



The 2013 Tour de Romandie promises to be as popular as ever

With a weightier line-up of 21 teams, record TV coverage (32 countries) and an action-packed route, the TdR is ready to give a wake-up call to spring! Excitement and drama relayed and tweeted to one and all.

Les Diablerets, 12 April 2013 / On D-11 of the mountain prologue between Le Châble and Bruson (7.45 km, 310 m gradient), the Tour de Romandie unveiled details of a 2013 edition that promises to be as popular as ever. It was in Les Diablerets, the finish of the Queen stage departing from Marly (188.5 km, 3981m gradient) that organisers provided an update on participation, record TV coverage and other key figures, such as the total difference in altitude of 10,353 metres. With Christopher Froome and Richie Porte expected to start, the final line-up will certainly not lack bite, nor will the new IAM Swiss team with Johann Tschopp.

Prilly-Granges: the BMC team comes home!

Katusha's repechage took the number of teams in the contest to 21, i.e. 168 riders in the frame, a surprise that forced organisers to make changes very quickly. In addition to the nineteen WorldTour teams there are two invitees, Europcar and the IAM Swiss team, a newcomer which already has its sights set high with Johann Tschopp, crowned best climber at the last Paris-Nice. BMC, the American team that's Swiss in its heart, will be watched closely in the Prilly/Western Lausanne – Granges (SO) stage, as this finishes outside the Swiss Velodrome founded by BMC boss Andy Rihs. With a line-up for 2013 that includes hot shots Cadel Evans and Philippe Gilbert, the current Swiss champion Martin Kohler, the Dane Sebastien Lander and the best young rider of the 2012 Tour de France Tejay van Garderen, the team is a serious contender for honours.

Every scenario you can think of... and more besides!

After the mountain prologue, three easy-looking stages await the riders. However the 2,000 metre plus gradients on each one could put some riders out of sight, and not just those at the front of the peloton. Thrilling encounters are in store between Saint-Maurice (VS) and Renens (VD), from Prilly to Granges (SO), and around Payerne (FR), where route planner Bernard Bärtschi has placed two climbs in the final 10 kilometres, meaning sprinters and their teams will at least be able to ensure a big finish.

The weekend holds promise of every scenario you can think of... and more besides. Defending the jersey in the rollercoaster section to Les Diablerets (Col des Mosses, twice over the Col de la Croix, Morgins, then the final ascent) will be a tough challenge. There's every chance that the Tour will still be undecided at the end of this stage, the first major mountain encounter of 2013, on a par with those of the Giro or the Tour: the 18.7 km of Sunday's time-trial, against the delightful backdrop of Geneva's embankments, could see rapid changes on the leader board. In short, this TdR promises to be one of the most open and spectacular ever.

An original feature of the prologue is the time recorded between the intermediate timing station (km 3.09) and the finish, which will be taken into account when awarding the first best climber jersey!

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Four more years of live TV with SSR-SRG

Even before the prologue on 23 April, the first victory of this 2013 Tour has been won by the organisers and SSR-SRG! The two partners renewed their contract for the next four years, providing a superb guarantee for the event's sponsors. And in terms of TV coverage, pictures relayed on the Tour this year will reach a record number of viewers. Thanks to collaboration with IMG Media, the event, labelled "World Tour", will be followed in 32 countries.

Facebook, twitter: the TdR well and truly established on social networks

The TdR, which has kept pace with the rapid advance of social networks, continues to thrive online with details on its website of all stages, the official programme, times of the publicity convoy, and start and finish villages. Film of the race and all the drama of the action will again be tweeted live. And, on a daily basis, photos and video interviews will be posted throughout the Tour on Facebook (android and iPhone updated application) and on the website tourderomandie.ch.

Deep-rooted popularity on home ground. A warm welcome to les Carrossiers Romands!

Underlining the appeal of the event, which is supported by all six French-speaking cantons of Switzerland, its reputation has attracted a new sponsor: the Fédération des Carrossiers Romands joins the caravan as the Tour's official supplier.

Much loved by its sponsors, the TdR is also highly popular on its home ground and indeed around the world (even a Taiwanese journalist has asked to receive all info and photos from this edition, which he's going to cover from his home country!). And friends of the French-speaking Swiss Tour like nothing better than a get-together: on 15 March this year, the 2013 Gourmet Stage of the TdR brought 630 guests to Payerne, the stamping ground of Richard Chassot and focal point of the third stage of the route on Friday 26 April. Prestigious guests included Andy Rihs, UCI president Pat McQuaid, the president of the Fribourg Government Madam Demierre and her Vaud counterparts, councillors of state Jean-Philippe Leuba and Pascal Broulis, Mr Yves Christen, president of the Fondation Tour de Romandie, as well as many other personalities.

Tour de Romandie Press Service

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Tour de Romandie

Champ de la Vigne 3, 1470 Estavayer-le-Lac
Tél. +41 26 662 13 49 Fax +41 26 662 13 50
info@tourderomandie.ch, www.tourderomandie.ch