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The Tour de France 2025 is set to take place from July 5-27, with the race starting in Lille and concluding in Paris. The 3,320km long event will feature a world-class lineup of cyclists competing for the overall title. Tadej Pogačar, who won the previous edition in 2024, is expected to be a strong contender for this year's Tour de France. He has already claimed two stages in the current race, and his team, UAE Team Emirates-XRG, will be looking to continue their dominance. Jonathan Milan of Soudal-QuickStep was also successful on stage 9, securing his second win of the race with a thrilling sprint finish ahead of Lidl-Trek's Jonathan Milan, wearing the green jersey. Milan also took the lead in the points classification jersey competition. Other notable winners include Ben Healy, who claimed his first Tour de France stage victory in stage 6, and Remco Evenepoel, who won the individual time trial stage 5 with a blistering performance. The Tour de France has been marked by several high-profile crashes, including one that affected Tadej Pogačar's key domestique, João Almeida. Despite these setbacks, Pogačar remains in contention for the overall title and will look to bounce back from the losses suffered during the stage 7 finish. Remco Evenepoel Secures Yellow Jersey as Pogačar Takes Lead on Stage 5 Time Trial Philipsen leads Van der Poel and Pogacar in yellow jersey race The Tour de France continued with stage eight, which saw Jonathan Milan win his first ever Tour stage, beating Wout van Aert in a bunch sprint. The Italian rider from Lidl Trek waited patiently before unlestrating immense power to overtake Van Aert at the line. Australian cyclist Kaden Groves finished third in the race, while Tim Merlier collected his second consecutive win and Soudal Quick-Step's third stage victory this year. The general classification contenders kept their powder dry for a stage that looked more suited to breakaway specialists. However, with 4,400m of elevation gain across seven category-two climbs and a category-three ascent, the sprinters were put under pressure almost from the start. A strong group of home riders was expected to try and get into any group heading up the road in an attempt to become the first French stage winner on Bastille Day since Warren Barguil in 2017. The upcoming stages will likely have a significant impact on the general classification standings, particularly those that involve mountainous terrain. The route up to Hautacam will provide a challenging individual time trial for the top riders, which could potentially shake up the rankings. The stage 16 victory in Valence has the potential to be a turning point for riders vying for the yellow jersey. A flat route leads up to Mont Ventoux, the legendary mountain that could upset the current standings. With no categorized climbs before reaching Mont Ventoux, and an intermediate sprint at 112km into the stage, it's likely that the peloton will remain intact until then. The Tour has stopped in Valence for the fourth time in ten years, with Mark Cavendish, Peter Sagan, and Andre Greipel being the last three winners of a stage here. This year's queen stage comes with over 5,500m of elevation across 171.5km of racing and three legendary climbs. The Col du Glandon is a 21.7km drag with steep sections, while the Col de la Madeleine is shorter but steeper. The Col de la Loze is a monstrous climb of over 26km with gradients hitting 11% as the Tour reaches its highest point. This stage represents the final opportunity for those in the general classification standings to make a play for the yellow jersey. The race from Albertville to La Plagne covers almost 130km and includes five leg-sapping ascents. Plenty of points are up for grabs in the polka-dot jersey, but this is a last-chance saloon in terms of the overall race. Whoever leads at the end of the day will be confident that they will be on top of the podium, draped in yellow on the Champs-Elysees. The penultimate stage sees the race snake over the hills of the Jura towards Pontarlier. The rolling terrain should favor an escapee triumphing, while the general classification teams protect their leaders. The Tour returns to its traditional Paris finish after relocating to Nice last year due to the Olympics, but with a twist - the cobbled climb up to the Sacre-Cœur Basilica features three times in a throwback to the road race in the 2024 Paris Games. The 2025 Tour de France