

Academy Report – Sponsored by Utmost and Ian Brown's

The Academy is the very important link between the U12 section of our Club and the Senior section, and it is vital to the success of the GVC. If the Academy thrives and functions the way it is intended to, it will provide a steady stream of well prepared and enthusiastic group of riders ready to compete at senior level both within the Club and in the wider world of cycling. The performance and development of the Academy riders during 2025 clearly shows we are track to produce riders capable of competing a high level, such as the Island Games, Commonwealth Games and even to pursuing a career in the sport.

This year the Academy has been run by Gary Wallbridge, Adrian Tourtel and Paul De Garis and their approach appears to be working with the Academy numbering of around 22 riders spread between U18, U16 and U14 categories. With most of these riders, and in particular the younger ones, taking part in all the disciplines we have on offer and with many of the riders also taking part in or assisting with the Flyers programme, it has been a very busy season for many.

The highlights of the year have been numerous, the off-island trips are always very special and it is vital for the development of our younger riders to experience a different racing environment and against unknown opposition. These trips include many to the UK to participate in the Southern Series XC, also two designated Academy trips, one to the Southern XC and the other to France and of course the Islands Games. The French trip was a huge success with 11 riders travelling for a very busy weekend, this will be repeated in 2026, I am sure. We need to thank Alex Margison, Mark Smith, Adrian Tourtel, James Duguid and James Shorto for organising the trip and supporting the riders when in France

If producing top riders for the future is one of Academy goals, well 2025 was a good example of how well it can work. Three Academy riders, Ollie Duguid, Charlie Toutel and Seth Davey, gained selection for the 2025 Island Games in Orkney with all three producing outstanding performances during the Games and helping the Guernsey team place second in the cycling medal table. Then we have young Zach Smith, who has raced and excelled at the top level on the U16 category in the UK, the European Youth MTB Championships in Sweden and other high level MTB races in Europe, it was a very busy season for him, culminating in him being invited to join BC's National School of racing....and that means he is very special. Well done to Zach and also to the three Island Games riders, this must inspire the younger riders, not just in the Academy also those in the U12 and U10 categories to aspire to achieve the same goals.

One the aims of the Academy is to 'Inspire the riders to aspire to achieve their goals', we will continue to work with this great bunch of your riders to help them achieve their goals, whatever they may be in the world of cycling.

The improved performances of our all of our Academy riders during the 2025 season is very evident in the race results, some very competitive racing, quicker times, PB's and records, with Seth Davey breaking some very good TT records along the way, Zach and Charlie fighting for top spot in the XC and CX races, this is all good news.

Much of this good work and overseas racing is only possible with the financial support given by our Academy sponsors, Utmost and Ian Brown's and I will also include the Guernsey Sports Commission, we thank your continued support.

We are really looking forward to 2026