

Issy-les-Moulineaux, 29th of January 2008

OBJECTIVE LURE!

The Paris-Nice week always reveals interesting lessons for the cycling amateur, obviously overwhelmed with emotions at the moment of enjoying the first great stage race on the calendar. One will start gathering indications on the men in shape or discover new talents, questions will be asked and at the end one should remain ever enthusiastic for the future. This short crossing of France gives a new taste for road cycling: the areas visited as this season begins will be as many invitations for fearsome battles between the riders. Like in 2008, the start will be held at Amilly, in the heart of the faithful 'Agglomération Montargoise et Rives du Loing'. After the village of la Chapelle-Saint-Ursin that could host a bunched sprint, the debates will continue on the way to Vichy where Paris-Nice hadn't enjoyed a stage in ten years. The long relationship between the Race to the Sun and Saint-Etienne will witness a 58th episode, the pack will then deeply explore Ardeche: that is indeed where the climbers will be submitted to a first significant test. But it is mainly during stage 6 that a real hierarchy should be drawn: the altitude finish set at the summit of the Lure Mountain will be a first experience on this fabulous site and the highest in the history of Paris-Nice (1600 m). For those not used to the shrewdness of the area, this huge hill is also known as the "Little Sister of the Ventoux". The 13.8 km climb at an average 6.6% gradient will certainly be one of the big moments of the event. Finally, the difficulties on the weekend with the tricky and demanding hills of the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes will put an end to the last uncertainties. The final decision could be made on one of these climbs, like it occurred in 2008 during one of the final ascents.

THE 20 TEAMS INVITED, THE MAIN RIDERS

Germany

Team Milram (MRM): Fothern, Knees

Belgium

Quickstep (QST): S.Chavanel, Barredo

Silence - Lotto (SIL): Evans, Gilbert

Denmark

Team Saxo Bank (SAX): A.Schleck, Voigt

Spain

Caisse d'Epargne (GCE): Pereiro, L.L.Sanchez

Euskatel - Euskadi (EUS): S.Sanchez

United States

Garmin - Slipstream (GRM): Millar, Wiggins

Team Columbia – High Road (THR): Burghardt

France

BBox Bouygues Telecom (BTL): Rolland

Cofidis le crédit en ligne (COF): Auger,

Dumoulin

Française Des Jeux (FDJ): Casar, Ladagnous

AG2R - La Mondiale (ALM): Nocentini, Dessel

Agritubel (AGR): Moreau, Feillu

Italy

Lampre – N.G.C. (LAM): Caucchioli

Liquigas (LIQ): Kreuziger, Chicchi

Luxemburg

Astana (AST): Contador, Leipheimer, Popovych

Netherlands

Rabobank (RAB): Flecha, Posthuma

Skil-Shimano (SKS): Hupond

Russia

Team Katusha (KAT): Steegmans

Switzerland

Cervelo Test Team (CTT): n.c.

Discover the details of the course at www.letour.fr

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