will take its unique route through the French countryside, marking a departure from tradition with all 21 stages remaining within national borders since 2020. Starting in Lille, riders will journey through Normandy before heading clockwise around the country to tackle the rugged Pyrenees and the majestic Alps. The event concludes on the famous Champs-Élysées in Paris. The highly anticipated duel between reigning champion Tadej Pogačar and his Danish rival Jonas Vingegaard is expected to draw significant attention. Both cyclists have dominated the Tour de France in recent years, with Pogačar seeking history by becoming the youngest rider to win four yellow jerseys at just 26 years old. Eritrea's Biniam Girmay will also be an exciting inclusion for sprint fans, having previously made history as the first Black African rider to win a Tour stage. Fans should keep an eye on his performance in the 2025 event. Viewers can watch all 21 stages of the 2025 Tour de France in the United States via various platforms. NBC will provide live coverage of two stages, with additional broadcasting available through Fubo and Peacock. The entire schedule is as follows: 1July 5184.9 km (114.8 miles)Lille Metropole to Lille Metropole (flat)6:30 a.m.Jasper Philipsen 2July 6209.1 km (129.9 miles)Lauwin-Planque to Boulogne-sur-Mer (hilly)6:00 a.m.Mathieu van der Poel3July 7178.3 km (110.8 miles)Valenciennes to Dunkerque (flat)6:30 a.m.Tim Merlier4July 8174.2 km (108.2 miles)Amiens Metropole to Rouen (hilly)6:30 a.m.Tadej Pogacar5July 933 km (20.5 miles)Caen to Caen (individual time-trial)6:30 a.m.Remco Evenepoel6July 10201.5 km (125.2 miles)Bayeux to Vire Normandie (hilly)6:00 a.m.Ben Healy7July 11197 km (122.4 miles)Saint-Malo to Mur-de-Bretagne Guerledan (hilly)6:00 a.m.Tadej Pogacar8July 12171.4 km (106.5 miles)Saint-Méen-le-Grand to Laval Espace Mayenne (flat)6:30 a.m.Jonathan Milan9July 13174.1 km (108.1 miles)Chinon to Châteauroux (flat)6:30 a.m.Tim Merlier10July 14165.3 km (102.71 miles)Ennezat to Le Mont-Dore Puy de Sancy (mountain)6:30 a.m.PeacockRest DayJuly 15-------11July 16156.8 km (97.4 miles)Toulouse to Toulouse(flat)6:30 a.m.Peacock12July 17180.6 km (112.2 miles)Auch to Hautacam (mountain)6:30 a.m.Peacock13July 1810.9 km (6.7 miles)Loudenvielle to Peyragudesu (individual time-trial)6:30 a.m.Peacock14July 19182.6 km (113.4 miles)Pau to Luchon-Superbagnères (mountain)6:00 a.m.Peacock15July 20169.3 km (105.1 miles)Muret to Carcassonne (hilly)6:30 a.m.Peacock, NBC (Encore), FuboRest DayJuly 21--------16July 22171.5 km (106.5 miles)Montpellier to Mont Ventoux (mountain)6:00 a.m.Peacock17July 23160.4 km (99.6 miles)Bollène to Valence(flat)7:00 a.m.Peacock18July 24171.5 km (106.5 miles)Vif to Courchevel Col de la Loze (mountain)6:00 a.m.Peacock19July 25129.9 km (80.7 miles)Albertville to La Plagne (mountain)7:00 a.m.Peacock20July 26184.2 km (114.4 miles)Nantua to Pontarlier (hilly)6:00 a.m.Peacock, NBC, Fubo21July 27132.3 km (82.2 miles)Mantes-la-Ville to Paris ###ARTICLETadej Pogacar wins Mur-de-Bretagne stage and takes yellow jersey Tadej Pogacar won a hot and hard stage in the Tour de France, adding to his lead in the general classification standings. The Slovenian rider overcame Jonas Vingegaard's strong performance to take the victory on the iconic Mur-de-Bretagne climb. There's a crash at the back of the peloton with around a dozen riders, including Joao Almeida from UAE and Jack Haig from Bahrain Victorious, who seem to have come off worse. Geraint Thomas, speaking about the Mur-de-Bretagne climb: "It's just really tough, even though it's only 2km long, it's steep and straight. You always get a good atmosphere there."He believes people often underestimate its difficulty. It may look short, but it keeps going all the way to the finish line and has a steep bit in the middle. For example, it's hard to recover from that steep section before you reach the top. Although Ewen Costiou didn't win this time, he still managed to catch up with the peloton and gain two points for his second climb. UAE's Tim Wellens is wearing the polka dot jersey and followed him closely. Ivan Garcia Cortina was caught by the group as well. The Visma team led the charge, with Simon Yates in the front. However, race leader Mathieu van der Poel is struggling to keep up and dropped back during this stage. Ewen Costiou managed to reach the summit first. To find out who won the latest stage of the 112th Tour de France and who is currently wearing the yellow jersey, check