

## TALES FROM THE FRONT

### The Coronavirus war from the eyes of a rescuer in Bergamo

For many people their job is their must, for some lucky ones their job is their passion, and for some chosen ones their job is their mission. Padana Emergenze is a not-for-profit organization of volunteer and professional rescuers, in the front line against Coronavirus pandemic in the most affected city of Italy, Bergamo. "I'm still surprised about all those people saying thank you. At the end of the day, we do our job. It's people's right to be provided with first aid." Marco Astori's, Manager of Padana Emergenze, and his colleagues' job is to dedicate heart, soul and time to assist those who are in need. They are a group of nearly 100 people who provide first aid in Bergamo's city and outskirts with nearly 20 ambulances.

"Since 23rd February in the evening our job and our lives have changed dramatically". Marco tells us that Padana Emergenze had to re-organize in a few hours a consolidated working method they have been adopting since 2011, when Padana Emergenze was born. All ambulances have been transformed in order to welcome covid-affected patients, rescuers have been equipped with devices for their own protection and procedures for rescuers' and ambulances' sanitisation have been deployed too.

The physical and mental challenge Padana Emergenze rescuers, as well as rescuers from other first aid organizations in Bergamo, had to face has been unbelievable. During the contagion peak, calls were coming non-stop. Padana Emergenze rescuers have been working on loop without brake, they were not even keeping track of the working hours. However, the thing that made this emergency so difficult to handle is the enemy itself. The virus is invisible, very contagious and all rescuers were aware they were at high risk to get the infection. "As soon as the epidemic broke out, many of us self-isolated immediately to avoid any chance to infect our families. I've been living away from my family for more than 40 days in a row now to protect them". Says Marco.

Even in the most devastating period in Bergamo history since World War Two, there is something good we can learn from. "I was impressed by the dignity of the people of Bergamo. Given the extent of the emergency, it was very difficult to assist people in need as fast and as effectively as before. Anyway, no one complained. There were people asking to be left at home so that we could rescue those who needed our help the most. I felt, and I still feel, proud to be Bergamasco". It is really true that people show their best side in the darkest moments. All first aid organizations have shown great collaboration skills and hard work as never before.

Us from Vittoria, we wanted to help Padana Emergenze, and symbolically reward all heroes whose mission is to safeguard other people's lives, with the initiative ["UNITI per BERGAMO"](#) (United for Bergamo). Vittoria and two-times World Cup winner Dario Acquaroli decided to give away the Bianchi mountain bike that Dario rode to victory in the 1996 World Championship in Cairns

(Australia). It is something Dario Acquaroli is really attached to, which shows his love for Bergamo.

Each donor will be entitled to participate to the draw of the 1996 World Champion Bianchi mountain bike. As of today, more than 20.000 euros have been collected, and they will be donated to Padana Emergenze entirely. If you want to make a donation, click [HERE](#).

In conclusion, we want to say thank you to Padana Emergenze and to the rescuers because they just do their job – as they like to say – and because they fulfill a mission, we will be always owing to – as we like to say.

For more information, drop an email to the Vittoria marketing staff:

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