



WCA Women's Cycling Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do women deserve to be paid the same as men if they do not race the same distances?

Professional athletes are not paid based on how long the game lasts or the length of an event. The professional athlete running 100 meters gets the same prize money as the professional athlete running a mile – or the same gold medal if he or she each wins the event in the Olympics. Male and female weight-lifters receive the same gold medal or gold medal prize money when they win their respective events, even if one lifts 100 lbs. more than the other. Similarly, male and female professional athletes in the top major tennis events (French, Australian and US Opens and Wimbledon) play different length sets but receive the same prize money. Professional athletes are entertainers whose salaries are based on public acknowledgement that you are watching the most exceptionally gifted athletes in their sports -- the best athletes in the world competing against each other in an event of appropriate distance or duration that maximizes the possibility of producing entertaining and exceptional play. Elton John or Taylor Swift gets paid \$1 million for performing a show whether they do 10 songs or 15.

Think of the ways in which great athletes are segmented to produce the fairest and most competitive contests between equally matched athletes. We commonly use weight divisions in boxing and wrestling, or separate men's and women's divisions because of gender based physiological differences in muscle mass that have an impact on strength and speed, critical factors in sport performance. What makes the best entertainment and desirable--to-- watch sports event is equally matched competitors. Thus, segmenting athletes into different groups of similar weight or gender types creates the best competition.

For instance, it is illogical to ask whether the heavyweight champion of the world in boxing is a better athlete than the lightweight champion of the world. They never compete against each other;; nor should they so there is no fair comparator. Likewise, it is not sensible to suggest that heavyweights should get paid more than lightweights. The top athletes in each competitive classes are equally extraordinary.

It is also important to note that for many years, women were not allowed to race the same distances as men because of stereotypical and false assumptions about the inferior capabilities of females. Women were not allowed to race a distance greater than 400 meters in the Olympic Games until the 1950's and the women's marathon was not contested in the Olympics until 1984. Thus, it is always appropriate to revisit the historical decision--making related to these distance decisions and the issue of optimum distances for the best competition.

2. There are not enough women racing to mandate a minimum salary for professional women in cycling. Why should the UCI mandate it?

Professional athlete salaries are not based on numbers or proportions of participants. The marketplace sets upper values based on the quality of the top athletes in a sport, not how many athletes are participating. The issue of equal minimum salaries for male and female cyclists is neither a quantity of participants nor marketplace issue. Rather it is an expression of the value UCI or sponsors place on male versus female professional athletes based on their gender. Male and female professional cyclists put the same effort and training into their sport. A statement supporting equal minimum salaries for male and female professional cyclists should be expected of a national sport governing body that has adopted a policy of no sex discrimination. For instance, governments do not establish a different minimum wage levels for men and women.

Maximum values are based on marketplace factors such as television ratings, sponsor interest, and media coverage. However these marketplace factors are significantly affected by international sports governing body decisions related to investments in the marketing and promotion of the most publicly visible races. Such investments create public and sponsorship interest and elevate marketplace values. If the same commitment and investment is not made for men's and women's cycling, the results will be different ---- as has been the case.

3. Why do women & men race separately? Why don't women race in the men's races?

Separate sex competition is usually mandated by national and international sport federations because they recognize that at the highest levels of competition, the physiological differences between the sexes would create an unfair advantage if males competed against females. Most sports involve propelling a mass through space or overcoming the resistance of a mass. Thus, strength and speed are important performance factors. Strength and speed are significantly affected by muscle mass. Because of the male hormone androgen, males typically produce more muscle mass per unit of body weight and are therefore stronger and faster than females. Having men and women competing against each other is a lot like asking the heavyweight boxer to compete against the lightweight boxer. That is not what sport it about. Good sport requires equally matched competitors. Having men and women competing separately against others of their respective sex accomplishes the same purpose as establishing multiple weight divisions, enabling athletes of significantly different sizes, weights and strength to fairly compete against each other and demonstrate their athletic prowess. Neither the public nor competing athletes want the outcome of the competition to be about who is bigger or stronger. They want the outcome to fairly reflect the athlete's skill, strategic competence, training endurance, courage and endurance.