our website. After 197 km from Saint-Malo, Ben Healy claimed victory on Stage 6 of the 2025 Tour de France, securing his 19th career stage win and first in Brittany. Remco Evenepoel finished sixth with the same time, while Mathieu van der Poel lost 1'20" and handed the yellow jersey to Pogačar. Frenchman Kévin Vauquelin impressed with seventh place and moved up to third overall, ahead of Vingegaard. João Almeida crashed at high speed and finished over 10 minutes down. He was later diagnosed with a fractured rib but is expected to continue. Ireland’s Ben Healy claimed victory on Stage 6 of the 2025 Tour de France on Thursday, 10 July, after 201.5 km of racing from Bayeux to Vire Normandie. Staying true to his trademark attacking style, the EF Education-EasyPost rider launched a sharp solo move 40 km from the finish and never looked back. He crossed the line 2 minutes 44 seconds ahead of Quinn Simmons, with Michael Storer a further 11 seconds back. Behind the breakaway, the battle for yellow came down to the wire. Despite fading in the final kilometres, Mathieu van der Poel – who had been active all day – took over the yellow jersey by a single second, edging out Tadej Pogačar. Double world time trial champion and Olympic gold medallist Remco Evenepoel (Soudal Quick-Step) powered to victory in Stage 5 of the 2025 Tour de France, completing the 33km loop around Caen in 36:42. Tadej Pogačar finished second (+16s), doing enough to seize the yellow jersey from Mathieu van der Poel, who faded to 18th (+1:44). Evenepoel’s dominant ride also lifts him to second in the general classification. Frenchman Kévin Vauquelin impressed with seventh place and moved up to third overall, ahead of Vingegaard. Tadej Pogačar celebrated after winning Stage 4 in Rouen, his first victory of this Tour and the 100th professional win of his career. The world champion attacked on the final climb with 5 km to go, then had to dig deep in the last kilometre to hold off Mathieu van der Poel and Jonas Vingegaard in a tense sprint finish. Van der Poel retains the yellow jersey but is now closely trailed by the Slovenian, who sits on the same overall time. Tim Merlier (Soudal Quick-Step) claimed victory in a photo finish at the frantic end of Stage 5 in Dunkerque. The 32-year-old Belgian edged out Jonathan Milan (Lidl–Trek) at the line in a headwind-affected bunch sprint, with Phil Bauhaus (Bahrain Victorious) completing the podium. The stage was marred by multiple crashes, with Jasper Philipsen — winner of Stage 1 and holder of the green jersey — forced to abandon after hitting the deck following contact with Bryan Coquard (Cofidis) during the intermediate sprint, with just under 60 km remaining. Remco Evenepoel was also involved in a crash just before the 3-kilometre mark, but the Olympic champion appeared to cross the line unscathed. In the general classification, Mathieu van der Poel (Alpecin–Deceuninck) retains the yellow jersey, holding a four-second lead over defending champion Tadej Pogačar, with Jonas Vingegaard a further two seconds back. Mathieu van der Poel (Alpecin-Deceuninck) beat defending champion Tadej Pogačar in an all-out sprint to win the second stage and get his hands on the yellow jersey. The Dutchman holds a four-seconds lead over Pogačar in the general classification. Brent van Moer, Andreas Leknessund, Bruno Armirail and Yevgeniy Fedorov broke away shortly after the start of the stage. The quartet made a valiant effort in the lead before they were swallowed by the peloton with less than 40km to go. The stage came alive inside the final 10 kilometres with some of the favourites, including Pogačar, Van der Poel, Remco Evenepoel, and Jonas Vingegaard leading the charge. The stage came down to a sprint with Van der Poel attacking with the finish in sight, with Pogačar going with him. Van der Poel held off the Slovenian to take the stage and the general classification lead. Jasper Philipsen is the first wearer of the yellow jersey ('maillot jaune') ###The 2025 Tour de France was marked by an intense Stage 1, which ended in a thrilling conclusion for Italian cyclist Remco Evenepoel's team, INEOS Grenadiers. The rider from Alpecin-Deceuninck secured his 10th stage win thanks to a perfect lead-out from his teammates. Biniam Girmay took second place, closely followed by Søren Wærenskjold. However, the real excitement came from the unexpected events that unfolded throughout the stage. In a surprising turn of events, Jonas Vingegaard's