

USA Cycling U23 European Development Program (UEDP) FAQ

When does the roster get set, for the U23 European Development Program, each year?

Trick question! The UEDP fundamentally operates without a set roster. Rather, athletes participating in the UEDP can be selected for race trips at any time, and conversely, participation in a race trip does not guarantee participation in future race trips. This creates a program that is both highly competitive to participate, yet also open for emerging talent to show their ability. Both aspects are important in the best development of U23 road athletes racing at the European level.

What is the aim of the UEDP? Do the riders race in both the US and Europe?

The aim of the UEDP is not singular in practice, but the ultimate goal is to produce American road cyclists, that are Olympic medal capable. This entails taking the top U23 road athletes and giving them exposure to the highest level of international U23 competition, as well as coaching and resources to help maximize their athletic potential. Riders selected for the UEDP historically race in both the US and Europe. However, the confusion occurs in that, the UEDP only consists of European racing. UEDP athletes are typically members of a trade team as well that facilitates their American racing.

I am a U23 athlete, what do I need to do to get selected to participate in the UEDP?

Selection for the UEDP is based on a triangulation of three main criteria, competition results, physiological data, and mental assessment. These are the three broad categories that factor into selection, but the underlying driver is for an athlete to enter into the selection pool, they need to in some way demonstrate that they are competitive on the same level as the riders already in the program. Physiological data and mental assessment, via conversation, power files, metabolic and lactate testing, are all taken into account, but ultimately competition performance is weighted most heavily. Since the UEDP is a “rotating door” program, where riders can enter and exit the program at any point, there is no single “selection race”, or “trials” style event. The events where results are most valued are the events in which athletes can compete against athletes that are already proven in European competition. Barring any anomalies in the competition environment (i.e. an event date conflict that leads to a reduced field), these are the US events that are heavily looked at as indicators of European performance potential:

- USA Cycling U23 National RR and ITT Championships
- Tour de Beauce
- Redlands Classic (specifically, Sunset Loop, ITT, and Oak Glen stages)
- Tour of the Gila (specifically Gila Monster stage)
- USA Cycling Professional RR and ITT Championships
- UCI races in North America and Europe

The other factor that must be considered in athlete selection for the UEDP is age. When riders are racing age 19 and 20, the driving factor in selection is development

potential. Athletes at 19 and 20 need to display they have the strength to race in Europe on a level where they can participate in the race, such that they can learn from it and apply that investment forward. Athletes at 21 and 22 are reaching the point where they are expected to display increased power in results, such that they are capable of top 10 performances in UCI .2 and .NCup events. The UEDP is all about progress, and that is why the program is set up to operate on a subjective selection process. Coaches and Program Directors are in place to assess and nurture this progress.