

Press release
- for immediate release -

The greatest of small tours, the TdR is riding with Sion 2026 and will see Richie Porte come and defend his title

Yverdon-les-Bains, 12 April 2018 / The details of the route for the next Tour de Romandie (24th to 29th April), which were unveiled on Thursday in Yverdon-les-Bains, have a few treats for the UCI World Tour peloton. As per the recipe for success of this greatest of small tours, the route brings together components of great stage races over six days. It will offer the year's first moments of truth: with, in particular, a mountain time trial and the first sequences through large passes, during the Queen Stage around Sion and its 5 mountain prizes, marking the return of great alpine battles.

From Fribourg to Delémont, the peloton will travel through five of the event's seven sponsoring cantons (Vaud, Fribourg, Neuchâtel, Berne and Jura). The Tour de Romandie will put on a great show, from the capital of Jura to Yverdon-les-Bains, then against the clock in the Ollon-Villars climb, between Mont-sur-Rolle and Geneva on the Sunday and, of course, in the Olympic stage around Sion.

Formalised on 23 March at the TdR gala lunch, the presence of the Swiss Winter Olympics candidacy on the leader's jersey sends a strong message: Swiss sport, in this case Romand sport, is capable of organising very big events. And all sports fans are hoping that the breakaway of the TdR – SION 2026 tandem will be a winning one.

A select peloton with the 2017 winner Richie Porte and many strong contenders

As was the case in recent years, Wanty Groupe Gobert (Bel) joins the other 18 teams as a guest. There is one change: the UCI has limited the number of riders per team to seven (instead of eight). There will be two former winners on the starting line: Simon Spilak (winner in 2010; and 2nd in 2013, 2014 and 2015), the defending grand champion Richie Porte, and many other strong contenders, such as Rui Costa and Dani Martin (Team Emirates), Geraint Thomas (Team Sky), Primož Roglič (Lotto NL Jumbo, winner of the 2018 Tour du Pays Basque), Jarlinson Pantano (Trek-Segafredo), Marc Soler (Movistar) and, for AG2R La Mondiale, Pierre Latour (best young rider 2016 and 2017), accompanied by the Swiss riders Stefan Dillier and Mathias Franck.

The Swiss riders also includes Michael Albasini (Mitchelton Scott, with seven stage wins in this race!) and Stephan Küng (BMC, the Tour's blue-eyed boy since his two heroic victories in 2014 and 2017), plus Tom Bohli and Danilo Wyss, the only Romand rider in this edition.

Sponsors: Aquatis takes the plunge and joins Jouez Sport, Banque du Léman, Net+ BliBlaBlo, Caffè Chicco d'oro and Prodis

Even if 2017 rewrote the statistic whereby the winner of the Tour de France has often won the TdR first, or was at least on its podium (2011, 2012, 2013,

2015, 2016), the Tour de Romandie remains a reference. Simon Yates, 2nd in Geneva last year, finished 7th on the Champs-Élysées. And the TdR will be fanning the Olympic flame, from 24th to 29th April, and beyond, with the intention of providing the same springboard for Sion 2026 as for its winners!

Although there is continued suspense over who will replace Vaudoise Assurances as presenting sponsor, the Tour de Romandie can count on prestigious partners as its jersey sponsors: Jouez Sport (best sprinter), Banque du Léman (best young rider), Net+ BliBlaBlo (best climber), Caffè Chicco d'Oro and Aquatis, the new partners joining the peloton (Stage winner) as well as Prodis (combativity prize).

The publicity cavalcade is reinforced by new co-sponsors, Vittoria (the Italian bicycle tire manufacturer) and Avesco Rent. New official suppliers—with Agemo as the safety partner protecting the whole route, and Bière Boxer and Pays Romand–Pays Gourmand, as a federation of bodies promoting the Romand Swiss terroir—complete this exceptional circle of sponsors.

Richard Chassot is clear: “Everything has been done to win-over the public. To ensure that the peloton puts on a show. To convince a big brand, like SION 2026 this year, to be displayed on our leader jersey in 2019. The Tour de Romandie, which is so emblematic of our region, can only be perpetuated with the support it is granted in unison by the Romand cantons and that of Berne. We are working on that with determination. And with optimism, given the confidence and the interest of our sponsors and partners in place.”

TV broadcasting grows again: images of Romandie in 191 countries

TV coverage is growing again. Magnificent images of Romandie will thus now be seen in 191 countries, with coverage on each continent. A total of 1,000 hours of live broadcasting is planned across the world, with a global audience approaching 20 million viewers.

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