

FEDERICO MEDA



Federico Meda

“Ten years ago the Gazzetta had no record of who had the pink jerseys, where they were, anything. The initiative has its origins in a discussion with the late Fiorenzo Magni, who was patron of the Ghisallo Cycling Museum. Ultimately they asked me whether if it might be possible to start searching for them, with a view to trying to conserve the heritage of the race.

“Initially we thought about trying to buy them, but that was problematical in the sense that it would have exposed us to speculation, and also to potential fraud. We therefore decided that it would be better if we made a €500 donation to the cycling museum at Ghisallo for each one we managed to acquire. That way we contribute to the preservation of the jerseys, and also to the heritage of the race itself. The point is that the Giro belongs to everybody, and in that sense so too do the jerseys.

“The process of trying to uncover them can be frustrating, but it's never less than fascinating. The joy of finding them is immense, as you can imagine. We'll never have them all, obviously, but I'd like to be able to create a kind of register of ownership. The maglia rosa is such an iconic symbol here, and I'm proud to be associated with the project.”

Federico Meda is a cycling journalist and historian, and is responsible for the “Giro for Ghisallo” [www.giroforghisallo.gazzetta.it] project. Of the 58 original maglie rose already acquired, the oldest is that of Vasco Bergamaschi, winner of the 1935 edition.

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Giovanni Tarello

“I started collecting when I was 12, in 1976. Every Monday all the kids would come in to school and talk about football, who'd won and who'd lost the day before. The school caretaker was an AC Milan fan, and so of course he'd join in.

“The caretaker's real passion, though, was cycling. He had this encyclopedic knowledge, but none of the other kids were interested. When the Giro came along he had nobody to talk to, so I told him I was a cycling fan. He thought I was making it up, but there were two riders from close to our village, and I their biggest fan. When I told him the names of every member of every team in the race he started to take me seriously. Anyway it was he who gave me my first ever cycling book, a 1957 almanac. I still have it today, and it was the book which started me collecting...

“I don't buy that many books these days, but I still look at for those which are rare, or historically important. I love the sport 360”, but the truth is that I'd rather have Alfredo Binda's

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autobiography than Ivan Basso's...”  
Giovanni Tarello is a writer and cycling historian. He has precisely 914 books about the sport, the overwhelming majority extremely rare. In addition he's written ten books of his own about Italian bike racing history. Amongst them are biographies of Giancarlo Astrua and the great Francesco Camusso, winner of the first maglia rosa back in 1931.

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Daniele Cerino

“I would say that there are about 300 bikes in my collection. Of those about 200 are fully restored and 'race-ready', while 100 or so are works in progress. Essentially the object of the exercise is to return them to the original condition and specification.

“The five Fausto Coppi bikes are identical to those he rode in 1940 - his first Giro - , then 1947, 1950, 1952 and 1953. I can't say that they're his bikes, but they are identical. The same applies with Marco Pantani's bikes. Those two, along with Gianni Bugno and Francesco Moser, are my cycling idols...”

“As regards collecting, I'm probably unusual in that I don't distinguish between old and new. There's no reason whatsoever why a modern bike can't be a beautiful piece of engineering, and so I'm happy to have a 2007 Colnago alongside a 1953 Beltramo, or a 1955 Frejus.

“I'd say that there are probably about ten bikes I don't have that I'd dearly love to own. In most cases it's simply because they would be too expensive - each would cost well in excess of €10,000 - but in others it's just because the chances are I'm never going to find them.”

Daniele Cerino is the owner and curator of the most extraordinary collection of racing bicycles in Italy. In order to house them all he rents two floors of a condominium, a double garage and a separate workshop. He says it's impossible to calculate their worth, and chooses not to think about the investment he's made over the 33 years he's spent