

Issy-les-Moulineaux, the 13rd of June 2006

TOUR DE FRANCE DIRECTION PRESS RELEASE

With three weeks to go before the start of the Tour de France and due to the information that they have concerning the recent doping issues revealed in Spain, the organisers of the event have decided to take the following decisions:

As the Tour management had mentioned when delivering its two invitations for the next Tour de France and faithful to its principals concerning the fight against doping, the two teams, Agritubel and Comunidad Valenciana needed to be faultless on a ethics point of view. The situation of Comunidad Valenciana's sporting director, although he has left his functions, has forced the organisers to withdraw the team's invitation.

The team will not be replaced.

Concerning the case of Manolo Saiz in this issue, prejudicial to cycling's image, the Tour de France has taken into account the fact of his withdrawal from the Tour. A withdrawal that the race organisation would have requested anyway.

Concerning his team and because of this year's system, except for invitations, the participation is decided by the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) through the attribution of licences by a special commission. Therefore the Tour de France awaits an upcoming decision of this commission concerning the presence in its event of a team in which one of the main shareholders is blamed in a doping issue.

Finally if riders or members of the team staff are accused by the Spanish justice before the start or during the event, the ethics code decided by the sporting groups envisaging the withdrawal or retiree of people concerned, will be strongly applied.