

Basso pursues the “yellow dream” for a special dedication

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A yellow dream, for a very special dedication.

During the presentation of the **Liquigas-Cannondale team**, in the beautiful Palazzo Cusani, in Milan, Ivan Basso confirmed his great goal for the season, **to win the Tour de France for the first time**. For this reason, he is willing to forgo the Giro d'Italia, the race he won for the first time in 2006, that brought him back to the top of cycling last spring, although his participation in the Giro, for which Vincenzo Nibali has been nominated captain, cannot be ruled out.

The two Italian superstars were the centre of attention during the evening, when the **29 cyclists** and the whole staff of the Liquigas-Cannondale team were presented, as was the new jersey, which is mostly white. But hopefully, it will be yellow, when **the Grande Boucle** is run in July, **with Basso as the sole captain**. “After winning the Giro twice, I have another dream to realise,” says Basso. “At the age of 33, I have to try to win the Tour. I don’t think this is my last chance, because I still feel quite young, but the course this year is certainly suitable for climbers, and **it’s a course I can see myself doing well in**.” The champion of Cassano Magnago then lowered his voice when journalists asked him the most intimate question of the evening. “We all know how much **Aldo Sassi suffered** over the last few months,” he explained, referring to the death of his trainer. “It was a bad blow for me, we’ll miss him very much. But thinking about him gives me another reason, **an extra stimulus to win the yellow jersey ‘for him’**.”

For the Giro, Basso and the Liquigas staff (of which the co-sponsors also include the Varese supermarket chain, **Tigros**) have left the final decision for spring. “The first objective of the Liquigas team is to repeat the extraordinary success of 2010, and then we’ll choose the strategies in line with the interests of everyone: mine, Vincenzo’s and the team’s,” Basso continued, during the time dedicated to interviews. “**What is important is always to think big**, which is right for a team like ours. Still, if I take part

in the Giro, I won't be there just to train for the Tour, like a number of foreign champions in the past. I'll participate **to help Nibali** and to work for him."

In the meantime, everything is ready for the beginning of the competitive season; Basso, who is looking forward to being a dad for the third time, **will start racing in the Tour de San Luis**, the Argentinean stage race (from 17 to 23 January), in which he already competed two years ago, which was won by the Luquigas team and by Nibali in 2010. The first event in Italy will be in Laigneglia, and **the GP Insubria and GP Lugano (26 and 27 February) on the roads of the Canton Ticino and Varese**, have been confirmed. Among the other races planned, there are the "Tirreno-Adriatico" in March and a number of classics in the North, such as the "Freccia Vallone" and the **beloved "Liegi-Bastogne-Liegi"**. The programme will then vary in accordance with the participation in the Giro: depending on the choices, there are two different calendars, until July, and the attempt to make the yellow dream come true.

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redazione@varesenews.it