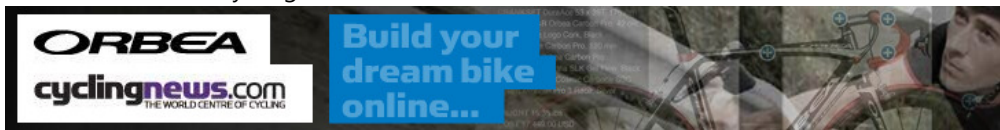




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Giro finale
Photo ©: Bettini

First Edition Cycling News for November 13, 2003

Edited by Jeff Jones & John Stevenson

Beloki has found a team



Joseba Beloki
Photo ©: Jon Devich/CN

Spanish cycling star Joseba Beloki has found a team for 2004, and will announce it on Thursday, November 13, European time, according to a report in AS. The team will not be a Spanish squad, and Saeco, Gerolsteiner and Lampre have been named as the strongest candidates. Beloki recently called off a deal with potential new cycling team Stayer, after it didn't pay its bank guarantee in time and couldn't assure participation in the 2004 Tour de France.

Beloki's manager Pablo Arregui confirmed the news to AS, but would not yet name the team. Beloki will be presented with his new team in its own country, as well as in his home town of Vitoria, Spain [Ed: presumably not at the same time].

With Saeco already having solid leaders in Gilberto Simoni and Danilo Di Luca, it's being speculated that Lampre (Casagrande) and Gerolsteiner (Rebellin) are the most likely destinations for Beloki. In addition, he will take his brother Gorka with him to the new team.

Ullrich and Bianchi closer to agreement

The dispute between Jan Ullrich and Team Bianchi may be resolved in a few weeks, with a meeting between Ullrich and team manager Jacques Hanegraaf scheduled for November 22. Ullrich is owed an estimated €600,000, as Team Bianchi hasn't paid him since August. Team Bianchi on the other hand has been claiming that Ullrich was in breach of contract when he presented himself to the media as part of T-Mobile's squad for 2004. "I hope that we can work out something between us," Bianchi's Jacques Hanegraaf told the SID newsagency.

Hanegraaf also said that he has "little hope" that Team Bianchi will continue next year, although there has been talk about attracting Joseba Beloki to the team. That means the future of Bianchi's current team director Rudy Pevenage is unclear, as he is not welcome at T-Mobile and has only been offered a job as Ullrich's personal advisor by Ullrich himself.

"A place in the team car is not planned," said T-Mobile's Mario Kummer to SID, but added that there is a possibility to work together. "We remain in contact and will talk to each other."

T-Mobile's manager Walter Godefroot excluded any official Pevenage presence in the team however. "I don't think that this will be possible again," he said. "On the sporting side, Jan is my point of contact, in financial matters I speak with his manager Wolfgang Stroband."

Cooke to resume training

By Gerard Knapp

This year's Tour de France green jersey winner, Baden Cooke, expects to be back on his bike this weekend following advice from a doctor that the post-operative complications from surgery to remove a cyst were healing.

Earlier this week, Cooke was seen by Dr Andrew Garnham, a doctor for the Victorian Institute of Sport. "He seems to think it's healed up and the hole is closed, although there is a lip of skin left which is a worry," Cooke said. "He wants me to start riding on it, lightly."

In September, Cooke underwent surgery in France for a cyst that had plagued him all season. Keen to return home, Cooke had booked a first class ticket back to Melbourne, Australia, with the objective of being able to lie down and relieve pressure on the affected area, as he was left with a two-centimetre hole in his groin area. But a ticketing bungle left him in economy, meaning he had to sit on the wound area for almost a whole day. The end result was the stitches broke and it looked like Cooke may have been worse off than had he not had the surgery at all ([see full story](#)).

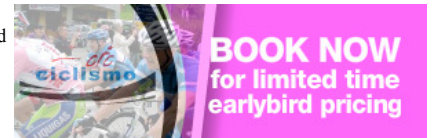
Last weekend, Cooke did line up at the Cafe Racer criterium in Melbourne as he wanted to appear in an event held in his home state. However, he withdrew as he was concerned he may be causing more damage. After the visit to the doctor and his optimistic prognosis, "I'm certainly feeling a lot more positive about it", he said.

From this weekend, Cooke expects to be on the bike for 1-2 hour rides every second day and will gradually build up the distance, depending on how the healing progresses.

Canadian EPO doctor denies supplying

Canadian doctor Maurice Duquette, who pleaded guilty on Monday to prescribing EPO to an as-yet-unnamed Quebec cyclist and coach, has now denied giving the rider drugs.

