

Gran Fondo New York Winner Stripped Of Title

Oscar Tovar of Colombia, the winner of the 2015 [Campagnolo Gran Fondo New York](#), has been stripped of his title. This was after he failed an in-competition anti-doping test at the May event, according to an announcement by the organizers and the U.S. Anti Doping Agency (USADA).

Tovar won the 100-mile (160km) race that featured 5,000 cyclists from 70 nations, in less than four hours and 15 minutes on May 17. His ban was backdated to start May 17 and any results since then were also forfeited. However, Tovar was able to keep his victory in the Gran Fondo NY Colombia, staged in Bogota on April 26.

A USADA test found that the 32-year-old Tovar had synthetic [testosterone](#) in his system on May 17, 2015, following the 100-mile event. Tovar has been banned for two years under WADA rules and Gran Fondo New York (GFNY) has banned the Colombian for life from all GFNY of its events.

GFNY CEO Uli Fluhme said we are of course upset and hurt that a doper taints the reputation of our race and had us celebrate him on the day. Fluhme added however, it is without a doubt more important for us to do what we can to make our race fair, of which doping controls are an integral part. The GFNY CEO also commented that simply looking away and not testing the athletes is the worst decision that a race director can make because it forces everyone to take drugs to try to level the playing field.

The Gran Fondo starts under the George Washington Bridge in New York and winds through urban and rural areas, including Bear Mountain, before finishing in the suburbs of New Jersey. The 2015 Campagnolo Gran Fondo New York brought as many as 5,000 riders through all five Rockland towns, and riders from 70 countries, including last year's top finisher, Gabriel Corredor of Colombia. The longer course winds its way across the George Washington Bridge and then riders have to climb Perkins Memorial Drive on Bear Mountain before they head west into Ramapo for a stop at Provident Bank Park. After this, they go down South Mountain Road and through Orangeburg en route to rejoin Route 9W for the return to Manhattan.

In the last few years, the sport of cycling has been marred by many doping controversies. Some of the biggest names in the world of professional cycling, including [Lance Armstrong](#), were found guilty of doping and banned. The UCI, the world governing body of cycling, has been on an improvisation mission ever since to curb doping in cycling. During this year's Tour de France, anti-doping controls at the Tour de France were done in collaboration with the French Anti-Doping Agency (AFLD). In a press release, UCI president Brian Cookson had said he would like to highlight once again the excellent climate in which all the stakeholders involved in the fight against doping work together on a daily basis for the benefit of our sport. Cookson had added we can be confident of the robustness of our program thanks to the sharing of information between all anti-doping actors and a strategy focused on even more targeted controls.