, paracycling, and BMX freestyle.

In Bermuda, the BBA focuses on Road and MTB, practised on public roads, parks, and the Railway Trail. Plans are in place to introduce Track cycling within five years. The Association also owns hand-cycles for paracycling and works with the Bermuda Paralympic Association to identify and support athletes.

Each year the BBA oversees ~30 races:

- 75% Road time trials, road races, criteriums (March–November)
- 25% MTB short track, endurance, and skills-based events (November– March)

Categories exist for youth, juniors, adults, and recreational riders, ensuring inclusivity at all levels. Selected athletes also represent Bermuda internationally at Caribbean, Pan American, and World events.





THE PLAN

Cycling is approachable, with skills most people learn early. Unlike sports requiring advanced technical mastery in childhood, cycling primarily relies on balance, coordination, and awareness.

To succeed in Road or MTB, athletes must develop a strong aerobic base and discipline-specific strength, mostly during teenage years. Participation in other sports helps lay this foundation. Specialisation is not required before ages 14-15.

Guiding Principles:

- Basic skills usually taught by parents/guardians
- Enjoyment and frequency of participation are key
- Endurance built through a wide range of activities (running, swimming, team sports, casual cycling)
- Road safety and following directions emerge in early teens
- Cycling-specific training with a competitive focus begins at ages 14-15
- Social bonds in adolescence support training motivation and structure









LTAD PHASES

The phases of a LTAD programme are broadly similar across most sports, though the appropriate age for each phase can vary significantly. For example, while an eightyear-old swimmer may need to refine stroke technique, cycling at that age requires less technical precision

The general LTAD phases can be summarised as follows:

- Active Start Active play should be encouraged from the earliest ages. Basic physical awareness is developed through crawling, climbing, running, and playful movement.
- **FUNdamentals** Movement skills are introduced through activities that mimic organised sport. At this stage, the emphasis is on fun, making enjoyment the guiding principle.
- Learn to Train Athletes begin to develop an understanding of basic sport rules, as well as simple tactics and strategies.
- Train to Train A period of rapid physical growth and development, where athletes build capability across physical, technical, tactical, mental, and emotional elements.
- Train to Compete Athletes refine their skills to reach proficiency, concentrating on one sport as their primary focus.
- Train to Win The highest level of competition, with athletes aiming to be worldclass and participating in major international events. At this stage, athletes may compete as full-time professionals.
- Active for Life Encompasses all activities and participation beyond the highperformance pathway. This phase is equally important, enabling individuals to enjoy recreational cycling, community rides, and competitive participation at their own level, driven by personal health and wellness goals.



BBA ROAD MAP

The BBA has adapted Sport for Life's LTAD model to the unique context of Bermuda. Each phase reflects the appropriate age, focus, and developmental milestones for





FUNdamentals (6-8 years)

Develop balance, braking, and steering skills through fun family rides and playful activities.

Train to Train (13-14 years)

Weekly coached sessions on safety, group riding, and endurance. Start entering entry-level road and MTB races.



Learn to Train (7-12 years)

Introduction to MTB and short road races on closed courses. Learn simple tactics, cornering, and gear use.

Train to Compete (15-18 years)

Structured training plans, FTP testing, nutrition, and mental readiness. Compete in local and regional championships.



Train to Win (18-23 years)

Focus on high-performance environments (university teams, overseas racing). BBA provides support and pathways to international competition.



This progression ensures that every Bermudian - whether aiming for the Olympics or weekend wellness – has

a place in cycling.



Active for Life (all ages)

Opportunities to ride for health, recreation, and community engagement, with open participation in local races.

BBA LTAD PHASES

Based on our cumulative experience and work with other cycling organisations, the BBA has adapted the basic LTAD framework to fit Bermuda's unique context. This programme has demonstrated success locally, regionally, and internationally. While adjustments will continue to be made, the current structure has proven effective. The primary factor influencing an athlete's progression is not technical complexity, but rather their maturity level, willingness, and commitment to training. Given that pedalling is a relatively simple skill, progression depends more on motivation and consistent practice.

The BBA's competition schedule allows participation for almost any age. For most young athletes, this begins as a fun activity rather than a purposeful stage. Purpose develops once an athlete identifies cycling as something they want to pursue more seriously.

Active Start

The earliest stage, learning to balance, pedal, and safely operate a bicycle, happens under the guidance of parents or guardians. Strider bikes are appropriate once a child can walk, with pedalling introduced a few years later. Children should be encouraged to ride on soft surfaces and away from potential hazards.