That doesn't mean that men and women should not compete against each other. Prior to puberty, females and males should compete with and against each other on co--educational teams because there is no gender--based physiological reason to separate females and males in sports competition. Such youth competition groupings should be organized around skill and experience. Girls and boys possessing similar skills should be playing with each other and against teams consisting of boys and girls who are similarly skilled.

After puberty, when physiological differentiation begins its influence on strength and speed, co-educational sport competition should still be encouraged at all age levels. However, there should be rules that require equal numbers of females and males on both teams and also rules that maximize fair competition between the sexes. Males and females should be encouraged to compete with and against each other in sports whenever possible. Mixed doubles in tennis, coed volleyball, coed basketball and mixed teams of men and women in golf are good examples of competitions in which females and males on the same team and in equal numbers compete against identical number of females and males on the opposing team. Cycling race formats with mixed teams of equal numbers of males and female cyclists could and should be created and such competitions celebrated.

4. If the UCI mandated a minimum salary then many teams wouldn't be able to afford to be UCI with their current budgets. Wouldn't mandating a minimum salary just set women's cycling back further by eliminating teams/reducing the number of teams at UCI races?

The development of professional cycling for men and women, namely opportunities for the sport's most talented athletes to be able to train full-time and compete in the most challenging competitions, should be a major priority for UCI as the international federation for cycling. Highly visible aspirational role models drive youth sports participating ensuring the long term health of the sport. This means that UCI should be involved in the establishment of a successful business model for the sport's top athletes including the structure of cycling's pinnacle competitions, marketing and promoting these events, creating sponsorship and advertising packages and insuring worldwide electronic media distribution as both a return on UCI and sponsor investments and establishing the attractiveness of the sport's brand. Investing in these critical business predicates produces the revenue success required to support both minimum salaries and large championship purses. Thus, the conversation cannot be about scarcity, (i.e., there's not enough money for female cyclists), the focus needs to be on growing men's and women's cycling, and not just the former.

In any business sector there are already developed products and brands and there are new products being developed. Typically, major corporations separate their workforces with a dedicated group of specialist experts in sales that focuses on quality control and steady growth of already developed products and another dedicated group of specialist experts in marketing and development of new products. A healthy business demands a commitment to both investments. There are significant differences in these staffing groups and strategic business plans – think of the former as investment bankers engaged in low risk/steady growth and the other as entrepreneurial hedge fund managers requiring innovative efforts and a more aggressive development plan. UCI has already made a commitment to its well-developed men's cycling product and must insure its continued health and steady growth. UCI has not made a similarly strong commitment to developing the women's product and therein is the key issue.

A scarcity mentality is a death wish for hedge fund managers. In order to make money, you need to spend money, especially on marketing and promotion to acquire and position the product, make it attractive to the public and investors (sponsors), thereby producing market demand. Success will not occur unless UCI establishes a separate, highly committed staff



with a marketing and promotion skill set, who are also passionate about the development of women's cycling will not produce success and makes the budget commitment necessary for new product development. The focus must be on the development of media demand and steady revenue streams that will fund women's cycling purses and salaries, not the reasons why there is not enough current money to treat male and female cyclists equally. UCI must get entrepreneurial about women's cycling, committing to its product development.

5. Why should we show women's cycling on TV? There isn't public interest.

There is actually considerable public interest in cycling and the more media coverage women's cycling receives, the more people want it, as with any other sporting event or entertainment show on television today. Promotion and media coverage drive public interest, not the other way around. Data on UCI's Road World Championship indicate that time spent watching women's cycling increased by 134% from 2013 to 2014. Universal Sports Network aired the event, viewers became engaged in how competitive women's cycling is, the network hired a female commentator, and result was audience growth. Universal Sports alone increased their coverage of women's cycling on TV from 13 hours in 2012 to 19 hours in 2014. What this data on audience growth with increased media coverage reveals is the untapped potential of women's cycling.

