



# Gino Bartali

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*LIFE*

Gino Bartali was one of the greatest champions of Italian sport, symbol of cycling in the post-war period. He was born in Ponte a Ema, a small town, in the south of Florence, on 18th July 1914.

At the age of 11, Gino had to buy a bicycle to go to the nearest school in Florence, with the help of the family he succeeded. So Bartali began to develop his skills as a cyclist.

At the age of 17, he won his first race and then achieved great goals and great victories. In 1943, Cardinal Elia Dalla Costa asked Bartali to help him deliver fake documents for the fleeing Jews; on the pretext of his long bicycle training, Bartali could bring forged documents, and the photos needed, in the frame of his bicycle; he even agreed to hide a family of Jews in his cellar until the liberation of Florence.



In 1944 Bartali was taken as a suspect to Villa Triste, in Florence, the place where the Fascists imprisoned and tortured their opponents, but fortunately, was considered completely unrelated to all the accusations.

He died in Florence as a cycling legend at the age of 86 on May 5th, 2000. Bartali was a member of the clandestine organization DELASEM for which he made numerous trips carrying documents; his valourous actions in favor of the Jews were awarded with the gold medal of civil merit.

## CAREER

He won more than 100 races, including three Giro d'Italia (1936, 1937, 1946) and two Tour de France (1938, 1948).

Bartali's career was conditioned by the Second World War but at the same time helped the Italian people, for example when in 1948 he won the Tour de France that helped to ease the climate of social tension in Italy.

During the twenty years, that is the period of fascist domination that goes from 1922 to 1943, Bartali managed to continue his career without any problem, was only forced by the regime in 1938 to skip the tour of Italy to get ready for Tour de France which was considered more important.

