

Research and Innovation in Sport on a Budget: The MacGyver Approach

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Research and innovation are necessary in high performance cycling in order to maintain competitiveness on the track, the road and the dirt at World, Olympic, and Paralympic level. Some teams are able to invest substantial sums in this work, while others have smaller budgets but still have the same performance demands. It is possible to achieve effective innovation on a tight budget by using an approach similar to the TV show “MacGyver”, where tools were made or repaired in an improvised way, making use of whatever items were at hand. Applied to sports innovation, this means identifying resources that a team already has access to, creating partnerships that benefit both parties rather than one-sided sponsorships, tapping into external experts who already have the knowledge the team needs, learning lessons from other teams, and being especially mindful of implementation. Cycling Canada has created a team of partners and experts who not only provide support for the team, but who have connected with each other to solve design and production issues. Of particular note is that all of the partners are Canadian, which lends a common purpose to the overall innovation goal. Cycling Canada is committed to providing excellent equipment and performance support to the team, as well as providing added value to the partners.

Key words: Partnerships, equipment development, windtunnel, aerodynamics, implementation, lessons learned.

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