This question and answer actually reveals a lack of understanding about the development of television coverage and its relation to public interest. The marketer understands his or her function of driving the development of public and media interest through promotion and favorable positioning of the product. Viewership is a function of promotion rather than public interest. Television ratings are determined by three primary marketing factors, whether the program is (1) in prime time when most people are watching, (2) scheduled at a predictable time so people know when and where to tune in (with both of these factors determined by the programming administrator) and (3) promoted – advertised so the event is known to the prospective viewership and perceived to be important and exciting. Just look at the high ratings achieved by the last Women's FIFA World Cup that reflect ESPN's delivery of prime time placement, scheduling and promotion. Television coverage and television ratings are the outcome of persistent intentional promotion by cycling teams, national and international cycling governing bodies and cycling race promoters.

Creating media coverage is not about asking the media to give women's cycling more time. It's about UCI making concrete structural changes in the presentation of cycling that incent the media to provide more coverage of women's cycling. What would be the marketing metrics or media numbers if both men and women participated in the Tour de France or any other major event as they do in the Boston Marathon, Wimbledon, U.S. Open Tennis, the French Open, etc.?

What if the event promoters or UCI put the same financial backing and effort into the women's race as they do the men's race in these "majors"? What if there was only one awards ceremony for both races that featured the male and female athlete who each won their Tour de France standing together? What if the press conference following the race featured the male and female winners? What if the top male and female racers appeared together at the





pre-event and during-event press conferences? What would the media coverage look like then? What if the winners received the same prize money? What if UCI adopted such policies as conditions for its own events or as conditions for all sanctioned events?

6. Should all the men's races (e.g., Amgen Tour of CA, Tour de France, etc.) have women's races too?

Yes, all pinnacle races, typically called "Grand Tours" should include men's and women's racing, showing off the finest athletes in a sport. In addition, men's and women's racing should have their Grand Tours and/or series. Structuring a sport in this way takes advantage of several marketing principles: (1) the Grand Tours or sex separate competition series captures the respected segmented markets who prefer men's or women's cycling and are the dedicated year-round followers of a sport, (2) the pinnacle grand tours capture both these segments and the new general public audience who are curious about a major sports event thereby creating an opportunity to develop new followers, (3) the separate sex tours respectively capture different sponsors and advertisers because the viewing audience have different characteristics, and (4) the mixed sex pinnacle grand tours offer the opportunity to capture global generic product sponsors that appeal to both male and female consumers. The sponsors of men's pro races are very different than the sponsors of the Olympic Games.

7. Should all men's pro tour teams have women's UCI teams?

The answer to this question depends on the values of the UCI with regard to its obligation to grow cycling. UCI has already mandated that Pro Tour teams fund U23 teams with intent to grow the sport demonstrating its commitment to the value of growing men's cycling by 2017. What policy position should the UCI take if it wishes to grow the sport for all cyclists, men and women? If UCI equally values both male and female cyclists, it should mandate that all World Tour, Pro Continental and Continental teams should have a women's team included in their programs.

8. If men's and women's racing happened at the same time, would the media even cover the women's race?

Scheduling men's and women's major cycling events at the same time is illogical if there is a large audience segment that wants to see and support both men's and women's cycling. Most national governance organizations recognize that there are segregated audiences favoring men's and women's cycling respectively (noting that both audiences include both males and females but have significantly different characteristics) and an audience (again consisting of both males and females) that enjoys both and has characteristic differences than the audiences viewing sex-separate events. By not scheduling men's and women's cycling against each other, both events maximize the possibility of capturing the largest possible audience segment. This doesn't mean that sex separate events should be at separate venues or locations, simply that they should not conflict in time. Also, there are great efficiencies in common venues and, for pinnacle major events in particular, great promotional synergies and opportunities to attract new fans. The UCI goal should be vibrant men's and women's standalone tours and combined pinnacle events.