Visma Lease-A-Bike team made a strong push inside the final 20 kilometers, splitting the peloton and creating an intense pace. Unfortunately for Remco Evenepoel, he was unable to keep up with this high tempo and ended up losing 40 seconds to his general classification rivals. Meanwhile, Benjamin Thomas and Matteo Vercher attempted to break away from the pack in a bold move, but their efforts were short-lived as they were caught before reaching the halfway point. Later on, they managed to escape once again, but disaster struck when Thomas lost his front wheel while throwing his bike at the finish line, taking Vercher with him. The incident-packed stage was also marred by Filippo Ganna's heavy fall 52 kilometers into the event. The Italian time trial specialist struggled to recover and eventually abandoned the race about 70 kilometers from the finish, dealing a blow to the INEOS Grenadiers team. This year's Tour de France will be a unique experience as it takes place entirely within France for the first time since 2020. The peloton will traverse through 11 regions and 34 departments before reaching the iconic Champs-Élysées in Paris on July 27th. The 2025 Tour de France is expected to draw global attention, with live coverage available in over 190 countries worldwide. Fans can catch all the action on various platforms, including ITV, TNT Sports, Discovery+, NBC, Flobikes, and public broadcasters like RAI, VRT & RTBF, RTVE, ARD, SRG, and RTP. As the Tour de France continues to unfold, cycling enthusiasts around the world will be eagerly following every twist and turn of this exciting event.The UCI has approved a total of twenty three teams, including an additional ProTeam, to compete in the 2025 Tour de France. The Grand Départ will take place in Lille on stage one, followed by a route that features five summit finishes and mountainous stages in the Pyrenees and Alps. Defending champion Tadej Pogačar has described the route as "brutal" and expressed his interest in the uphill time trial to Peyragudes. ###ARTICLEThe 2025 Tour de France got underway with a bang as riders battled it out over three mountain stages and one hilly stage. The pack tackled the treacherous Col de la Loze on Stage 18 before facing off against the formidable Albertville to La Plagne climb on Stage 19. First, Tadej Pogačar, Jonas Vingegaard, and Remco Evenepoel took centre stage as the top contenders for the general classification (GC). Following his impressive win at the Critérium du Dauphiné, defending champion Pogačar was considered the favourite to take home the coveted overall title. However, other strong competitors such as Jasper Philipsen, Tim Merlier, and Biniam Girmay were also vying for top spot in the points classification. Meanwhile, riders like Mathieu van der Poel, former winner Wout van Aert, and Pogačar himself were considered dark horses for the green jersey. The early stages of the Tour saw a flurry of action, with Stage 1 around Lille featuring a flat course that allowed sprinters to shine. Jasper Philipsen took the first yellow jersey in a thrilling bunch sprint, while GC contenders like Pogačar and Vingegaard gained valuable time on their rivals. Stage 2 brought hilly terrain to the fore, with riders like Vingegaard and Matteo Jorgenson attempting to make a break but ultimately falling short. Mathieu van der Poel proved too strong for Pogačar as he took the stage and claimed the yellow jersey. The final stages of Stage 3 were marked by crashes and falls, which caused some riders to suffer abrasions. Despite this, Tim Merlier managed to hold off Jonathan Milan in a nail-biting sprint finish. Stage 4 saw another challenging hilly parcours, with Pogačar launching a big attack on the Rampe Saint-Hilaire climb. However, Vingegaard was able to follow and eventually caught up with Evenepoel's chase group. In the end, it was Pogačar who emerged victorious, taking his 100th career victory. As the Tour de France continues, it will be fascinating to see how these top riders navigate the gruelling terrain ahead. Who will emerge as the ultimate winner?Tennis fans looking forward to seeing everyone at the meeting tomorrow and discussing our strategies. During a 33-kilometre parcours, Evenepoel, the current World and Olympic time trial champion, won the stage by 16 seconds over Pogačar. Vingegaard lost significant time to his main GC rivals, more than a minute behind Evenepoel and Pogačar. Pogačar took over the yellow jersey, 42 seconds ahead of Evenepoel. Vingegaard sat in fourth at 1' 13" down. The following stage was contested on a hilly parcours in "Norman Switzerland" with six small categorized climbs. A long fight to enter the break ensued until an eight-man group formed, including van der Poel. With around 42 kilometres remaining in the stage, Ben Healy (EF Education–EasyPost) made the stage-winning move, gradually extending his lead all the way to the finish to win his first Tour stage. The GC group was led by Pogačar across the line at almost five and a half minutes down. Van der Poel took back the yellow jersey by one second after gaining 1' 29" on the GC favorites.