

Cycling prodigy reflects on his first year riding for Team GB as he speeds towards more glory

Oscar is gearing up to race world's best

CYCLING champion Oscar Nelson-Julien has stepped it up a gear in a bid to cement his place in the Team GB squad.

The 17-year-old prodigy from Kentish Town has pedalled his way onto the podium at home and abroad this season to establish himself as one of the best racers in the country.

Oscar has recently come off the back of a very successful summer. Last month he won the first stage of the Junior Tour of Wales, arguably one of the biggest road races in the UK.

"That was one of the highlights of my year," he said. "It feels good to race against some of the best in the UK. Everyone

by MAX STOTT

has worked so hard to be there, so it's nice to feel a part of that positive energy."

Another of Oscar's big successes came at the European Championship in Ghent, Belgium, where he won gold for Great Britain in the time trial, a victory he described as "an amazing feeling".

"When we were on the podium we had Germany on one side and Russia on the other."

Other, it's obviously great to represent your country like that."

Oscar's rise on the road could yet have earned him a place at the Junior World Championships which take place in Harrogate, Yorkshire, in October.

The speedster, who travels to the National Cycling Centre in Manchester to train twice a month with Team GB, has been just as devastating on the track, winning a medal in every event that he took part in during the National Championships. He won a gold medal in the scratch race and silver in the madison, while also bagging a bronze in the individual pursuit, the kilo and the points race.

With all the glory that Oscar has celebrated in his first 12 months competing for his country he would be forgiven for dreaming of one day starting at the Olympics or the Tour de France. But like a true

professional he maintains a humble approach to the sport that he loves. "I don't want to plan too far into the future, and think about all the years ahead," he said.

"It has made me feel good knowing I've done something that not everyone else has done, and when you look at the list of people who have won the same things that I have it does make me think 'why not?'"

"But to be honest I'm just happy with what I've accomplished this year. Maybe I could have believed in myself a little bit more and pushed myself even harder. I've won a lot of races and been up there which is something I didn't really expect."

While Oscar awaits news about the Junior World Championships, he will continue to juggle training with studying sociology and maths A-levels at Camden School for Girls sixth form in Camden Town. He added:



Oscar has been a revelation on the road, winning in Wales and Belgium

"I'm quite lucky, my school has been really great and understanding. I get time off when I have to compete in competitions or if I have an

important training camp."

And how does a champion cyclist fuel-up before a big race? Oscar says he's not superstitious, but always has

baked beans on toast for breakfast when he's competing. "I might add a banana if I'm feeling up to it, just keep it normal, you know?"

