

## **Mauro Santambrogio Banned By UCI**

Italian professional road racing cyclist Mauro Santambrogio has received a ban of three years from the world governing body of cycling.

The cyclist, who last rode for UCI Continental team Amore & Vita-Selle SMP, received the ban for a positive test for [Testosterone](#) in 2014. Last year, Santambrogio failed the out-of-competition doping control in October while the rider was still serving a doping ban for testing positive for Erythropoietin (EPO) on May 4, the opening day of the 2013 Giro d'Italia. Santambrogio tested positive for Testosterone and was suspended from February 5, 2013 to November 2, 2014.

In his defense, Santambrogio said he used drugs under the supervision of a doctor for treating erectile dysfunction and infertility. Santambrogio will be allowed to return to competition on October 21, 2017 but the cyclist announced he would not return to racing after receiving the ban.

The cyclist had defended himself by saying that the urologist prescribed him Andriol, a brand name for Testosterone, 40mg for three months and Aprosten for 60 days and he only used the fertility and erectile drugs to start a family. Santambrogio added he did not use the drugs to enhance his cycling performance or make a comeback to the sport. The use of Andriol is banned at all levels by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Santambrogio's lawyer, Giuseppe Napoleone said his client was taken off the Registered Testing Pool (RTP) list and his name was not on the UCI's website for testing since his ban began in 2014.

Under the UCI Rules, suspended cyclists are required to re-enter its testing pool six months before they make a return to their first race. In Santambrogio's case, he announced his contract and plans to make a return in the 2015 season with Amore & Vita on October 31, 2014. In a statement, Napoleone said it appears out of the question that the drug use was not aimed to change or alter sporting results, since Mauro Santambrogio could not compete given his suspension.

During the 2013 Giro d'Italia, Santambrogio joined Danilo Di Luca from his Vini Fantini team who also tested positive for EPO. In the same race, Frenchman Sylvain Georges (Ag2r-La Mondiale) tested positive for the stimulant Heptaminol. Santambrogio had won stage 14 to Jafferau and placed ninth overall at the 2013 Giro d'Italia before news of his positive test emerged. Vini Fantini manager Angelo Citracca had announced (after the Giro d'Italia ban) that the team has fired Santambrogio and may seek damages following any disciplinary action. Citracca had also added we were wrong to engage Santambrogio, betrayed by nice promises, and a very promising beginning of a career but we cannot let this undermine a long-running project like ours.

The UCI at that time remarked it advised Santambrogio that he is provisionally suspended. The UCI statement also read that the decision to provisionally suspend this rider was made in response to a report from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accredited laboratory in Rome indicating an Adverse Analytical Finding of EPO in his urine sample.

Santambrogio is not new to controversies. He was suspended by [Team BMC Racing](#) from racing after his involvement in the [Mantua Investigation](#) that centered on team Lampre, where he raced until 2009.