

UCI World Cup Mountain Bike Gran Canaria 2007 underlines the quality sport-tourism couple, which is promoted by the island council.

Two weeks after the official announcement of the first event in the '2007 UCI World Cup Mountain Bike competition, (which will take place in Gran Canaria on 17th and 18th March) the council has shown itself to be very pleased and satisfied with the work done so far. Cardona, vice-president of the council, argued that this kind of "open door" championships is a good opportunity to showcase the island to the world. *We have been waiting for this project for over a year and a half. Gran Canaria and its cycling enthusiasts deserved an event like this*, he added.

Since he knew that Gran Canaria would be the venue for the next Mountain Bike World Cup, he has put his whole heart and soul into the task of promoting the island overseas. For this reason, Gran Canaria's council and the promoters, DG Eventos and Last Lap, will support the event with all the means at their disposal. In addition to this, the UCI will contribute to the organizational structure.

Perhaps the most important mean is the broadcasting of the championship. There is an information campaign, which begins in the tourist display stands found over the whole island, which show a sample of the cycling competition. This campaign carries on with the disclosure in the Media, which will be shown in foreign countries. The official website of this event, published in three languages, provides a clear example of how an event of how an event like this can be promoted.

According to the councillor José Miguel Álamo, there is an established couple: tourism-sport. For this reason the island council wants to attract another kind of crowd, who comes to play sports thanks to Gran Canaria's climate and to the perfect ground's orography. These are two important factors to enjoy all Mountain Bike's modalities. The councillor said on the matter: *This event will provide the possibility to know that Gran Canaria is not only a sunny place with beaches, but an island with natural enclaves.*

Fernando Portugal, Last Lap's managing director, agrees with José Álamo and in his opinion Gran Canaria's climate was a decisive factor when the UCI chose the island as the next venue for the World Cup. The UCI's interest in hosting the event in Gran Canaria has been overtaking the international sports diary's beginning one month to hold up the event and to avoid its confrontation with a prestige contestant: the Dolomitas, in the Italian Alps.

One of the World Cup's first event's biggest mysteries is the exact route, which will have 100-km long, that characterize the Marathon modality. For the time

being the route is not confirmed, although the organization would be prepared to contest the race in the southern municipality of San Bartolomé de Tirajana. The UCI must take the decision, because it has to supervise the route and check if the necessary requirements are fulfilled to have an event of this magnitude in the indicated place. The organization is doing its best on this matter. Throughout these months it's due to start a 50 stands Mountain Bike Fair on 16th March in the park, which is next to this municipality's town hall, but it has not been officially established by means of the specific commissions' creation in different interventions' matters. At the beginning, it will take place monthly and subsequently weekly.

Daniel González, DG Eventos company director, expects *counting on the participation of approximately 250 cyclists*. The event's organization provides economic aids and so it's easier to bring these professionals to the round island. Daniel González says that *this situation causes a bigger benefit for the event, which was liberated of an important economic charge and can assume some investments in favour of a bigger show. An example is to subsidize the best world teams for its participation in this World Cup's edition.*