According to a report from the *Montreal Gazette*, the latest development came in a disciplinary hearing at the Quebec College of Physicians and Surgeons (QCPS) on Tuesday. The CPS disciplinary panel was hearing arguments on making the rider's name public; the cyclist's identity is currently protected by a



publication ban. The rider's lawyer, Alain Barrette, said Duquette had presented the letter denying the allegations by hand to his patient on Tuesday. The previous day, Duquette pleaded guilty to 14 charges of administering banned drugs to 11 patients between 1998 and 2001, including three instances involving the rider.

The panel refused to accept the letter as evidence, saying that Duquette's guilty plea stands. Duquette's lawyer, Jean-François Lepage argued that the only issue at hand in the hearing was the publication ban, and not the guilt of his client, while Barrette, representing the rider, said that Duquette's guilty plea could in no way be linked to his client.

Organizations requesting the lifting of the publication ban include Radio-Canada, La Presse, The Montreal Gazette and the Quebec Cycling Federation.

Louis Barbeau, general director of the Quebec Cycling Federation, said the federation wanted the publication ban lifted so it can tackle the particular drug issue. "When you have a doctor who admits he prescribed some of these substances, we need to find out if the allegations are true," he said.

Italians spending €600 million/year on drugs?

The president of the anti-doping commission of the Italian Olympic Committee, Sandro Donati, has made the surprising claim that Italian sportspeople are spending over €600 million per year on performance enhancing drugs. Donati's claim was made in a report for the Libera association, and stemmed from the discrepancy between the number of drugs manufactured in the country and the number used for treating the ill.

Donati was quoted as saying "These figures aren't explained by the number of ill people in Italy and who really need these products, therefore it is hypothetical that this surplus goes to supplying the athletes." Donati claimed that there were 400,000 Italians doping themselves, adding that the gap was around €300 million per year for EPO and €250 million per year for growth hormone alone. Putting these numbers in perspective, it means 400,000 Italians are spending 0.05 percent of Italy's Gross Domestic Product on performance enhancing drugs for sport.

Donati believed that the pharmaceutical companies were involved in the illegal activities, and "have deliberately put a surplus of products onto the market" in order to increase sales.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald

Astarloza to defend Jacob's Creek Tour Down Under title



Astarloza in 2003
Photo ©: Tom Balks

Organisers of the 2004 Jacob's Creek Tour Down Under today announced six of the twelve teams to contest the event from January 20 to 25. Heading the list is AG2R-Prevoyance who have confirmed Spanish rider Mikel Astarloza will return to Australia in January to defend his 2003 Tour victory. Also lining up will be the new Liberty Seguros (formerly ONCE) outfit from Spain, Italian team Ceramiche Panaria, French teams FDJeu.com and Credit Agricole and the UniSA team made up of local South Australian riders.

Astarloza's victory in the 2003 race was his first professional win and was in the balance almost to the final sprint. Astarloza had taken the lead after stage five when officials resorted to a count-back of previous stage places to separate him and Lennie Kristensen (CSC).

Seven riders were within nine seconds of Astarloza on the final day but AG2R's sprinters protected Astarloza's lead in the final days' circuit race in Adelaide, making for some tense, crowd-pleasing racing.

Astarloza will be joined in Australia by three time Tour de France stage victor Jaan Kirsipuu who has notched up more than 100 victories in his 11 years as a pro. Spanish time trial champion Inigo Chaurreau will also line up with AG2R-Prevoyance.

JCTDU race director Mike Turtur says he expects to confirm the team line ups and the other six teams for the race in the next couple of weeks. "It will be another world class field for the 2004 Jacob's Creek Tour Down Under which promises to be a great race," said Turtur.

AG2R team for 2004 Jacob's Creek Tour Down Under: Mikel Astarloza (Spa), Jaan Kirsipuu (Est), Inigo Chaurreau (Spa), Andy Flickinger (Fra), Erki Putsep (Est), Nicholas Portal (Fra), Mark Scanlon (Irl), Ludovic Turpin (Fra)

5280 plans 2004 expansion

After a successful 2003 with over 20 race victories, the 5280/TIAA-CREF Development Cycling Team (known in 2003 as 5280/Subaru) will expand to fifteen riders in 2004. The team, headed by rider/manager Colby Pearce and supported by recently retired US pro Jonathan Vaughters comprised five espoir and three junior riders in 2003. For 2004 the squad will include 11 time national champion Blake Caldwell; junior national crit and road race champion Zac Grabowski; Sheldon Deeny, winner of a stage in the Estes Park stage race in the pro men; and U23 USA world's TT team member Timmy Duggan. US National team member Nathan Mitchell will join the squad, as well as Ian MacGregor. Junior Alex Howes will join returning riders Peter Stetina and Brady Kappius.

Other riders returning to the team from last year will include junior national team pursuit champion Ryan Luttrell, sprinter Ang Sheldrake (winner of two men's pro races in Colorado this year) and Harvard attendee Jay Ku.

