



## **2010 PODIUM PROGRAM – BMX**

*(2009 qualification standards for 2010 funding)*

### **Introduction**

The following document outlines the USA Cycling BMX Podium Program. The purpose of this program is to support American riders who have proven the ability to win medals at Olympic Games and Supercross competitions; and to provide support and program assistance to riders who have demonstrated the ability to develop into medal winning performers. At all levels, the primary goals of this program are to support and develop riders that are capable of sustained international success and consistent podium finishes in Supercross competitions. Because much of the funding for direct athlete support is provided by the US Olympic Committee, this program is focused on Olympic events only. Also, because funding for this program is fixed, there will be a limited number of supported positions available for the program.

Because this program is focused on international success, all riders who participate in these programs must have shown the ability to earn podium results in Supercross competition either presently or within the next four years based upon performances. Riders accepted into the program must meet stringent international performance standards as a condition of their entrance and continued participation in the program. Athletes who are not achieving Supercross podiums or clearly demonstrating continuing progress to the level where they will not be capable of attaining Supercross podiums will be removed from the program. Further, because the program is strictly based on international performance standards, USA Cycling will accept **ONLY** those athletes who are meeting the current performance standards. If there are not enough athletes meeting the performance standards for a particular category, then the available support spots in that category will remain unfilled.

The standards for entry into this program are derived from current international performances that are indicative of the level of performance required to achieve the podium in a Supercross event. These standards may be in the form of performance times at specific venues, laboratory performance standards, or results from specific categories of international events.

The number of available support positions in each program level is fixed and all available positions will be filled according to the specific performance criteria described for each program. Support is strictly limited to athletes who are qualified by meeting performance standards in an Olympic event. With the exception of the highest level of support, the term of support is limited for each level. The purpose for doing this is to ensure that athletes are “moving through” the system and making continual progress toward achieving a podium result at a Supercross World Cup. Athletes who “stall out” or fail to demonstrate progress, will be removed from the programs. Additionally, athletes with a long history of performance, e.g. several years or more who have failed to demonstrate the ability to achieve a top-three finish at a Supercross may not be accepted into the program, and/or may receive a lower prioritization than an athlete performing at a similar level who has only recently started competing in that event.

## **Program Goals**

The goal of this program is to provide a support structure for our top athletes who are delivering international results; and to create additional motivation and incentive for developing athletes to transition to the Supercross events and to progress to the highest level of performance.

## **Strategy**

- Create consistent, tiered support program and motivate athletes to “move up” the support ladder.
- Use strict international criteria for the funded levels of the program.
- Limit amount of time an athlete can remain at any level of the program other than “Podium Capable”.
- Require clearly demonstrated progression in performance towards “Podium Capable”.

## **Program Components**

### **1. Podium Capable Program**

- 1.1. Description – This program will provide resources and support to our top athletes and ensure that they have access to the *international* racing competition they need in addition to financial support, coaching and sport science. This program will require the athletes to meet strict international standards, e.g., a podium finish in the Supercross World Cup. In other words, these athletes will be “capable” of attaining the podium at Olympic and Supercross competition.

The entire focus of this program will be on international success and will endeavor to instill and reward that philosophy in our top athletes. We believe that the ONLY path to sustained international excellence is through the development of a cadre of American athletes for whom success at the International level is paramount.

In order to qualify for the support and funding commensurate with this level, athletes will be expected to agree to and fulfill an international racing program that will be negotiated with each athlete in advance of the season. This agreement will be in the form of a contract between the athlete and USA Cycling that will commit the athlete to certain events during the year. Additionally, an athlete at this level will be required to demonstrate they remain “podium capable” by meeting specific benchmarks during the season. These benchmarks will be determined by USA Cycling coaching staff and based upon their assessment of reasonable and periodized performance standards.

Because the qualification for this level of support is contingent upon the potential for podium finishes at the Supercross, athletes may remain at this level so long as they continue to meet the performance requirements. Allowances may be made for injury and other circumstances in order to continue to support an athlete at this level once they have qualified. However, in general, athletes once qualified will not be supported for more than one year without meeting the qualification standards. Athletes who do not meet requirements for continued participation will be moved to the Podium Potential level.

- 1.2. Goals & Objectives – Our objective with this program is to provide support for our top athletes and to continue to influence their careers and development. Through this program, we will work to maintain a positive relationship with those athletes that have come through the National teams and who continue to share our strong desire for international excellence.

