

Italian Cyclist Suspended After Links To Ferrari Exposed

Italian cyclist Michele Scarponi has been temporarily suspended by his Lampre-ISD team after he admitted to working with disgraced doctor Michele Ferrari.

The cyclist, who won the 2011 edition of the Giro d'Italia after Alberto Contador was stripped of his title following a positive test for the banned drug Clenbuterol, admitted last month that he had worked with the doctor following reports in *Gazzetta dello Sport* linking the duo.

Ferrari played a key role in the systematic doping program employed by Lance Armstrong's US Postal and Discovery Channel teams between 1999 and 2005 and was handed a lifetime ban from working in professional sports in July 2012. Scarponi has been suspended on a temporary basis by Lampre-ISD even though the cyclist has not admitted to any connection with doping and to working with Ferrari before he joined the team. Meanwhile, the [Italian Cycling Federation](#) is also believed to have launched an investigation which may put Scarponi "out of action for some time".

A spokesman for Lampre-ISD said the team was following its internal medical policy and Michele Scarponi has been suspended by the team doctor Carlo Guardascione. The suspension of the Italian cyclist began on October 25 when he released his statement and the Italian Cycling Federation has been notified of the suspension, the spokesman added.

Scarponi was previously banned for 18 months for his involvement in [Operation Puerto](#) in 2007. Operación Puerto was the code name of a Spanish Police operation against the doping network of Doctor Eufemiano Fuentes; the operation resulted in a scandal that involved several of the world's most famous cyclists at the time. Scarponi admitted he was Zapatero while Jörg Jaksche admitted he was Bella in Fuentes' files while Ivan Basso who was cleared by Italian authorities due to lack of evidence admitted involvement in the scandal to the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI).

The Italian professional road bicycle racer was able to secure a contract with Acqua & Sapone despite been implicated in the Operación Puerto doping case in 2006. The next year he was implicated again in the Operación Puerto case and confessed his role in the case on May 8, 2007. Thereafter, he was provisionally suspended on May 15, 2007. Diquigiovanni-Androni announced on June 13, 2008 that they had signed Scarponi for the coming two seasons with the cyclist completing the ban and won the Tirreno-Adriatico and also won 2 stages in the Giro d'Italia in 2009.

The Italian cyclist was able to award himself a second place finish in the Tirreno-Adriatic and was able to finish fourth overall in the Giro d'Italia where Scarponi was able to take a prestigious victory in the epic stage 19 and went on to a win in the Settimana Ciclistica Lombarda. After moving in 2011 to Lampre-ISD, Scarponi won the Giro del Trentino and the Volta a Catalunya and finished second overall behind Alberto Contador in the Giro d'Italia. After Contrador was stripped of the title for using Clenbuterol which he blamed it on contaminated meat, Scarponi was assigned the title. He finished 4th overall while trying to defend his Giro title in 2012 with Canadian Ryder Hesjedal taking the overall win.