

UCI ProTour: media coverage on the increase

The beneficial effects of the UCI ProTour are becoming increasingly obvious, especially in terms of the media coverage of the series.

At the recent Critérium du Dauphiné Libéré, 185 journalists (written, radio-TV and photographers) were accredited, which is a significant increase in media presence compared to previous years, in which the average was around 100. This same very positive trend was recorded at the Tour de Suisse: 180 journalists (around twenty more than in 2004) covered the race, and TV channels from 9 countries (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Japan) showed daily coverage. It should be noted that Danish, Japanese, Norwegian and Swedish TV broadcast the event for the first time. The excellent visibility of this first Tour de Suisse in the UCI ProTour era also included the broadcasting of «highlights» (selection of key moments in the race) in 130 countries, including the US, Australia and South Africa.

The UCI President decorated by the Dutch Sports Minister

During the Management Committee meeting in The Hague (Netherlands), the Dutch Cycling Federation (KNWU) organised a reception on 10th June in honour of the UCI President, Hein Verbruggen who will retire on September 2005. On this occasion, Mr Verbruggen received the medal of Officer of the Order of the Orange-Nassau from Mrs Clémence Ross-van Dorp, Dutch Health and Sports Minister. This award is given to «individuals that have done exceptional deeds for society». Her Majesty Queen Beatrix proceeds for nominations, under the responsibility of the Minister concerned.

BMX athletes at the World Cycling Centre (WCC) are a huge success at the European Championships

Athletes following the high level UCI BMX training course gave superb performances at the last European Championships in Vösendorf (AUT), confirming the technical progress carried out at training sessions lead by Hervé Krebs (former European Vice Champion of the discipline) at the WCC.

The talented Yvan Lapraz, a young Swiss rider aged only 16, won the two races in his category, pushing him up to the head of the provisional ranking for the European Cup. In the Juniors category, Sifiso Nhlapo (RSA) and the Colombian José Luis Montaña, finished respectively 6th and 3rd in the final, which suggests that they will have a promising end of season.

In the Elite category, Tyler Brown (USA) and the rider from Ecuador, Emilio Falla qualified for the semi-finals are now ranked among the sixteen best riders in the world. Next objective of the athletes training at the WCC up to 2nd August: the 1st round of the UCI BMX Supercross World Cup, which will take place in Aigle on this weekend.

Quebrantahuesos and the Cyclosporitive l'Ariègeoise: two weekends in the Pyrenees for the UCI Golden Bike series

The 5th and 6th events in the UCI Golden Bike series will take place on 18th and 25th June in the Spanish Pyrenees with the Quebrantahuesos, and in the French Pyrenees with the Cyclosporitive l'Ariègeoise.

The first event offers two circuits starting in Sabiñanigo: one is designed for well-trained mountain lovers (205 km and up to a height of 4300 m), the other («UCI Golden Bike format») is for the majority of cyclists (90 km and up to a height of 965 m). Last year the Quebrantahuesos had some 5400 participants from 16 countries.

The Cyclosporitive l'Ariègeoise will offer, a week later, a choice of 3 circuits: one of 161 km (up to a height of 3391 m), one of 116 km (up to a height of 2439 m) and one of 71 km (up to a height of 502 m).

UCI Golden Bike: new website in July

The new UCI Golden Bike series website (address www.ucigoldenbike.com remaining the same) will be launched on 4th July. Constantly updated, it will give basic and practical information on all events in the series, as well as offers for the participants of its race, in particular training programmes and, later on other exclusive advantages.

The following riders were sanctioned for doping offences:

Carlos LOPEZ GONZALEZ (MEX), tested positive with EPO and T/E 9.3 during the Vuelta a Guatemala on 29th October 2004, sanctioned by FEDERACION MEXICANA DE CICLISMO, suspension of 2 years from 9th February 2005 to 9th February 2007, disqualification of the race, fine of CHF 1'000.-. **David Estuardo CALANCHE JEREZ** (GUA), tested positive with triamcinolone acetone, during the Vuelta a Guatemala on 23rd October 2004, sanctioned by FEDERACION NACIONAL DE CICLISMO DE GUATEMALA, suspension of 2 months from 28th January 2005 to 28th March 2005, disqualification of the race, warning, reprimand, fine of CHF 1'000.-. **Roland GREEN** (CAN), tested positive with prednisolone during the UCI MTB World Cup in Houffalize (BEL) on 30th May 2004, sanctioned by CANADIAN CYCLING ASSOCIATION, suspension of 6 months from 5th July 2004 to 4th April 2005, disqualification of the race, fine of CHF 2'000.-.