Additionally, this program will ensure that our best athletes are participating in the select international competitions that will ensure USA Cycling is able to qualify Olympic start positions for our nation.

### 1.3. Program Elements –

- Podium Capable Stipend
- International Competition Program
- Contractual obligation to meet specific performance benchmarks up to and including Supercross World Cup podiums.
- Eligible for OTC Resident consideration
- Eligible for Elite Athlete Health Insurance
- Eligible for nomination to Olympic Jobs program

1.4. Benefit – Developing, encouraging, and rewarding international excellence will ensure that American athletes FOCUS on international excellence as their benchmark. In other words, we will create and reward podium-capable athletes who are driven to succeed at the highest levels.

## 2. Podium Potential Program

2.1. Description – This program will focus on the continuing development of the best American cyclists and will endeavor to provide the needed programmatic support in the form of camps and International competitions that are necessary to allow *those who are capable* to “graduate” to the Podium Capable support level.

This athlete centered and coach driven program will be the primary pathway to the top level of international performance and will include **only those athletes who CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE PROGRESS TOWARD THE PODIUM CAPABLE LEVEL**. Membership in this program will be contingent upon meeting international performance criteria and *continual progression* to the highest level of International performance (Podium Capable level). Athletes who “stall out” in terms of progress will be removed from the program. In general, it is expected that athletes will move through this program in three years or less. Under various circumstances it is recognized that athletes may drop down to this level from Podium Capable.

In order to qualify for the support and funding commensurate with this level, athletes will be expected to agree to and fulfill an international racing program that will be negotiated with each athlete in advance of the season. This agreement will be in the form of a contract between the athlete and USA Cycling that will commit the athlete to certain events during the year. Additionally, an athlete at this level will be required to demonstrate they remain “podium potential” by meeting specific benchmarks during the season. These benchmarks will be determined by USA Cycling coaching staff and based upon their assessment of reasonable and periodized performance standards.

2.2. Goals & Objectives – Our goal is to provide support and assistance to those athletes that have demonstrated they are capable of developing to the Podium Capable level. This program will also be designed to instill an attitude of professionalism in our top amateur riders; and to provide needed opportunities for international racing experience.

### 2.3. Program Elements –

- Podium Potential Stipend
- International competition program Eligible
- Contractual obligation to meet specific performance benchmarks
- Eligible for OTC Resident consideration
- Eligible for Elite Athlete Health Insurance consideration
- Eligible for nomination to Olympic Jobs program

2.4. Benefits – This program will provide support for emerging talent and create an uninterrupted pathway or “bridge” for our best athletes to the top level of international performance.

### **3. Podium Promise Program**

- 3.1. Description – This program is aimed at identifying and developing the next generation of cycling talent. Athletes who qualify for this level must meet stringent performance requirements derived from international standards and demonstrate the potential to attain the Podium Potential and, ultimately, the Podium Program level of performance. Again, in order to qualify for this level, athletes must continue to demonstrate *progress* toward ever higher performance levels – athletes cannot “park” at this level of performance. In general, it is expected that athletes of elite age will move onto a higher level of the Podium Program in three years or less.
- 3.2. Goals & Objectives – The goal of the program is to create an environment that will speed the development of our athletes by providing access to professional coaching and sport science, as well as top level domestic and international racing opportunities.
- 3.3. Program Elements
  - Podium Promise level assistance to attend National Team projects, qualifying events and camps.
  - Possibility for international competition
  - Eligible for minimal equipment support
  - Eligible for Elite Athlete Health Insurance consideration
- 3.4. Benefits –The program will ensure that our best emerging talent has access to the resources and opportunities required for their continual development. Like the programs above, this program is “progressive” in that it is predicated upon continual progress by the participants.

#### **Overall Benefits**

This program will provide the needed incentive for athletes to focus on the specific goal of international and Olympic success. .

#### **Prioritization of Awarding Podium Program Positions**

In the case that more riders attain the minimum standard for a given elite support program than there are available support positions, the allocation of support positions will be prioritized according to the following criteria:

1. Riders who have achieved a top-three (3) finish at the Supercross in the past 12 months.
2. Riders who have achieved a top-three (3) finish at the Supercross and top three (3) overall ranking in the Supercross Championship in the past 12 months.
3. Riders who exceeded the minimum performance time or standard by the greatest percentage within the previous 12 months.
4. Riders with the greatest rate of improvement in time or performance standard within the previous 12 months.

