

New cyclo-cross coordinator at the UCI

As part of its project to reform cyclo-cross, the UCI has just appointed a new sports coordinator for this discipline. Peter Van den Abeele, a 37-year-old Belgian and former professional cyclo-cross and MTB rider, took up the post on the 8th of December 2003 within the Sports Coordination Department of the federation. Prior to this, he was Team Manager of the Vlaanderen-T-Interim-Eddy Merckx team (cyclo-cross). Following the appointment of Peter Van den Abeele, Régis Alexandre, who until now has played the dual role of cyclo-cross and MTB coordinator, will now concentrate his activities on the latter discipline.

Athens 2004 Olympic Games: organisation of "test" track events

On the 12th of November 2003, the UCI track Technical Delegate, Gilles Peruzzi, visited the velodrome worksite in Athens to assess progress of the construction.

In collaboration with the Athens Organising Committee (ATHOC), he finalised the programme of the "test" track events which will take place from the 22nd to 25th of April 2004.

Decisions of the MTB Commission for 2004

Following the meeting of the MTB Commission on the 8th of December 2003, the following decisions were taken for 2004:

- **Starting procedures for Marathon MTB events:**
The men's race will start one hour later than the women's in order to prevent any unlawful arrangements.
- **Change to race times:**
After a survey of cross-country athletes by Mrs Laurence Leboucher, the MTB Commission, of which the former athlete is a member, has reduced the race times of the Olympic format. This measure is intended to make the races more spectacular and exciting.
They are now as follows:
Men Elite, 2 hrs - 2¼ hrs
Women Elite, 1¾ hrs - 2 hrs (reduction of approximately 15 to 30 minutes)
The race times of the Marathon format have

been increased to a minimum of 4 hrs for the World Championships, Continental Championships and the UCI MTB Marathon World Series. For all other Marathons, the minimum race time is 3 hrs.

USA Cycling visits the UCI

Messrs. Gerard Bisceglia and Sean Petty, respectively Chief Executive Officer and Vice President of Marketing of the American cycling federation (USA Cycling), met the UCI President, Hein Verbruggen. They had the opportunity of discussing ongoing projects with the employees of the different UCI departments and services.

2003 UCI Women's Road World Cup: a prize for the best organiser

The trophy for the best event in the 2003 UCI Women's Road World Cup was awarded to the organiser of the Flèche Wallonne. Mr. Pat McQuaid, member of the UCI Management Committee and President of the Road Commission, gave the award to Jean-François Pescheux, Director of the competition and John Lelange, his Assistant, at the World Cycling Centre on the 27th of November 2003. The ceremony took place in the presence of Mr. Jean-Marie Leblanc, the Director of the Tour de France. For the past 6 years, the ASO has organised the Women's Flèche Wallonne race every April in Belgium.

The following riders have been sanctioned for doping offences:

Robert NUNEZ, sanctioned by **Federacion Costarricense de Ciclismo**, disqualification of Vuelta Ciclista a Costa Rica 2002 and suspension of 4 years from 11 June 2003 to 10 June 2007. **Jean-Marc DOLLIN**, sanctioned by the **Fédération Française de Cyclisme**, disqualification of Tour de la Guadeloupe 2002 and suspension of 6 months from 10 May 2003 to 9 February 2004. **Ana Paola MADRINAN VILLEGAS**, sanctioned by **Federacion Colombiana de Ciclismo**, warning and disqualification of Pan-American Games 2003.