



Team NetApp gets a wildcard for the Giro d'Italia

Raubling – January 10, 2012. The German Team NetApp is one of four second-league teams to be invited to compete at this year's Giro d'Italia. As a result, the team, which is now in its third year of existence, will be taking part in one of the three major national tours.

"I was a bit speechless when I got the news. Although we presented ourselves in a confident way when applying, we also knew that we stood only an outside chance. Now it feels like the first season win. It's a great confirmation for us," was the reaction from Ralph Denk, Team NetApp's team manager.

"Our thanks go out to RCS as the organizer of the Giro d'Italia. I'd like to thank them for the decision itself and for the implied confidence in our young team. The Giro will give us an opportunity to prove ourselves. I'd like to emphasize the courage it took RCS to venture down a new path in terms of awarding the wildcard," Ralph Denk added.

The Giro d'Italia will be the highlight of the season for the tour specialists on the team. Thanks to the organizer's early decision, the team can design its racing program and preparation for the season in such a way that it will be competitive at the start. With a view to the general classification, Team NetApp will send its young Czech rider, Leopold König, to compete there. In 2011, König was placed second in the Tour of Austria, third in the Tour de l'Ain and fifth in the Tour of Britain. "We believe that Leo still hasn't exhausted his potential and that he will be able to finish the Giro in the top 20," stated an optimistic team manager, Ralph Denk.

This year's Giro d'Italia will be held from 5 to 27 May. It will start in Herning, Denmark, and finish in Milan. The professional riders will have to cover nearly 3,500 km over 21 stages. Two individual time trials, a team time trial and five mountain finishes are scheduled.