By investing in men's and women's cycling equally, presenting men's and women's cycling to the public using an equal treatment and promotional platform, UCI is placing itself in the best position to capture the female audience which still controls household spending and decisions on family activities. These women are independent, highly educated and very active. Studies show they support one another and their causes. Sponsors and advertisers understand this and do not want to be on the wrong side of sexism. National and international sport governing bodies now understand that sponsors expect them to demonstrate respect for women.

9. Why doesn't anyone watch or care about women's cycling?

These are two separate questions that are suspect with regard to factual support. With regard to television viewership. Viewership is not a function of public interest. Television ratings are determined by three primary marketing factors, whether the program is (1) in prime time when most people are watching, (2) scheduled at a predictable time so people know when and where to tune in (with both of these factors determined by the programming administrator) and (3) promoted – advertised so the event is known to the prospective viewership and perceived to be important and exciting. In the case of live events, the critical factors are (1) convenient time, location, parking and access and (2) promotion and advertising. If men's and women's cycling were treated equally with regard to these factors, the results would be very similar. Again, look at the audience results of well promoted separate sex events such as the FIFA Women's World Cup in which ESPN exercised its promotional clout or the WTA Women's U.S. Open Finals purposely positioning in prime time and heavily promoted. Promotions and advertising creates audience interest rather than audience interest dictating television coverage.

With regard to caring about women's cycling, audience interest is a function of marketing, promotions and television exposure. If women's cycling is promoted as exciting, aggressive, and compelling and delivers on the promise of a quality product (great athletes, well run event, good video/audio production values), the audience will respond in the same way as it responds to men's cycling.

10. Why do only a handful of riders win races internationally? Isn't it because there isn't much depth in women's racing?

This is not true in women's cycling in which races are won by many different riders throughout the course of year. There is no indication of lack of depth of talent in women's cycling. This competitive parity should be considered a sign of the health and quality of women's cycling. Research also demonstrates that overall quality of athletes and consistent successful performances (place finish) is more important than star power or actually winning races. In fact, professional leagues establish policies such as spending caps or salary caps, reverse drafts based on place finish or relegation to maintain such competitive balance. Star power is important in developing year around media coverage in that stars are celebrities followed year around for their social, and other activities and not just their sport event performances. Such year around exposure of the sport contributes to its success. However,

charismatic superstars are few and far between. Such status is most often ignited by extraordinary athletic achievements but continued interest in a star performer is dependent on personality, sponsorship endorsement and advertising exposure and purposeful individual marketing and exposure apart from sport performance. Part of any strategy to elevate media exposure of women's cycling is promotion of individual top athletes to create superstar status and interest. Many individual sports structure the sport in a way that points required for participation in pinnacle major events are followed throughout the year. Following purse earnings is another similar mechanism which is why comparable men's and women's sport purses are so important. Such promotional initiatives on individual athletes contribute to reversal the relative invisibility women's cycling.

10. Should women race the same distances as men? Should they race the same number of days as men? Is it physically possible for women to race the same volume as men?

For many years, women were not allowed to race the same distances as men because of stereotypical and false assumptions about the inferior capabilities of females. Women were not allowed to race a distance greater than 400 meters in the Olympic Games until the 1950's and the women's marathon was not contested in the Olympics until 1984. Thus, it is always appropriate to revisit the historical decision--making related to these decisions and the issue of optimum distances for the best competition. Women compete over the same distances/days/volume as men in many sports such as triathlon, marathons, ultra--marathons, etc. Research shows that women not only compete equally, but in ultra--distance events, performances frequently exceed their male counterparts due to body composition advantages (assuming performances are not enhancing by doping). However, the important point is that there are no physiological reasons to prohibit men and women competing over the same distances or numbers of days.

