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2026 MOUNTAIN BIKE XCO SELECTION POLICY

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UPDATED March 20, 2026 with programming changes in [blue text](#).*

*Developed by Cycling Canada’s Mountain Bike XCO Coach Panel, CTO and DHPS;
Reviewed by the Cycling Canada Athletes’ Council
and the High Performance Committee*

Deadline to appeal this policy: Feb. 25, 2026

All programming subject to change.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This document lays out the criteria to be used by Cycling Canada (CC) to select athletes to the Canadian team for National Team XCO projects.

Athletes must meet all Eligibility Criteria in sections B and C to be considered for selection.

Selection decisions are based on the Specific Criteria in Section D.

Unless expressly stated in the Specific Selection Criteria, selections are subject the General Selection Policy published on the CC website.

SECTION A – 2026 MOUNTAIN BIKE XCO PROGRAM CALENDAR

Project Dates	Category	Project	Location	Deadline to apply
May 12-25	Junior, U23	Spring Junior and U23 Project	Heubach GER Nové Město CZE	March 22
June 29-July 13	U23	Summer U23 World Cup Project	La Thuille ITA Pal Arinsal AND	May 25
Aug. 17-31	Junior, U23, Elite	UCI World Championships	Hägglingen SUI/Les Gets FRA Val Di Sole ITA	July 20
Sept. 14-20	U23	Fall U23 World Cup Project	Soldier Hollow, USA	July 20

SECTION B – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for selection to the Canadian team, an athlete must:

- Be a Canadian citizen.
- Have competed in the most recent Canadian Mountain Bike XCO Championships, or have a valid exemption (see National Championships Attendance Policy on the CC website)
- Have a valid Canadian passport that does not expire before the date required by the consular authorities of the country in which the event is being held.
- Be in compliance with all relevant CC and UCI requirements for eligibility.
- Hold a valid UCI license indicating nationality as Canadian.
- Sign, submit and comply with the CC National Team Agreement.
- Have completed all relevant UCI, WADA and Sport Integrity Canada anti-doping requirements.
- Have signed the consent form agreeing to be bound by the Universal Code of Conduct to prevent and address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS).
- Minors must have parental permission to participate in training programs and competitions.

Additional eligibility requirements may be detailed in the Specific Selection Criteria below.

SECTION C – EVENTS CONSIDERED FOR SELECTION

Selections will only consider results from the events cited in Appendix A unless other results are required to exercise Coach Panel discretion.

All results must be top half of the field unless otherwise specified. Field size is based on the official results on the UCI website, including athletes listed as DNS, DNF and DSQ.



In cases where the number of participants is restricted because of qualification processes or other types of restrictions, the number of participants in the qualification process may be taken into consideration.

Unless otherwise specified, results must be achieved in events of the same age category or higher than the event being selected for (e.g. a junior result cannot be considered for selection to a U23 event, but an elite result can be considered for selection to a U23 event).

Unless otherwise specified, for the purposes of this policy, results will include all athletes, not only those who applied for selection.

At the sole discretion of the Coach Panel, equivalent results in UCI events in other disciplines may be considered for selection, provided the athlete has previously demonstrated the appropriate level of skill to compete safely in the event being selected for. Selections based on equivalent results will be assessed on a case-by-case basis considering:

- the level of the event the result was achieved in;
- the compatibility of the physiological demands of the event the result was achieved in to the event being selected for;
- the depth of field of the competition the result was achieved in; and
- the athlete's demonstrated experience and skill in the discipline being selected for.

**SECTION D – SPECIFIC SELECTION CRITERIA****Spring Junior and U23 Project**

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Spring Junior and U23 Project</i>		
Project dates:	May 12-25		
Competition dates and locations:	May 16-17 – Heubach HC/UCI Junior Series GER May 23-24 – Nové Město World Cup/UCI Junior Series CZE		
Category:	Junior, U23		
Max. team size:	12 athletes, as follows:	Women	Men
	Junior (born 2008-2009)	3	3
	U23 (born 2004-2007)	3	3
	CC reserves the right to modify the team size per Clause 5 of the General Selection Policy.		
Selection dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 24 – Coach Panel submits recommendations to CTO and DHPS, or delegates • March 26 – Selection decision finalized; athletes informed; appeal period starts* • April 3 – Appeal deadline <p>* Anyone not named in the selection decision must appeal by the deadline or they lose their right to appeal.</p>		
Selection panel:	Selection recommendation made by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Coach Panel (See CC Website) Selection reviewed and approved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTO or delegate • DHPS or delegate 		
Prerequisites for selection:	To be considered for this project, athletes must complete the application form found on the CC website no later than March 22. Athletes must have a skill level suitable to the demands of the course. E.g. athletes should be able to consistently ride all features at the most challenging Canada Cup courses. Athletes who do not possess the appropriate skills may not be considered for selection. If needed, this determination will be made by the National Coach in consultation with the athlete and their personal coach.		
Selection criteria:	Selections will be made in the following order of priority until the quota is filled or there are no more eligible athletes. All results must be top half of the field or within 108% of the winner's time. Junior Women and Junior Men: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Athletes born in 2008 finishing top 24 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 World Championships. 2. Athletes born in 2008 who finished top 3 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 Canadian Championships. 3. The top Canadian finisher in the Junior XCO at the Langford Canada Cup (March 15) not already selected, providing they finish among the top 3 Canadians. 4. The top finisher born in 2009 in the U17 XCO at the 2025 Canadian Championships, providing they finished among the top 3. 		



