



© 17 December 2022, 19:30 (GMT)

ZWIFT ACADEMY WINNERS WILL JOIN PRO TEAMS IN 2023

After a Challenging Final Test in Spain, Alex Morrice and Luca Vergallito have been awarded pro cycling contracts for the 2023 season



For the seventh year in a row, the Zwift Academy Road talent identification and training program has awarded pro contracts to two athletes who distinguished themselves above all others. The 2022 talent identification program concluded in mid November in Denia, Spain, and Zwift announced the winners in a video released on GCN today.

The winners are Great Britain's Alex Morrice, age 22, who will join the UCI Women's World Tour with CANYON//SRAM Racing, and Italy's Luca Vergallito, age 25, will join the Alpecin-Deceuninck Development Team.

In order to earn their respective pro contracts, Alex and Luca set themselves apart from the more than 160,000 Zwifters who participated in the 2022 Zwift Academy Road. They were among the finalists – five men and five women – who were invited to the finals in Denia.

At finals, all the riders participated in Zwift challenges and races, met with coaches and teams staff, and had the chance to ride with athletes from both teams. Alex and Luca distinguished themselves for having exceptional athletic talent, impressive on-bike skills, and the necessary demeanor to learn what it takes to succeed at the highest levels of racing.

Alex is a level 34 Zwifter, and impressed the coaching staff at finals with her raw talent. A relatively new rider, the team believes she has a huge amount of development potential.

Magnus Bäckstedt, lead Sport Director at CANYON//SRAM Racing says: “Alex impressed me with her current power numbers for the type of rider we were hoping to find for the team. She also displayed a good understanding of tactics, with a real feeling for the race moment and she still has room to develop. Alex impressed during the whole week of finals and we're excited to welcome her to the team.”

“It was such a privilege to get to go to Spain and spend a week with the incredible women on CANYON//SRAM Racing,” said winner Alex Morrice. “I was so excited to get to ride with some of the world’s best women professional cyclists. Everyone made me feel so welcome and I couldn’t be more excited to race alongside these ladies in 2023 and beyond.”

Luca is a level 39 Zwifter who impressed the judges with his impressive power numbers and proved he had the capabilities needed to succeed on the road, as well as on Zwift.

Kristof de Kegel, Performance Manager at Alpecin-Deceuninck says: “Luca performed in a very constant way during the Zwift Academy Finals week, which shows that he has the right physical and mental skills to be a professional rider. His cycling progression was interrupted because of his studies so within the team we believe that we can make some big steps with him in the future. We are really looking forward to getting the best version out of Luca!”

"Even for someone who lives so close to the heart of professional racing, it can be very hard to get noticed by the big teams. I'm so grateful that Zwift gave me a way to get noticed, and I'm so excited to join the Alpecin-Deceuninck development team for the coming season, to get to test my fitness in the most important races, and to learn racing from many of the world's best athletes," said Zwift Academy Road winner Luca Vergallito.

You can join the Zwift Academy winners for rides in Watopia in the coming days. The [Alex Morrice CANYON//SRAM ride](#) will be held on Monday, December 19 at 10 AM PST // 11 AM MST 1 PM EST // 6 PM GMT // 7 PM CET. The [Luca Vergallito Alpecin-Deceuninck ride](#) will be held on Tuesday, December 20, at 9 AM PST // 10 AM MST // 12 PM EST // 5 PM GMT // 6 PM CET. You can find both events in the Zwift Companion App, and on the events page, [here](#).

A series of films produced at finals is now available on GCN, giving viewers the chance to go behind the scenes with the finalists as they worked to earn their spot on the pro teams. You can see the videos [here](#).

Images of the winners from Zwift Academy Road finals are [here](#).

To learn more about the finalists and to see how you can stay up to date with the latest Zwift Academy news, please visit [zwift.com/academy](https://www.zwift.com/academy).



ABOUT ZWIFT

Zwift is the fitness company born from gaming. We're dedicated fitness enthusiasts, experienced video game developers, and disruptive thinkers. Play is in our DNA and we know fun fuels results.

Zwift utilizes massively multiplayer online gaming technology to create rich, 3D worlds ripe for exploration. Join thousands of cyclists and runners in immersive playgrounds like London, New York, and Paris as well as our very own Watopia.

Our app connects wirelessly to exercise equipment: bike trainers, treadmills, and more, so your real world effort powers your avatar in the game.

From friendly races to social rides and structured training programs, Zwift unites a diverse community in pursuit of a more fun, immersive and social fitness experience.



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