

An aerial photograph of a group of cyclists in various colored jerseys (white, blue, red, orange) riding on a dark asphalt road. A large, stylized rainbow graphic with a flame-like bottom edge is overlaid on the left side of the image. The cyclists are in a hunched racing position, and some have numbers on their backs. The road has a yellow line marking. The background shows a wooden structure, possibly a bridge or overpass.

The Cyclists' Alliance

Report on the first year of our association

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May 2019

Eighteen months ago, we embarked on an exciting and uncertain journey by formally announcing The Cyclists' Alliance. Our sport is changing rapidly, as new fans discover our racing and see that we are among the best athletes in the world, with an exciting mix of traditional races and brand-new events around the world. This has sparked rapid investment, more media focus, and opportunities for growth in all disciplines of women's cycling. Our sport is telling amazing stories through our racing, bright personalities, and is inspiring a new generation of riders.

We created the Alliance to represent the career interests of all women in competitive cycling, because rapid change also demands the preservation of your rights as an athlete and career opportunities. We took on the responsibility to start this movement because we saw how we could put our current and past experiences in women's elite and professional-level cycling to work for you and for our sport – creating a new alignment with our fellow stakeholders in the sport to make sure your voice is heard, and that your unique needs as a professional woman are upheld in a global sport.

It all started with the riders. Our first surveys in 2017 gave everyone an opportunity to tell us what they were experiencing as a sporting professional, and to also tell us what they need to perform at their very best as an athlete and a career-focused professional woman. This information helped us to develop a platform and strategy which has influenced many changes in the sport in just a short time.

In this report, we want to give all members and stakeholders in the sport an update on what we have done so far, where we are right now and where we want to go.

Iris Slappendel, Gracie Elvin and Carmen Small



1. Organization

Organizational structure:

Executive board: Iris Slappendel (Executive Director), Carmen Small (Vice Director), Gracie Elvin (Communications Director).

Advisory board: Brendan Schwab (Executive Director, Uni World Players Association. Labour & human rights lawyer), EU Athletes (Athletes Right advisors), Marianne Vos (UCI Athletes Commission Women's Road representative), Joe Harris (business consultant), Kristen Worley (Gender rights advisor), Marnix van Ark (Legal advisor employment right, Staywise), Eric Vile (Legal advisor), Roos Hoozeboom (Membership and treasurer)

Direct membership and direct voting: Any active professional cyclist participating in UCI events, in the possession of a UCI licence, from 16 years and older can become a member of the association. Also, a former professional cyclist who was in the possession of a UCI licence five (5) years prior or less. All members pay a yearly membership fee of €50 EUR.

All members have a direct vote at the General Assembly. Members can vote electronically to make sure every vote counts.

We will have our first General Assembly in September 2019, and hold a vote for the executive board. Location: TBD, to coincide with the Boels Ladies Tour.

Team ambassadors: Every team has appointed a team ambassador. This rider can relay messages between the TCA and the riders in the team. The TCA reaches out monthly to the ambassadors with a short survey to check on subjects concerning team ethics/ culture, race safety, payment of salary/prize money or any other issues that riders worry about.



1. Organization

Goals of the organization:

The Cyclists' Alliance will represent the competitive, economic, and personal interests of all professional women cyclists.

We aim to:

- improve your career and economic opportunities;
- advocate for fairness and equality in your treatment;
- provide assistance in resolving all types of disputes;
- provide unconditional support to you both during and after your pro cycling career; and,
- elevate the appeal and popularity of professional women's cycling.

Extended mission statement and objectives can be found here:

<https://cyclistsalliance.org/our-mission-and-objectives/>

"The Alliance may exist only one year, but has meant a lot in our sport already," said member and trusted adviser Marianne Vos. "Riders know where to go with their legal or contractual questions, and know their interests will be defended."



Short term:

Expand TCA funding sources to support mentorship and post-career training programs for our members.

We strive to lobby for these changes:

- The establishment of a Women's Teams association so we can make a start with negotiating a joint agreement.
- Equal start numbers at the Paris Olympics 2024



2. Accomplishments

Extern:

- 120 members from 24 different teams and 19 different countries
- We have mediated in 12 different cases between riders and teams
- We provided ten riders with contract advice
- We assisted eight riders to gain release from their teams
- We started one arbitration on behalf of a rider against a team and have succeeded.
- We have advised the UCI and have been part of the discussions in the Women's WorldTour working group and Road Commission, on the following topics: Maternity leave, minimum salaries, insurance and the Ethics code.
- We are happy that our guidance has result in improved regulations for:
 - Maternity leave for WWT team (from 2020)
 - Minimum salary for WWT teams (from 2020)
 - Stronger insurance regulations (for all teams, for 2019)
 - Improved Ethics Code (from 2019 forward)



"Sometimes you don't know you need help until you're in a sticky situation," said Alison Jackson of her experiences.

"When I had a dispute with my professional team I had no idea what rights I had or who to contact or how I could help myself. The Alliance was my starting point, they knew who to contact and how to fight for me and walked with me step by step. I am a huge supporter of TCA because they stand for up for true sport and integrity within our sport."



2. Accomplishments

Intern:

- Independent consultation with a nutritionist (free)
- Post-career support with a career coach (reduced rate)
- Consultation with a Sport psychologist (reduced rate, free for members of the mentor program)
- Supplemental personal insurance package on reduced rate from SVL
- Contract consultation (free)
- Legal help (free)
- We started our mentoring initiative, called TCAMP (The Cyclists' Alliance Mentorship Program) which matched 10 pairs of experienced professionals with newer racers.
- We performed a team culture survey, which helped many riders to make an informed choice for their future team.
- Mid-2018, we opened up our organization for all women's cycling disciplines (CX, Track, MTB, BMX)

From 2019 we added the following benefits:

- Concussion protocol (free for members)
- Independent medical consultation by Claire Rose
- Certified psychologist Valentina Scandolara strengthens the TCAMP team.



Ellen van Dijk is a TCAMP mentor.

"This is a great idea from The Cyclists' Alliance. By sharing experiences between riders from different teams we can use our knowledge in the best possible way. It is very satisfying to help each other, so not every rider has to reinvent the wheel."

"Negotiating with teams can be quite daunting and stressful, but to have a mentor that I could ask questions and who could offer guidance made me a little more confident in what I was doing," said Laurretta Hanson.

"Next year is big year for me, transitioning from a primarily American race calendar to a European race calendar. This relationship has made me much more confident going forward."



3. Financial audit

All of TCA's funding comes only from member fees and donations so far, and all our work on the riders behalf is voluntary. We are truly thankful for the help of our partners like Velotutor (website development and marketing) and Staywise (legal advice), as well as our cooperation with EU Athletes and UNI World Players Association – both of whom have been invaluable resources and teachers for our ongoing mission to support you.

Profit and Loss statement:

We add our profit to our equity. Our equity is currently € 6,434.77. We want to save our assets in case we need to spend it on legal costs and on travel and accommodation costs.



Conclusion

We made great strides in just one year, but we know our journey together is just beginning as more fans demand racing coverage, and sponsors and race organizers see the amazing marketing potential in women's competitive cycling. We will be here every step of the way to make sure the rider's careers are more rewarding, safer, and with the kind of opportunities and career support that they deserve.

Iris, Gracie, and Carmen.

The Cyclists' Alliance

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Annual Report 2019