<i>Project title</i>	<i>Spring Junior and U23 Project</i>
	<p>5. Athletes born in 2008 who finished top 5 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 Canadian Championships.</p> <p>6. Coach Panel discretion based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A; ○ Historical results; ○ Consideration of health-related circumstances <p>U23 Women and U23 Men:</p> <p>1. Athletes finishing top 24 (women) or top 32 (men) in the U23 XCO at the 2025 World Championships or a U23 XCO World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date.</p> <p>2. Athletes born in 2007 who finished top 8 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 World Championships.</p> <p>3. The top Canadian finishers born 2004-2007 and not already selected in the HC event in the UCI US Pro Cup in Fayetteville USA (March 21, 2026; date TBC) providing they finish among the top 8 U23 athletes.</p> <p>4. Coach Panel discretion based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A; ○ Historical results; ○ Consideration of health-related circumstances. <p>Any ties will be broken by best placing. If there is still a tie, it will be broken by the athlete’s number of UCI points. If there is still a tie, it will be broken at the discretion of the Coach Panel based on Section B, Clause 3 of the General Selection Policy.</p> <p>If fewer athletes meet the selection criteria than quota spots available in each category, or if an athlete declines selection, CC reserves the right to strategically reallocate the quota spot to another category to support development or Performance.</p> <p><i>As selection for this event relies on performances from 2025, athletes must be in communication with the National Team coach regarding current health and fitness.</i></p> <p>One or more alternates per category may be named using the same criteria.</p>
Self-funding:	<p>Athletes are responsible for the following costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Travel costs to and from project ● Meals during the project ● Project Fee per CC’s National Team Athlete Fees Policy. The fee is based on the athlete’s National Performance Pool status, the number of project days, the project location, and whether meals are provided. The fee may change if the project parameters change. Fees must be paid two weeks prior to the start of the project.

Summer U23 World Cup Project

<i>Project title:</i>	<i>Summer U23 World Cup Project</i>
Project dates:	June 29-July 13
Competition dates and locations:	July 3-5 – La Thuille World Cup FRA July 8-12 – Pal Arinsal World Cup AND
Category:	Junior, U23



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Project title:	<i>Summer U23 World Cup Project</i>		
Max. team size:	8 athletes, as follows:	Women	Men
	U23 (born 2004-2007)	4	4
	CC reserves the right to modify the team size per Clause 5 of the General Selection Policy.		
Selection dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 26 – Coach Panel submits recommendations to CTO and DHPS, or delegates • May 28 – Selection decision finalized; athletes informed; appeal period starts* • June 5 – Appeal deadline <p>* Anyone not named in the selection decision must appeal by the deadline or they lose their right to appeal.</p>		
Selection panel:	<p>Selection recommendation made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Coach Panel (see CC website) <p>Selection reviewed and approved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTO or delegate • DHPS or delegate 		
Prerequisites for selection:	<p>To be considered for this project, athletes must complete the application form found on the CC website no later than May 25.</p> <p>Athletes must have a skill level suitable to the demands of the course. E.g. athletes should be able to consistently ride all features at the most challenging Canada Cup courses. Athletes who do not possess the appropriate skills may not be considered for selection. If needed, this determination will be made by the National Coach in consultation with the athlete and their personal coach.</p>		
Selection criteria:	<p>Selections will be made in the following order of priority until the quota is filled or there are no more eligible athletes.</p> <p>All results must be top half of the field or within 108% of the winner's time.</p> <p>U23 Women and U23 Men:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Athletes finishing top 24 (women) or top 32 (men) in the U23 XCO at the 2025 World Championships or a U23 XCO World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date. 2. Athletes born in 2007 who finished top 8 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 World Championships. 3. The top Canadian finisher born 2004-2007 and not already selected in the events below providing they finish among the top 8 U23 athletes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UCI HC US Pro Cup XCO – Fayetteville USA (March 21, 2026; date TBC) ○ UCI Continental Series XCO – Englewood USA (May 8-9, 2026) 4. Coach Panel discretion based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A; ○ Historical results; ○ Consideration of health-related circumstances. <p>Any ties will be broken by best placing. If there is still a tie, it will be broken by the athlete's number of UCI points. If there is still a tie, it will be broken at the discretion of the Coach Panel based on Section B, Clause 3 of the General Selection Policy.</p> <p>If fewer athletes meet the selection criteria than quota spots available in each category, or if an athlete declines selection, CC reserves the right to strategically reallocate the quota spot to another category to support development or Performance.</p>		