Manager Colby Pearce told Cyclingnews, "the team roster is not complete at this time, we are still in negotiations with additional riders." Pearce extended his thanks to all the team's sponsors and behind-the-scenes helpers, "who were the reason the racers were able to compete" in 2003.

A crash for Gilmore

Belgian track rider Matthew Gilmore has suffered a minor injury in a car crash following the Six Days of Munich. Gilmore, who finished second in the race, tore a muscle and is now undergoing intensive physiotherapy in order to be ready for the Six Days of Ghent.

Contract news

Møller to Alessio

According to Danish TV2, Portuguese based Claus Michael Møller will transfer from Milaneza-MSS to Alessio, and thus join a part of the fakta team. Møller is interested in the move as Alessio is guaranteed a spot in the Tour.

Masschelein & Cornelissen extend with Flanders

Belgian cyclist Thierry Masschelein and Dutch cyclist Bjorn Cornelissen have extended their contracts with the Flanders team, which will reportedly have an Italian co-sponsor next year after the withdrawal of iTeamnova. The squad will still be directed by Frans Assez, who runs the Flanders bike shop in Oudenaarde, Belgium. It will remain in Division II.

Johann Tschopp to Phonak

21 year old Swiss Johann Tschopp will make his professional debut with the Phonak team next season. Tschopp signed a two year contract with the top Swiss outfit, following his stagiaire ride with Phonak this year.

David Loosli to Saeco

Swiss cyclist David Loosli (23) will ride for Team Saeco next year. Loosli rode for Saeco's feeder team Romer's Wetzikon this year, winning the Flèche du Sud (2.6) and finishing third in Swiss Cycling's yearly rankings.

Borghesi to Miche

Italian espoir Fabio Borghesi will ride for Bulgarian Division III team Miche next season.

Managers named for Vlaanderen Division III

The Division III offshoot of the Division II Vlaanderen-T Interim squad is slowly taking shape. Its team manager will be Marcel Van Der Slagmolen, the former manager of the ABX-Go Pass team. Vlaanderen-T Interim III will be directed by Andy Missotten.

Massachusetts CX Champ's this Saturday

The Massachusetts State Cyclo Cross Championships will be held this Saturday, November 15 at Plymouth North High School, Plymouth, MA, the site of two US National Championships. The race is also a Tim Johnson Junior Series race and a Heritage Series Race. Racing starts at 10am on a very rider friendly yet challenging course. There's plenty of coffee and food available from Peoples Cycle. The Plymouth Cyclo Cross is sponsored by Music Unlimited, Hanover and Kingston, MA; Martha's Cyclery, Plymouth, MA; Sago Tea Cafe, Boston, MA and Sims Brothers Marine, Humarock, MA and is presented by the Mass Bay Road Club and International Cycling. For more information go to www.planetpeloton.com or www.bikereg.com.

Fuji announces neutral cross support

ASI/Fuji America has announced a neutral tech support program for cyclocross races through Northeast Racing Services. Fuji's neutral cross support will be primarily based on the east coast, but is available to any promoter in North America. The program will be available for the remainder of the 2003 cyclocross season and a full schedule is planned for next year.

The Fuji Neutral Cross program will be operated and run by Northeast Racing Services director David Fike. **Merlyn Townley** will be chief mechanic and responsible for race day operations. 2004 Fuji cross bikes will be available to any racer who needs a spare bike during the race. A Fuji Neutral support mechanic will repair their bike and return it to the rider on their next lap. Neutral wheels will be available for anyone who does not have spare wheels and mechanics are available to assist anyone in the pit needing help with bike swaps.

The Fuji Neutral Cross Support Program will be present at the following races this season:

November 15: Highland Park Cyclocross, Highland Park, NJ
 November 16: Cycle-Smart Cyclocross, Northampton, MA
 November 23: Team Douglas Cyclocross, Palmer, MA
 November 29: Verge Regional Championships, Cornwall, NY
 December 7: W.E. Stedman Co Grand Prix, S. Kingston, RI
 December 21: J+S Paterson Cyclocross, Merrimack, NH

Contact neracingservices@yahoo.com for updated listings and for promoter enquiries about the service.

825 press-ups for helmetless riding

A New Zealand policeman has handed down an unusual punishment to a miscreant who broke the country's mandatory helmet law: 825 press-ups. Youth Aid Constable Don Abbey was on his way to Buller Cycling Club time trials on Tuesday evening when he apprehended the perpetrator: himself.

According to a report on www.stuff.co.nz, Abbey forgot his helmet while on the way to the race. When he realized, he went to retrieve the missing lid from a nearby friend's house, but was spotted riding helmetless by 15 people. He therefore administered the same penalty he hands down to others: a NZ\$55 fine or a press-up for each dollar. Caught 15 times, he's copping an 825 press-up sentence, which he's reported to have endured on Wednesday.

And if you're wondering how he spent in the club time trial, he came second last.