



Today, January 30th, key founders of the Russian Global Cycling Project, notably Gazprom Company, Russian Technologies State Corporation and International group of companies ITERA presented Russian World Tour Team Katusha of 2012 season.

The following personalities were involved to the presentation: representatives of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation, representatives of the Ministry of Sports, Tourism and Youth Policy of Russia, representatives of the Russian Olympic Committee, representatives of the Government of Moscow as well as heads of international organizations, members of the Board of Guardians of the Found of Development and Support of Russian Cycling, members of the International Olympic Committee along with members of the Presidium of the Russian Cycling Federation.

- Our team Katusha is entering into its fourth season at the highest league of world cycling. We have all rights to be proud of it, because Katusha is a team of the highest international class, is one of the leaders of the world of professional cycling. I hope that the new season will develop even more successfully both for Katusha Team, and the whole Russian cycling. I would like to wish Katusha not only more prestigious and brighter victories in the new season, but also further development which, I am convinced, will lead to formation and blossoming of domestic cycling, said Igor MAKAROV, head of the Russian Global Cycling Project, President of the Russian Cycling Federation, member of the UCI Management Committee, President of the Board of Directors of International Group of Companies ITERA.

In the first three years in ProTour (till 2011) and World Tour (from 2011) the main Russian professional team Katusha has gained 68 victories and 142 prize-winning places. Totally, from 2009 to 2011 for 210 times Katusha's riders climbed on the podium of the most prestigious races.

Katusha Team won stages at all three Grand Tours: Giro d'Italia (2 stages in 2010), Tour de France (2 stages in 2009 and 2010) and Vuelta a Espana (1 stage in 2010 and 3 stages in 2011); won stages in World Tour races: Paris-Nice (2009), Tirreno-Adriatico (2010), Vuelta a Catalunya (2010), Vuelta al Pais Vasco (2010-2011), Eneco Tour (2010), Tour de Romandie (2011), Criterium du Dauphine Libere (2011), Tour of Beijing (2011); won famous classics races: E3 Prijs Vlaanderen (2009), Amstel Gold Race (2009), Giro del Veneto (2009), Paris – Bruxelles (2011), Giro del Piemonte (2011), GP Beghelli (2011); won national championships of Russia (2009-2011), Italy (2009), Belarus (2011) and Moldova (2010-2011).

There will be many changes during next season. The main one is, without any doubts, the new General Manager Hans-Michael Holczer. Together with Holczer, thanks to his big expertise in the world of cycling, there were many changes about materials and partnerships: while the three main ones – Gazprom, Rostekhnologii and ITERA – didn't change at all. The bikes the riders will use will have Canyon's frames; Shimano's groupsets and paddles; Mavic's wheels and tires; Ritchey's handlebars, handlestems and bartapes; and Selle Italia's saddles. The Sport Directors will follow the race in Skoda's cars; and also the shirts changed, with a red predominance.

But the most interesting changes may have occurred to the Katusha Team's roster, which has been enriched with two legends: Oscar Freire, which has already taken the first victory for this 2012 in Australia, and Denis Menchov, the best Russian rider in big stage races. Together with them, some other good newcomers which will improve the quality of the roster: Maxim Belkov, Xavier Florencio, Marco Haller, Alexander Kristoff, Rudiger Selig, Gatis Smukulis, Simon

Spilak, Angel Vicioso, plus Alexey Tsatevich and Timofey Kritskiy, former members of the best European Continental team, that is to say Itera-Katusha.

These newcomers will be placed side by side with some confirmed riders, which helped the team to take 22 victories and 45 podium places during the last season: Pavel Brutt, Giampaolo Caruso, Denis Galimzyanov, Vladimir Gusev, Joan Horrach, Petr Ignatenko, Mikhail Ignatyev, Vladimir Isaychev, Aliaksandr Kuchynski, Alberto Losada, Daniel Moreno, Luca Paolini, Alexander Porsev, Yuriy Trofimov, Maxime Vantomme, Eduard Vorganov and, of course, Joaquim Rodriguez, 4th positioned in the UCI World Tour Individual Ranking 2011.

