

## **Team California Juniors – What it Means to be TCJ**

Team California Juniors (TCJ) is focused on developing young athletes in to their best bicycle racing selves. Our goal is to generate racers capable of confidently and successfully racing for Team California.

To achieve this goal, we draw on the collective experience and guidance of former elite and professional cyclists and current USA Cycling licensed coaches and managers.

TCJ is selective about the racers it brings in to its program. If you have been invited to join the program, it is because TCJ believes you are capable of working in partnership with us and taking every opportunity available to help you succeed.

TCJ athletes are evaluated along four tracks:

- ***Sportsmanship & Professionalism***
- ***Cycling Skills Development***
- ***Drive***
- ***Athletic Ability***

Your growth along these tracks are your pathway to success.

## **Sportsmanship & Professionalism**

Sportsmanship: conduct (such as fairness, respect for one's opponent, and graciousness in winning or losing) becoming to one participating in a sport.<sup>1</sup>

Professionalism: a combination of skill and high standards.<sup>2</sup>

TCJ athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and professional manner at all times.

**The most important ways to exhibit sportsmanship and professionalism as a member of this team is through advocacy for TCJ and for the sport.**

Remember, TCJ is funded and driven by sponsors, donors, and dedicated volunteer management who want to see the program succeed and, frankly, deserve credit for their assistance and efforts.

So, very simply: the more often a TCJ athlete presents TCJ and the sport to his or her “public” in a positive light, the more valuable the athlete is to TCJ.

**Actions** a TCJ racer should take:

- wear Team California Juniors kit when on the bike, or TCJ casual wear at cycling-related events.
- be present and be a positive influence at awards ceremonies regardless of their placing.
- pre-register for races at the earliest opportunity.
- invite friends to join GS Andiamo.
- invite friends to attend races.
- proudly reference TCJ status on social media platforms.
- follow all TCJ-related social media accounts.
- publish positive social media messages about TCJ, its donors, sponsors and management.

There is no I in Team. TCJ athletes are expected to be part of the team first and individuals second. Part of the TCJ athlete’s growth as an individual is moving from racing for themselves to racing as part of a team. The TCJ athlete is one who has more to learn by being part of a team as opposed to riding for themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Merriam Webster Dictionary.

<sup>2</sup> Collins Dictionary.

### **Cycling Skills Development.**

The Team California (TC) athlete's goal is to eventually successfully compete in the sport of bicycle racing at the highest level. The Team California Juniors (TCJ) athlete's goal is, of course, to start taking steps to achieve that goal. The TCJ athlete should take every opportunity to sharpen bicycle-racing skills and test them at the highest level available to him or her.

**Actions** a TCJ racer should take:

- train with TCJ teammates
- attend TCJ approved skills and competition clinics
- seek to advance through categories (take advantage of every upgrade point offered in clinics and camps)
- seeking to become a mentor and/or coach

## **Drive**

Team California Juniors athletes are chosen because of their love for the sport. They are athletes who are driven to compete as well as just ride their bike.

Separate from sportsmanship, professionalism and athletic ability, driven athletes monitor their training and racing so they may readily seek out feedback from themselves, from mentors and from coaches.

TCJ athletes follow the “Three R’s”: Riding, Recording and Reporting. This allows the athlete to begin to understand his or her progress, training needs and racing potential. It also allows TCJ coaches and management to assess progress, guide training when appropriate, and recommend races for the athlete.

**Actions** a TCJ racer should take:

- Follow TCJ coaching and director instructions (RIDE).
- Use a downloadable bike computer on each ride (RECORD).
- Promptly upload ride data to Strava to share with teammates and to Training Peaks for coach/management review and analysis (REPORT).

## **Athletic Ability**

Team California Junior athletes are chosen based on their race performance as well as capacity for growth in the sport.

Actions a TCJ athlete should take.

- Describe focused goals for each event to team management.
- Reflect and learn from each training session and event.
- Show forward progress in the sport based on goal achievement
- Keep an upgrade chart ready for submission to your upgrade coordinator; attain category upgrades based on race performances.