

International Cycling Union: from Paris to Lausanne

Once upon a time there was an International Cyclist Association. It lasted until 14 April 1900.

On that day, in Paris, six men decided to change the history of world cycling. After handing in their resignation, these delegates, representing national federations in Belgium, France, Italy, Switzerland and the United States of America, went on to found the International Cycling Union (UCI).

The first minutes were signed by Emile de Beukelaer, who was nominated President, Alfred Riquelle, the Count of Villers, Victor Breyer, Paul Rousseau and Mario Bruzzone, the treasurer of the new federation.

The long march had begun, and the first UCI Congress was held at the Hotel de Russie in Paris on 11 August 1900, the day before the Track Cycling World Championships.

Amateurs had to wait until 1921, and professionals until 1927, before the UCI would bestow: the title of world champion on road cyclists.

Since the dawn of the 20th century, through the fabulous years of the 1950s up until the present day, cycling has undergone continual development, crossing all the stages indispensable to its technical and structural evolution. Other disciplines were thus progressively added to those which, since the start of this extraordinary adventure, had contributed to building the unique legend of cycling. The track and road events having soon acquired undeniable popularity through their deep roots in the sporting culture of a number of countries, the bicycle was effectively ready to discover new horizons: cyclo-cross and indoor cycling first, then mountain biking, trial and BMX.

This dimension of modernity that cycling has integrated into its historical heritage over the years has multiplied

the immense social value of a sports activity which, greatly exceeding all links with competition, has undoubtedly stimulated the establishment of a much more intense relationship between man and nature.

The UCI, whose mission is to promote all facets of cycling, has always been aware of its responsibilities to the different levels of the movement it has been running for 100 years. Its commitment to encourage the growth of each discipline, organize the world championships and world cups, as well as enrich the cycling programme in an Olympic context represents, therefore, only one part of the efforts made in favour of cycling by our federation, which is also increasingly involved in social initiatives and training and solidarity projects.

Today, with its five continental confederations which unite some 170 countries, the UCI is one of the world's main

sports federations. Based in Lausanne following the reunification of the International Amateur Cycling Federation (FIAC) and the International Professional Cycling Federation (FICP), a decision taken by the Orlando Congress in 1992, it is preparing to open the World Cycling Centre in Aigle, Switzerland, in 2002.

In this new complex, the creation of which will coincide with the completion of a solidarity and development strategy for all cycling disciplines that the UCI has been carrying out for many years, the administrative activities of 50 or so employees and the sports activities of the racers and technicians involved in the training camps will be carried out in perfect symbiosis. A headquarters, a velodrome, a cycling and sports school. Two years ago the World Centre was just a vision. In 2002 it will become a magnificent reality.



The future World Cycling Centre.