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MNCF: Be a little more patient

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THE cycling fraternity have been told to be patient as the Malaysian National Cycling Federation (MNCF) implement in stages improvements through their restructuring exercise this year.

The first on the agenda, the Respeda Series amateur cycling championships, is set to take off in Bukit Serindit, Malacca today; while the second, nationwide centres of excellence formed in collaboration with the Malaysian Schools Sports Council (MSSM), should begin by March.

MNCF deputy president Datuk Naim Mohamad said this in response to former Terengganu coach Daud Mohamed's criticism of MNCF's development committee.

"We have many new projects that are not ripe enough to be announced, but some of them, as you will see in the coming months, are already being implemented," said Naim.

The Respeda Series is a six-round cycling championship run solely for amateurs. Organised by an MNCF-appointed company, AT Race Management, it is aimed at tapping into the wide base of active cyclists at the grassroots level.

The format of the race is planned to generate more involvement from the clubs in the country, with clubs having to enter teams with riders from five different categories up to the 50-years-old and above category.

"Since this project had received enough support and the response had been encouraging, it was the first to be implemented," said Naim.

A four-round King of The Mountain Series, for cyclists into climbing, is also on the cards this year after the successful Genting Challenge - Tribute to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad - held last year.

Responding to Daud's criticism of the failure of the MNCF development committee to assign cyclists to coaches, Naim said the responsibility is with the coaching committee and not the development committee.

MNCF had, at their last annual general meeting of 2003, also decided to open the National Championships to club teams instead of only State teams from this year, so more cyclists to compete.

"Several committees were formed last year and they will be implementing their respective programmes beginning this year," said Naim.

Terengganu CA president Datuk Ahmad Sidi Ismail heads the MNCF development committee, while the coaching committee is chaired by Negri Sembilan CA secretary Yunus Ibrahim.

"I don't blame Daud for thinking that he has been left out but I would ask him to be just a little more patient as we start making these improvements one at a time," said Naim.