For U23 support programs, the allocation of support positions will be prioritized according to the following criteria:

1. Riders who have achieved a top-three (3) finish in major international competitions in the previous 12 months.
2. Riders who exceeded the minimum performance time or standard by the greatest percentage within the previous 12 months.
3. Riders with the greatest rate of improvement in time or performance standard within the previous 12 months.

#### **Admission into the Podium Program**

Only athletes who have met the specific minimum qualification criteria for a particular program will be considered for admission to any of the Podium Support programs. Please note that athletes may only qualify for ONE podium program at a time, i.e., athletes who meet the qualification criteria in more than one event or discipline, will be admitted to the program for the single event at highest level they are qualified for.

### **Rider Agreement**

All athletes admitted into the Podium Program **will be required** to sign an Athlete Agreement in order to participate and receive benefits from the program. The Podium Program contract requires a high level of commitment by the athlete. The agreement includes a quarterly assessment that athletes must comply with to receive funding. Athletes must meet agreed upon markers at each quarterly assessment. The concept is to assure the athlete and personal PET that we are on the same team with the same goals. These goals and or markers will differ from rider to rider based upon personal training philosophy and the timing of the program. If an athlete fails to meet goals a plan will be discussed at the quarterly meeting in how to get the athlete back on track as soon as possible. In this way we hope to keep our top performers at the necessary level for the important events of the season. Riders missing two or more markers in a consecutive assessment periods may be moved to a lower level of the program.

### **Podium Program Support Levels**

**Podium Capable** – This program provides a \$25,000 annual stipend plus program and logistical support that is specific to the particular program and/or event for which the athlete is qualified. This is the highest level of support and is restricted to those athletes who are currently capable of a top-three finish at the Olympic Games or Supercross World Cups. Qualification for this support program is contingent upon signing a performance agreement that outlines the athlete’s specific event and project obligations, as well as performance goals for the year.

**Podium Potential** – This program provides a \$12,500 annual stipend plus program and logistical support that is specific to the particular program and/or event for which the athlete is qualified. This level of support is restricted to athletes who demonstrate that they have the potential to achieve a top-three finish at the Olympic Games or Supercross World Cups within the next four years. Support at this level is limited to four years, and athletes must demonstrate that they are “on track” to attain the Podium Capable level within their allotted time frame in order to remain in the program. Qualification for this support program is contingent upon signing a performance contract that outlines the athlete’s specific event and project obligations, as well as performance goals for the year.

**Podium Promise** – This program provides program and logistical support that is specific to the particular program and/or event for which the athlete is qualified. This level of support is provided to athletes who demonstrate that they have the ability to achieve the Podium Potential level within the next three years. Participation in this program is limited to three years and athletes must demonstrate that they are “on track” to attain the next level within their allotted time frame in order to remain in the program. Qualification for this support program is contingent upon signing a performance contract that outlines the athlete’s specific event, project and equipment obligations, as well as performance goals for the year.

### **2010 Podium Program Qualification Matrix**

The following tables describe the minimum criteria required for consideration of athlete to enter the program. All time, performance, Supercross World Cup, and or Olympic podium requirements must be in the same discipline (Road, Track, MTB, and BMX). Subsequent qualifications in different events in the same discipline in the successive years will be considered a continuation of the podium process, i.e., once an athlete meets a standard in a discipline, they must meet subsequent year standards in any event in that discipline. Athletes who meet podium standards in more than one event may only qualify for ONE podium program per year:

Funding level	BMX	
	Elite Men	Elite Women
<b>Podium Capable</b>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2009 UCI Supercross Overall Champion</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of two (2) Supercross wins in the 2009 SX season</li> </ul>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2009 UCI Supercross Overall Champion</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of one (1) Supercross win in the 2009 SX season</li> </ul>
<b>Podium Potential</b>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top three (3) Overall in the 2009 UCI Supercross Season End Rankings</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of two (2) International Supercross podiums in the 2009 SX season</li> </ul>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top three (3) Overall in the 2009 UCI Supercross Season End Rankings</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of two (2) International Supercross podiums in the 2009 SX season</li> </ul>
<b>Podium Promise</b>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A podium result in a UCI International Supercross Race</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top ten (10) Overall in 2009 UCI Supercross Season End Rankings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A podium result in a UCI International Supercross Race</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top ten (10) Overall in 2009 UCI Supercross Season End Rankings</li> </ul>