

On Triathlon Academy

What is the On Triathlon Academy?

The On Triathlon Academy is a unique development program designed to nurture young triathlon talent.

In an industry-first collaboration between three leading brands, sportswear brand On, bike manufacturer Canyon and wetsuit producer sailfish came together to address the unique challenges faced by aspiring triathletes. Pressures of international competition, the financial burden of the sport, and the long-term commitment required to reach the top can be significant obstacles for many young triathletes.

The On Triathlon Academy powered by Canyon and supported by sailfish provides a holistic approach to athlete development and a pressure-free environment where the athletes can focus on reaching their full potential.

The Academy will kick off in March 2025 with four athletes.

How did the idea for the Academy originate?

On has a long history with triathlon, starting with co-founder Olivier Bernhard, a former professional triathlete himself. Over the years, On has developed its triathlon roster, including Nicola Spirig, Kristian Blummenfelt, and Javier Gomez. Through building its roster and exchanging conversations with triathletes all over the world, On realized that the early years of a triathlete's development are crucial, but they are also the years where support is often lacking and pressure is high.

Using these insights from the triathlon world, On developed the concept of the Triathlon Academy, aiming to provide a safe and developmental space for young, talented triathletes where they do not need to worry about finances and relieve some of the mental pressure to help them develop and gain the experience they need to become the champions of tomorrow.

What is the goal of the academy?

Addressing the pressure of international competition, the financial burden of the sport, and the long-term commitment required to reach the top, the On Triathlon Academy aims to remove these barriers for young triathletes, allowing them to develop on their own time and help them on their journey to the top of the triathlon sport. The academy also seeks to foster a strong sense of community amongst its athletes. By creating a supportive and collaborative environment, we aim to break the perception of triathlon as solely an individual pursuit, promoting teamwork, shared experiences, and mutual encouragement.

What do athletes receive?

The athletes part of the academy will receive a package of financial support, training support, and gear to help them gain experience on the triathlon circuit.

Financial Support

Each athlete will receive a travel stipend to support them on their journeys to different races worldwide

Training Camps

While athletes will continue to work with their coaches, the academy will invite them to join one to two training camps a year. This will not only provide an opportunity to connect with fellow young triathletes, build a community but also direct touchpoints with the brands, who will offer onsite insights into their products, help the athletes fine-tune their product selection, and generate content that the athletes can use to promote their personal brands.

Access to On's Athlete Compass

Athletes in the academy will benefit from the offerings of the On Athlete Compass. This is a program that provides 360-degree support to On-sponsored athletes in different areas, including those that are typically overlooked in traditional sponsorships (i.e., financial planning, personal branding).

Gear

On will support the athletes with two kit drops per year, one in the spring and one in the autumn. sailfish will help them with their swimming kit, and the athletes will be provided with bikes by Canyon.

Will athletes be living together?

The athletes will not be based in one location together at the same time. They will spend time together during the training camps and at races but will continue training with their pre-existing teams and setups.

How long do athletes commit to the academy?

Athletes will benefit from the On Triathlon Academy services for two years, with an option to prolong the partnership for two more years, depending on their age. When athletes turn 23, they transition out of the academy and enter the elite racing fields.

Will On sign the athletes transitioning from the academy to professional contracts?

Individual sponsorship contracts will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the end of the triathlon academy.

How are athletes selected?

Athletes are selected based on multiple criteria, including their past performances at junior and U23 international competitions. High-performance coaches and federations are also consulted to provide insight and data on the talent.

Who are the Talents part of the Academy?

The first four athletes who have signed up to participate in the academy are Aspen Anderson (AUS), Jimena De La Pena (USA), Mathis Beaulieu (CAN), and Canyu Liu (CHN).

Anderson (AUS) won the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games, De La Pena (USA) came second, Beaulieu (CAN) came third at the 2023 Junior World Championships, and Liu won the 2024 Asian Youth Championships.

What does the future look like for the academy?

The academy will look to expand with two more athletes in 2026 while continuing to support those already part of it. The academy will be limited to a handful of triathletes to ensure they receive the best support.

How does the academy fit into On's sports marketing strategy?

The On Triathlon Academy is a natural extension of On's ongoing investment in young athletes. On already supports the next generation of athletes through partnerships with collegiate athletes in the USA (NIL), dedicated partnerships with junior tennis players, and the On Youth Camp and Academy in the road and track disciplines. The On Triathlon Academy further solidifies On's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering the growth of future champions.

Will there be opportunities for academy athletes to collaborate with or learn from On's professional triathletes?

Yes, the academy athletes will be able to connect with current and former On professional triathletes. Javier Gomez, for example, will step into a mentorship role, traveling to some of the races throughout the year to support the athletes and will be available to them for questions and advice.

Will the academy provide access to sports psychologists, nutritionists, or other specialized support staff?

Yes, the On Triathlon Academy offers access to sports psychologists, nutritionists, and other specialized support staff through the On Athlete Compass, which participants have access to.

The On Athlete Compass includes services not typically offered in traditional sponsorships, such as financial planning and personal branding, but health and fitness-related support like sports psychologists, nutrition workshops, and 1:1 coaching.

The academy aims to provide a holistic approach to athlete development, and access to these specialized professionals is crucial for both physical and mental well-being.

What specific training and development opportunities will be provided to athletes during training camps and throughout the year?

While athletes will continue to work with their own coaches, the academy will invite them to join one to two training camps a year. This provides an opportunity to connect with the other athletes in the academy and for the brands to offer on-site insights into their products, help the athletes fine-tune their product selection, and generate content that the athletes can use to promote their personal brand.