FUNdamentals

At this stage, development is still largely familybased. Activities might include organised rides in safe areas such as backyards, parks, or the Railway Trail. As children grow, they naturally adjust to changes in balance and centre of gravity. Skills such as braking, route awareness, and manoeuvring around obstacles are introduced, always with the emphasis on fun.

Learn to Train

From around age 7, the BBA begins to include young cyclists in introductory activities. While often called "races," the primary purpose is enjoyment and social engagement. Events, such as MTB races in winter and criterium (closed-course) road events in other months, help develop simple rules, gear shifting, cornering, and other foundational skills. These activities supplement regular riding and help athletes adapt as they grow.







BBA LTAD PHASES

Train to Train

This phase begins with a weekly programme for 13-14 year-olds, providing the first structured instruction. Topics include mechanical skills, road safety, group riding, and endurance training. Athletes may also join group rides with juniors and adults on weekends, gradually building stamina and racing skills. At this stage, they can compete in entry-level Road and MTB categories, typically continuing through age 16. From age 15, athletes may join a dedicated training group (ages 15–18) that meets twice weekly. This highly purposeful programme spans both Train to Train and Train to Compete phases.

Train to Compete

Athletes now demonstrate commitment to their growth in cycling. While some may still balance multiple sports, this phase is critical for international selection.

From ages 15–18, the BBA provides a structured, periodised training plan aligned with the competition calendar, designed to peak for the National Road Championships (June) and Junior Caribbean Championships (August). Developed by a certified cycling coach, the plan includes:

- Two group sessions per week, focused on progressive development and teamwork.
- Functional Threshold Power (FTP) testing each January, with quarterly recalibration to guide training intensity.
- Endurance rides on weekends, often within open group rides of mixed ability levels, fostering tactical awareness without pressure.
- Local racing twice monthly, with athletes placed in categories appropriate to

Additional elements include sports nutrition, mental preparation, and wellbeing, discussed within the peer group setting.

Some athletes may also be selected to compete overseas at the BBA's direction and expense, depending on group goals and available opportunities. For athletes studying abroad, the BBA monitors training via digital platforms to assess readiness for selection.



BBA LTAD PHASES

Train to Win

After the junior stage, athletes progress to the Under-23 category, often while pursuing higher education overseas. Many universities in the UK and USA offer competitive cycling programmes, including scholarships.

In this phase, the BBA's role shifts from hands-on delivery to support and monitoring. Coaching is typically managed by university teams or personal coaches, while the BBA assists with long-term planning and access to national representation.

Opportunities for selection may include:

- Elite Caribbean Championships
- Pan American Championships
- World Championships

- CAC Games (qualification required)
- Pan Am Games (qualification required)
- Olympic Games (qualification required)

Athletes are expected to represent Bermuda at National and Caribbean Championships unless team obligations prevent participation. They are also encouraged to inspire younger cyclists when home in Bermuda.

Active for Life

Cycling offers lifelong opportunities for participation and health. All local Road and MTB races are open to recreational riders, with no age restrictions. Beyond competition, cycling contributes to fitness, wellness, and community engagement. The BBA also organises non-competitive events, such as charity rides and awareness campaigns, ensuring cycling is accessible and relevant for all Bermudians, whether for recreation, transport, or personal health.



BBA LTAD, DOES IT WORK?

Yes!

The BBA is confident that our programming works on multiple levels. Bermuda is now a dominant force in Caribbean cycling and has produced medal-winning athletes at regional and Pan American levels, all of whom came through our development pathway.

While athlete participation at the highest level cannot be guaranteed, the BBA has the right components in place to give every cyclist the opportunity to reach their potential Caribbean Cycling
Championships

114 madala

Pan American Championships

> 2 medals

Junior Pan Am Games

medal

Pan Am Games

medal

















FUTURE OUTLOOK & GOALS

The BBA will continue building on its LTAD Plan with goals to:

- Expand junior participation by 25% by 2030
- Launch a track cycling programme within five years
- Reach gender parity in junior cycling by 2030
- Secure more podium finishes at Caribbean and Pan American competitions
- Establish Bermuda as a regional hub for cycling development and events

Success will be measured not only by medals but also by participation, retention, and the role of cycling in improving Bermuda's health and wellness.

















Long Term Athlete Development Plan

Created March 2024

The BBA's Long Term Athlete Development Plan maps out how cyclists progress from youth to elite levels, promoting growth, performance, and lifelong participation in the sport.



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