11. How can we encourage more women to pursue racing bikes?

We can encourage more male and female participants in cycling if we engage in specific programs to introduce, educate, promote and provide equipment and opportunities affected by cost. Barriers to participation need to be identified and addressed. National sport governing bodies, local cycling clubs and individual cyclists need to take responsibility for developing strategic plans and growing the sport at all competitive levels. The development of young riders and the provision of year around training, competitive opportunities and exposure of our top riders need to be supported by specific programs that focus on these different age and skill groups. UCI should assist NGBs by developing model program structures and strategies that can be adopted by countries and local association while taking major overall responsibility for growth of the cycling brand through television exposure and the staging of pinnacle events. Ultimately, it will be up to each country to support the sport of cycling and help each layer of cyclists grow, from grassroots to professionals.

12. How do we get more financial support for women's pro cycling?

Investment in women's cycling needs to start with UCI developing and implementing a strategic plan that centers on elevating the electronic media exposure (digital, cable and broadcast) of women's cycling and female cyclists. Revenues are a function of audience reach which is directly related to such promotional strategy. Investment must start within the cycling industry which stands to benefit the most from increased participation in and popularity of cycling among women. Such strategies also have to focus on finding corporate partners whose products appeal to women and those who want to use women as marketing tools. On a practical level, UCI should hire a major global marketing company to produce and implement such a strategy.

13. How do we increase the popularity of women's pro cycling?

Promoting women's cycling requires a multi-faceted strategy that includes the following:

- Commit to obtaining media coverage of pinnacle major events that include the top male and female cyclists and the major events on a women's pro tour.
- Establishment of a communications strategy that utilizes print and electronic media distribution of stories that showcase the personalities and activities of top female professional cyclists during and outside of their competitive seasons.
- Consider the creation of a celebrity cycling event where female pro cyclists lead teams that include Hollywood celebrities and other public figures in a made-for-TV charitable exhibition.
- In collaboration with cycling product industry leaders, develop a plan to promote female cycling using professional female cyclists for local workshops, appearances and other forms of promotional activation.

14. What qualifies a woman as "pro"? Can't anyone be pro?

"PRO" women's cycling is a very grey area because there are no designation of pro cycling for women. Women's teams call themselves pro but at the same time there are no minimum salary requirements/guidelines, no criteria for pro/UCI teams other than paying a fee. UCI needs to initiate a worldwide licensing and recognition system with clear and specific guidelines for riders, teams and staff. Once, established, UCI should commit to educating members and sponsors about the system and why supporting such development will result in the financial and participation growth of the sport.

15. If women's races are shorter, do they train as much as the men? It's not really a full-time job, is it?

The time and work commitment to be a professional athlete is a full-time commitment for both male and female professional athletes. What an athlete does during full-time training varies with regard to percent time spent on weight/strength training, aerobic activity versus speed intensity, etc. with training strategy varying based on factors related to the length of the race and the nature of the course, etc. The design of training programs are also adjusted to address individual strengths and weaknesses. For instance, from an intensity and strength



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2056 CRAIG ST | WINSTON SALEM NC 27103

perspective, most women train even harder than the men for two reasons. First, the professional female cyclist doesn't currently have the same amount or depth of races on her professional calendar as are available to male pro cyclists so they have to train harder intensity--wise to prepare for the demands of the season and the variety of types of races they do, whereas men often have the opportunity to "race into shape." Second, from a strength perspective, women have less testosterone than men do naturally occurring in their body which gives males an advantage in building muscle mass, so women, especially track racers, have to spend about 20% more time in the gym and doing strength building work than men do. Training full-time for men and training full-time for women means they are both spending an equal amount of time and effort in executing their respective competition preparation programs.



info@womenscyclingassociation.com