

#TdR2016 / From La Chaux-de-Fonds to Geneva over 712.06 km

A perfect route and a royal peloton: it's up to Froome, Pinot, Quintana, Albasini & Co to light up the 70th edition!

From the 'timely' prologue in La Chaux-de-Fonds to the quays of Geneva, with two hill finishes, the anniversary route will let an exceptional peloton put on a real show! One that can be watched on 170 TV channels and social media, including Snapchat!

Villars-sur-Ollon (VD), 15 April 2016 / 11 days away from the 'timely' prologue in the UNESCO World Heritage status chessboard urban development of La Chaux-de-Fonds, the Tour de Romandie reveals the royal setting of its 70th edition. While more crack riders are to be added to his list, Richard Chassot, head of the Tour de Romandie, is already hailing a line-up of champions: "As in recent years, we have brought together a splendid peloton for the Romand public and TV viewers all over the world." The winners of four recent editions will be on the starting line: Chris Froome (Sky, 2013 and 2014), Simon Spilak and Ilnur Zakarin (Katusha, 2010 and 2015).

In addition to these recent yellow jerseys, including that of a 2nd Tour de France for Froome last year, Thibaut Pinot will be among the big favourites. The brilliant winner of the international Critérium this year, and 4th in the last TdR, could give France a new victory 17 years after Laurent Jalabert. A mano a mano between Froome and Pinot is certainly not the only potential scenario, with candidates for final victory such as Nairo Quintana (Movistar), winner of the 2014 Giro and the 2016 Volta a Catalunya, Romain Bardet (AG2R La Mondiale), winner of the 'Combativity Award' in the 2015 Tour de France as well as the 18th stage, Geraint Thomas (Sky), winner of Paris-Nice, Simon Gerrans (Orica GreenEdge) winner of the Tour Down Under, Michele Scarponi (Giro 2011), Jan Bakelants (AG2R). And so on and so on!

More than a dozen Swiss riders on the starting line

Helvetic hopes for stage victories rest, of course, with Michael Albasini (Orica-GreenEDGE), with his 5 crowning moments over the past two editions, as well as with the IAM Cycling team with, in particular, Mathias Frank (4th in the 2014 TdR and 8th in the 2015 TdF), the FDJ team's Steve Morabito and Sébastien Reichenbach (4th in the Tirreno-Adriatico), and, for BMC, Danilo Wyss and Tom Bohli. Team Roth, one of the invited professional continental teams, will be notably lining up Dylan Page, Valentin Baillifard, Martin Kohler and Roland Thalmann.

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As a reminder, the anniversary route will take the 18 World Tour teams and two invited professional continental teams from the prologue in La Chaux-de-Fonds to the finish line on the quays of Geneva. The 1st stage to Moudon, just like the 3rd between Conthey and Villars-sur-Ollon, will see the competitors cross the finish line twice. Taking into account the team managers' wishes to have a harder race, so as to better prepare for the Giro and the Tour de France, Richard Chassot has placed two hill finishes on the 70th anniversary edition cake, with Morgins on Thursday and then Saturday's Queen Stage to Villars-sur-Ollon, which will have five passes, including three in the 1st category. The time trial around Sion and its slopes will be another one of the week's highlights—and a decisive one at that.

Great sponsor loyalty and a new yellow bib for the best team

Popularity ratings are constantly increasing for the Tour de Romandie, whose recent gala dinner beat its attendance record with 700 guests in Montreux. This is also borne out by the trust and loyalty of its sponsors: Vaudoise for the leader's yellow jersey, Gruyère AOP for the best climber's pink jersey, PMU romand for the best sprinter's green jersey (PMU is celebrating 25 years of existence in 2016 and has been the green jersey sponsor for 23 years) and Raiffeisen for the best young rider's white jersey. Prodis remains associated with the red number sign for the 'Combativity Award'. UPC Cablecom is becoming the sponsor for the new yellow bib representing the Best Team.

Transport company Von Bergen SA is joining the sponsors, as well as Transvoirie, a company in the environment sector, and Point Vert, whereas New Work is withdrawing after 9 years of presence.

Global TV broadcasting

Reviewing the global broadcasting of the Tour de Romandie's TV images always sends a shiver of happiness through the Romand region. In figures, the TdR has been watched in 170 pays, by over 8 million people. Among the closest European neighbours, 8 countries show the RTS-produced images live; this includes seven national public channels.

Social networks: the launch—today!—of a TdR Snapchat account

The new website unveiled three months ago (50,000 visits/day during the event) remains the hub around which the race's other channels are structured, including the very popular Android and IOS applications for smartphones and tablets.

On the social networks, mainly intended for its youngest fans, the Tour de Romandie is today inaugurating its Snapchat account, enabling fans of this application to instantly share photos and videos.

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The #TDR2016 social network podium currently has its Twitter account in the lead, with 10,500 followers, ahead of Facebook, with 9,200 subscribers, and Instagram, which is approaching 2,500 subscribers. The prize for the best Tweets from the TdR 2015, which reached 2.1 million people, goes to the 111,837 retweets of 'In the sun, as promised' by Chris Froome and Geraint Thomas (wearer of the yellow jersey) at the start of the 2nd stage.

#TDR2016 Press Department

The Tour de Romandie 2016 at a glance

Prologue	Tuesday 26 April	Prologue, La Chaux-de-Fonds	3.95 km
1st stage	Wednesday 27 April	La Chaux-de-Fonds - Moudon	169 km
2nd stage	Thursday 28 April	Moudon - Morgins	173.9 km
3rd stage	Friday 29 April	Individual time trial, Sion	15.11 km
4th stage	Saturday 30 April	Conthey - Villars-sur-Ollon	172.7 km
5th stage	Sunday 1 May	Ollon - Geneva	177.4 km

Total changes in elevation: 10,140 m

Total: 712.06 km

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