<i>Project title:</i>	<i>Summer U23 World Cup Project</i>
	<i>As selection criteria for this event relies on performances from 2024, athletes must be in communication with National Team coach regarding current health and fitness.</i> <i>One or more alternates per category may be named using the same criteria.</i>
<i>Self-funding:</i>	Athletes are responsible for the following costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel costs to and from project • Meals during the project • Project Fee per CC's National Team Athlete Fees Policy. The fee is based on the athlete's National Performance Pool status, the number of project days, the project location, and whether meals are provided. The fee may change if the project parameters change. Fees must be paid two weeks prior to the start of the project.

UCI XCO World Championship

<i>Project</i>	<i>UCI Mountain Bike World Championships and Preparation race</i>		
<i>Project dates:</i>	<i>Aug. 17-31</i>		
<i>Competition dates and locations:</i>	<i>UCI C3 – Hägglingen SUI – Aug. 23 (Junior only)</i> <i>U23 World Cup – Les Gets FRA – Aug. 21-23 (U23 only)</i> <i>World Championships – Val di Sole ITA – Aug. 26-30</i> <i>Junior and U23 athletes selected as starters to the World Championships will be invited to the preparation races listed above.</i>		
<i>Category:</i>	<i>Junior, U23, Elite</i>		
<i>Max. team size:</i>	<i>24 athletes, as follows:</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
	<i>Junior (born 2008-2009)</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
	<i>U23 (born 2004-2007)</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
	<i>Elite (born 2003 and earlier)</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
	<i>CC reserves the right to modify the team size per Clause 5 of the General Selection Policy.</i>		
<i>Selection dates:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 22 – Coach Panel submits recommendations to CTO and DHPS, or delegates • July 24 – Selection recommendations submitted to HPC • July 27 – Selection decision finalized; athletes informed; appeal period starts* • Aug. 4 – Appeal deadline <p><i>* Anyone not named in the selection decision must appeal by the deadline or they lose their right to appeal.</i></p>		
<i>Selection panel:</i>	<i>Selection recommendation made by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Coach Panel (see CC website) <i>Selection reviewed by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTO or delegate • DHPS or delegate <i>Selection reviewed and approved by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Performance Committee 		
<i>Prerequisites for selection:</i>	<i>To be considered for this project, athletes must complete the application form found on the CC website no later than July 20, 2026.</i>		



<i>Project</i>	<i>UCI Mountain Bike World Championships and Preparation race</i>
	<p>Elite athletes must have achieved one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be among the top 4 Canadians on the UCI XCO ranking (including U23s and elites) on the UCI ranking on the selection date; or• Have a top 50 result in the Elite XCO at a UCI World Cup in 2026. This result must be top half of the field or within 106% of the winner's time. <p>Meeting these prerequisites does not guarantee selection.</p> <p>Athletes must have a skill level suitable to the demands of the course. E.g. athletes should be able to consistently ride all features at the most challenging Canada Cup courses. Athletes who do not possess the appropriate skills may not be considered for selection. If needed, this determination will be made by the National Coach in consultation with the athlete and their personal coach.</p>
Selection criteria (XCO):	<p>Selections for the Cross-Country Olympic (XCO) will be made in the following order of priority until the quota is filled or there are no more eligible athletes.</p> <p>All results must be top half of the field or within 106% of the winner's time.</p> <p>Junior Women and Junior Men:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Athletes finishing top 3 in the Junior XCO at the 2025 World Championships.2. Athletes finishing top 8 in the Junior Series XCO in Nové Město CZE (May 23-24, 2026).3. The top Canadian finisher in the Junior XCO at the Sherbrooke UCI Junior series Canada Cup (May 30-31, 2026), or next best if already selected.4. The top Canadian finisher in the Junior XCO at the Canmore UCI Junior Series Canada Cup (June 13, 2026), or next best if already selected.5. The top 3 finishers in the Junior XCO at the 2026 Canadian Championships (July 18, 2026) or next best if already selected.6. Coach Panel discretion based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A;○ Historical results;○ Consideration of health-related circumstances. <p>U23 Women and U23 Men:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Athletes finishing top 3 in the U23 XCO at the 2025 World Championships or a U23 XCO World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date.2. Athletes finishing top 24 in a 2026 U23 XCO World Cup-3. The top finisher in the U23 XCO at the 2026 Canadian Championships not already selected, providing they finish among the top 5.4. Athletes finishing top 40 in a 2026 U23 XCO World Cup.5. The top Canadian U23 finisher not already selected in the UCI Mountain Bike Continental Series Canmore (June 13, 2026), providing they finish among the top 3.6. Coach Panel discretion based on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A;○ Historical results;○ Consideration of health-related circumstances.. <p>Elite Women and Elite Men:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Athletes finishing top 3 in the Elite XCO at the 2025 World Championships or an Elite XCO World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date.