There will be some new Sports Directors too in the staff: the new Head of the Sports Department Christian Henn, the new Head of Sports Directors Valerio Piva, Michael Rich, Uwe Peschel and Torsten Schmidt will be together with the confirmed Dmitriy Konyshev, Mario Chiesa, Claudio Cozzi and Gennady Mikhaylov. Sebastian Weber is the new Team Trainer; last but not least, the riders will take advantage of Erik Zabel's precious expertise and suggestions. The former German champion will prepare the team to every possible sprint situation, so that the riders know what to do in every possible condition.

Katusha Team won 22 races and took 45 more podium places in 2011. The main successes of the team in 2011 are: stages at Vuelta a Espana, Criterium du Dauphine Libere, Vuelta al Pais Vasco and Tour of Beijing, classics races Giro del Piemonte, Paris – Bruxelles and GP Beghelli, podiums at Amstel Gold Race, Fleche Wallone, E3 Prijs Vlaanderen and Giro di Lombardia.

The main aims of Katusha Team in 2012 are: good performance at all three Grand Tours (Giro d'Italia, Tour de France and Vuelta a Espana), victories at monumental classics races, the final Top-3 in the UCI World Tour team ranking as well as preparing of Russian riders for the Olympic Games in London.

In 2012 the youth direction of the Russian Global Cycling Project will be continuously developing as the UCI Continental team Itera-Katusha and two youth teams Under-23 and Under-21.

The UCI Continental team Itera-Katusha has already spent two seasons in the UCI Europe

Tour. In 2011 Itera-Katusha became the best continental team in Europe with its 29 victories (with 109 victories and podium places in all competitions of 2011). The main results of Itera-Katusha in 2011 are: general classification of Tour de Slovaquie, Five Rings of Moscow and Tour du Pays de Savoie, victories at Coppa della Pace, Memorial of Oleg Dyachenko and GP Nogent-sur-Ois, both races of Russian Under 23 Championships.

The roster of Itera-Katusha in 2012 is:

Igor Boev, Alexander Foliforov, Igor Frolov, Pavel Kochetkov, Dmitriy Kosyakov, Viacheslav Kuznetsov (Russian RR Under 23 Champion), Dmitry Mokrov, Maxim Pokidov, Sergey Pomoshnikov, Alexandr Prishpetnyy, Maxim Razumov, Sergey Rudaskov, Alexander Rybakov, Andrei Solomennikov, Anton Vorobyev (Russian TT Under 23 Champion), Ilnur Zakarin, Kirill Baranov (track) and Sergey Chernetckii (track).

The head sports director of the team is Nikolay Morozov.

The team aims at good performance in the UCI Europe Tour, Russian U23 Championships, confirmation of the leadership among all European continental teams as well as good results of its riders in the frame of the National team at European and the World Championships (both, road and track).

Youth teams Under-23 and Under-21 will continue its development in 2012 too. Just in a year these teams took 19 victories and 40 prize-winning places.

The roster of Under-23 team is:

Mikhail Akimov, Sergei Alekhin, Alexey Belov, Alexander Grigoryev, Nikita Kapralov, Roman Katyrin, Artur Kovsh, Konstantin Kuperasov, Gennady Tatarinov, Kirill Yatsevich.

The sport directors of the team are Evgeny Popov, Alexander Vasin and Anatoly Yarkin.

The roster of Under-21 team is:

Viacheslav AKHMAMETYEV, Vladislav BELEVANTSEV, Alexander BEREZKIN, Kirill EGOROV, Alexander EVTUSHENKO, Sergey KOLODIN, Aleksandr MEZHECHEV, Alexey RYABKIN, Artur SHAYMURATOV, Sergey TEMNENKO.

The sports director of the team is Ilya Chernetkii.