

Giro d'Italia attracts tasty new sponsorship deal

Matt Cutler

The organisers of the Giro d'Italia have shrugged off the controversy surrounding cycling by signing a two-year deal for Balocco to become the new sponsor of the race leader's prestigious pink jersey.

The Giro is one of cycling's three Grand Tours alongside the Tour de France and Vuelta a España, with its pink jersey having been previously sponsored by Ferrero drinks brand Estathé under a long-term deal. Biscuit producer Balocco is currently a major sponsor of Serie A football giant Juventus, but CEO Alberto Balocco said the company has decided to back the Giro after he attended the race this year.

"The Giro is without a doubt one of the most iconic events in our country, and thanks to its international coverage, shows wonderful images of our Italy around the world," Balocco told Gazzetta dello Sport. "Our sponsorship of the maglia rosa is therefore a fantastic way of reaffirming our Italian pride and increasing our global profile. I realised that the Giro is an extraordinary adventure, a country that is reborn in a different place every day. In every corner of the Italian countryside, even in those places that often do not enjoy any media attention, the Giro attracts a huge crowd that is beyond all expectations."

Balocco's commitment comes with the sport at the centre of new doping allegations amid the fallout from the Lance Armstrong affair. However, Balocco said: "There's always a risk in anything you do but we're convinced that we've made the right choice. I've seen that the testing is severe and gives little chance to anyone who thinks of cheating. We've signed a two-year contract, with an option for a third year. We're not interested in a short-term sponsorship; we want people to remember our name. With the same colour we won the Scudetto with Juventus. We're here to repeat the success achieved in football. We believe in the new cycling."

The 2013 Giro d'Italia starts from Naples on May 4 and finishes in Brescia on May 26. The 2012 edition started from Herning, Denmark and ended in Milan, with Canada's Ryder Hesjedal of the Garmin-Barracuda team the final overall winner.

Fonte: SportBusiness International. Disponível em: <<http://www.sportbusiness.com/news/186608/giro-d-italia-attracts-tasty-new-sponsorship-deal>>. Acesso em: 7 Nov. 2012.