Project	<i>UCI Mountain Bike World Championships and Preparation race</i>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Athletes finishing top 32 in a 2026 Elite XCO World Cup 3. Athletes ranked among the top 3 Canadians in the UCI XCO ranking on the selection date. 4. Winner of the 2026 Elite Pan American XCO Championships. 5. Coach Panel discretion based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Performances in the events listed in Appendix A; ○ Historical results; ○ Consideration of health-related circumstances.. <p>Any ties will be broken by best placing. If there is still a tie, it will be broken by the athlete’s number of UCI points. If there is still a tie, it will be broken at the discretion of the Coach Panel based on Section B, Clause 3 of the General Selection Policy.</p> <p>If fewer athletes meet the selection criteria than quota spots available in each category, or if an athlete declines selection, CC reserves the right to strategically reallocate the quota spot to another category to support development or Performance.</p> <p>One or more alternates per category may be named using the same criteria.</p> <p><i>* Where a U23 athlete is eligible to race Elite, Coach discretion will be used to prioritize order of selection.</i></p>		
Selection criteria (XCC):	Per UCI rule 9.2.034, Canada has the following quota for the 2026 Cross-Country Short-Track (XCC) World Championship; these riders must be selected from among the starters in the XCO:		
	Category	Women	Men
	U23	3	3
	Elite	2	2
	<p>Athletes will be selected in the following order of priority until the quota is filled or there are no more eligible athletes:</p> <p>U23 Women and U23 Men</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Athletes finishing top 3 in the U23 XCC at the 2025 World Championships or a U23 XCC World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date. 2. Athletes finishing top 20 in a 2026 U23 XCC World Cup- 3. The top U23 finisher in the 2026 Canadian XCC Championships not already selected, providing they finish among the top 5. 4. Athletes prioritized based on their U23 XCC World Cup ranking on the selection date. <p>Elite Women and Elite Men</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Athletes finishing top 3 in the Elite XCC at the 2025 World Championships or an Elite XCC World Cup in the 12 months prior to the selection date. 2. Athletes finishing top 20 in a 2026 Elite XCC World Cup- 3. The top Elite finisher in the 2026 Canadian XCC Championships not already selected, providing they finish among the top 5. 4. Athletes prioritized based on their Elite XCC World Cup ranking on the selection date. <p>Any ties will be broken by the best individual result. If there is still a tie, it will be broken at the discretion of the Coach Panel.</p>		



<i>Project</i>	<i>UCI Mountain Bike World Championships and Preparation race</i>
	CC reserves the right to fill any unused spots with athletes selected to the XCO at the discretion of the Coach Panel
Selection criteria (XCR):	The starting composition for the Team Relay (XCR) will be determined by the Coach Panel from among athletes selected as starters in the Junior, U23 and Elite XCO. Selection will consider results and performances in UCI events and Canadian Championships in the 12 months prior to the selection date.
Self-funding:	Athletes are responsible for the following costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel costs to and from project• Meals during the project• Project Fee per CC's National Team Athlete Fees Policy. The fee is based on the athlete's National Performance Pool status, the number of project days, the project location, and whether meals are provided. The fee may change if the project parameters change. Fees must be paid two weeks prior to the start of the project.



APPENDIX A – SPECIFIC SELECTION EVENTS

Selections made using Coach Panel Discretion will consider performances in the following events. Performances include but are not limited to finishing position, lap times and percentage of winner’s time.

Event	Junior	U23	Elite
XCO World Championships	X	X	X
XCO World Cups		X	X
XCC World Championships (podium finishes only)		X	X
XCC World Cups (podium finishes only)		X	X
XCO Pan American Championships	X	X	X
XCO Continental Series		X	
Most recent Canadian XCO Championship on selection date	X	X	X
UCI XCO Junior Series	X		
XCO Canada Cups	X		