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Guidelines for athlete use of websites and social networking

Facebook, Twitter and the like are very valuable tools for both marketing and for keeping in touch.

Cycling Australia promotes itself and members via Twitter, Facebook and several websites.

We understand that as many of you travel away from home for long periods you may be using Facebook and Twitter (and other various networks) to stay in touch with friends and family.

We encourage this BUT we also want to ensure you do not risk the reputation and standing of the team, Cycling Australia, the AIS, sponsors or, indeed, your own personal reputation.

A good rule of thumb is to think twice and post once. Don't put anything out in public that you wouldn't want your grandmother to read because once it's in cyberspace it's there forever. You might delete it later but that doesn't mean it hasn't been cached (stored) in one of the thousands of search engines that operate on the Internet or hasn't been forwarded on or copied into someone else's domain.

What might seem amusing and innocent to you this year might not be so in a couple of years time when you are about to sign a contract and photos of you on a pub crawl looking like a drunken lout/tart emerge in the media. Or a comment you made about someone comes back to haunt you further down the track.

The safest option is to ensure that your own profiles on Facebook are set to PRIVATE. By keeping profiles private, fans and strangers will not be able to click into your profiles and invade your privacy.

Fans and strangers can join you through the official CyclonesHQ Facebook page or they can follow you on the CA website. Having 5000 friends on Facebook, 4970 of whom you have never met, is not something to aim for unless you are running your Facebook page as a fan medium rather than a personal page.

Riders are encouraged to write on the CyclonesHQ Facebook wall and this might take the form of:

- *telling others about your achievements or the achievements of your team mates*
- *congratulating riders, staff, team sponsors*
- *thanking people for helping you achieve results*
- *chatting with fans of the team.*

The rules for riders in the online environment are the same as those that apply to other forms of communication, including print media, television, radio, and public appearances and the Code of Conduct and Athlete Agreements apply across all forms of communication.

It is important to remember that information and views can spread very quickly and widely through online media and can easily be subject to distortion and misrepresentation. SO BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY AND DO.

In particular, you should NOT:

- disclose personal information about yourself or others
- disclose any confidential information including competitive information belonging to Cycling Australia, your team, AIS or another person, unless authorised to do so
- make any misleading or false statement
- make available any intellectual property, including copyright material (for example, documents, music, film, photographs, artistic works, etc) that you don't have permission to use
- make any defamatory statement (that is, a statement likely to injure the reputation of another person)
- make any abusive, harassing, discriminatory or otherwise offensive statement
- make any statement that might bring the team, the sport, sponsors, CA, AIS or ASC into disrepute

IF IN DOUBT LEAVE IT OUT

HELP & ADVICE

If you have a question, want some advice or need some extra tips and training we are here to help.

You train hard to succeed on the bike but being a successful professional is also about how you present off the bike so we urge you to put some effort into your personal development as well.