

2005, year of the UCI ProTour

Welcome to 2005, first year of the era of the UCI ProTour! The great reform of professional road cycling officially came into force on 1st January.

In view of the exciting prospect of the opening race (Paris-Nice, on 6th March 2005), on 13th and 14th December 2004, the International Cycling Union organised a conference for organisers and teams which will take part in the first series of the UCI ProTour. This meeting gave everyone the opportunity to be as well-prepared as possible, in order to make the UCI ProTour a success.

The UCI ProTour has a website, www.uciprotour.com, where a multitude of information can be found (calendar, teams, results, rankings, rules, etc).

UCI Continental Circuits: here we go!

It will be tomorrow in South America, as part of the UCI America Tour, that the first race of the 2005 season, an important year since the road cycling calendar will inaugurate its new events, will kick off. The Vuelta al Tachira will be raced from 8th to 21st January on the roads of Venezuela.

It should be remembered that each circuit has its own website: www.uciaticatour.com, www.uciamericatour.com, www.uciasiatour.com, www.ucieuropetour.com and www.uciocceaniatour.com, where a host of information can be found (calendar, teams, results, rankings, rules, etc).

The 2005 UCI Track World Cup «Classics» in Manchester

The third round of the 2005 UCI Track World Cup «Classics» will take place from tonight at the Manchester velodrome in England. After Moscow and Los Angeles, the Russian team is currently first place in the general ranking, ahead of the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain.

Many top level athletes will be taking part in competitions scheduled until Sunday, some of which will be shown live on the BBC and Eurosport. In addition to the Manchester event, there will also be a special keirin race with 12 riders among whom some of the greatest specialists in this discipline.

2004-2005 UCI Cyclo-Cross World Cup in Aigle: Belgian victory and popular success

On 2nd January last, the 8th round of the 2004-2005 UCI Cyclo-Cross World Cup took place at the World Cycling Centre and on the banks of the Rhone. The event was co-organised by the International Cycling Union and the Cyclophile d'Aigle (Aigle cycling club).

The Belgian Sven Vanthourenhout won the event, which was raced on a very technical and exciting circuit, ahead of his fellow countrymen Sven Nijs, leader of the discipline's individual ranking and Erwin Verweken, 2001 World Champion. Many Flemish spectators travelled to support their riders and the turnout of the Swiss public was also encouraging.

The World Cycling Centre at the service of Federations and Teams

At the beginning of the 2005 season, various current great champions are enjoying excellent training conditions provided by the World Cycling Centre (www.cmc-wcc.com) in Aigle, Switzerland.

From 28th to 29th December, the Italian Cycling Federation paid a visit as part of a training course. From 3rd to 4th January, it was the turn of athletes from Swiss Cycling. Naturally it is not only National Federations that are the only ones welcome at the WCC. From 3rd to 8th January, the Spanish team Saunier Duval-Prodir, a UCI ProTeam which will be racing this season in UCI ProTour races, is also staying in Aigle.

Micro Application awards top marks to the UCI website

The «2005 Guide for French-speaking websites» published by Micro Application has awarded the UCI website (www.uci.ch) top marks, rewarding it for «outstanding quality on all levels: content, design, downloading time, graphics and entertainment». Micro Application publishes, technical handbooks for novices as well as IT experts. With 4 million products sold each year in the French-speaking territories, it is one of the 4 market leaders. This positive information is encouraging for the work currently being done, which will result in the launch of new products in 2005, in particular web services and photo galleries.

The following riders have been sanctioned for doping offences:

Iban VELASCO MURILLO, sanctioned by the **Federación Española de Ciclismo**, fine of CHF 1'000.- (art. 64/2). **Antonio GARCIA GONZALEZ**, sanctioned by the **Federación Española de Ciclismo**, fine of CHF 50.- (art. 64/2). **Jean-Michel TESSIER**, sanctioned by the **Fédération Française de Cyclisme**, disqualification from the race Grand Prix Villers Cotteret (FRA), 31 May 2004, suspension of 2 months from 30 July 2004 to 30 September 2004.