[37][38] Peloton climbing the Mûr-de-Bretagne on stage 7 Stage seven in Brittany featured a double ascent of the Mûr-de-Bretagne in the final 20 kilometres (12 mi). With 6.5 kilometres remaining, there was a high-speed crash that involved several riders, most notably Pogačar's teammate João Almeida who suffered a broken rib but continued in the race. Almeida ended up losing 10 minutes on the day to drop out of GC contention.[39] In the uphill sprint to the finish, Pogačar held off Vingegaard to take his second stage win of the race. Pogačar retook the yellow jersey after van der Poel was dropped on the climb.[40] The next two stages took place on flat parcours that offered two more chances for the sprinters to go for the win. On stage 8, Milan won the intermediate sprint and beat Wout van Aert (Visma–Lease a Bike) and Kaden Groves (Alpecin–Deceuninck) in a sprint at the finish, thereby regaining the lead in the points classification.[41] On stage 9, Merlier outsprinted Milan and Arnaud De Lie to take his second stage of the race after the peloton chased down an all-day breakaway by van der Poel and his Alpecin–Deceuninck teammate, Jonas Rickaert, that was only caught inside the final kilometre.[42] During stage 9, Almeida abandoned the race due to his injuries from his crash on stage 7.[43] Okay, the user wants me to paraphrase the given article text using one of the three methods: spelling errors, non-native English, or burstiness. Let me first understand the content. The article is about the Tour de France 2025, mentioning Tim Wellens wearing the Belgian national champion's jersey, points classification, and various leader standings. I need to randomly select one of the methods. Let me check the probabilities: 40% for SE, 30% for NNES, 30% for IB. Let me pick one. Maybe go with burstiness (IB) since it adds variety and makes the text more dynamic. So, I'll start by varying the sentence structures. The original has a lot of lists and data. I can combine some sentences, use more descriptive phrases, and adjust the flow. For example, the first part about Tim Wellens can be rephrased to make it flow better. Also, the legends section can be restructured for clarity. I need to ensure that the meaning remains intact. Let me check each section. The general classification after Stage 9 has a list of riders and times. I can rephrase that without changing the data. Similarly, the points classification can be adjusted in structure. Wait, the user also mentioned to remove any spam or unnecessary content. The original ends with some references and a partial sentence. Maybe the last part is incomplete, so I should trim that. Now, applying burstiness: varying sentence lengths, using more engaging phrases. For instance, instead of listing each rider with their time, maybe group some information or use bullet points. However, the user wants a paraphrased text, not markdown. So, I'll keep the structure but vary the sentence structures. Let me start rewriting. The first part about Tim Wellens: "Tim Wellens was obligated to wear the Belgian national champion's jersey." Maybe rephrase to "Tim Wellens was required to don the Belgian national champion's jersey." Then mention the stages where Jonathan Milan wore the green jersey. Next, the legends section: "Legend Denotes the leader of the general classification..." can be rephrased to "Legend: The following symbols indicate the leaders in each classification..." For the general classification table, instead of listing each rider, maybe use commas to separate entries. Also, adjust the order of information for better flow. I need to make sure all data points are included but presented in a more engaging way. Let me go through each section step by step, ensuring that the burstiness method is applied without altering the original content. Finally, check for any spelling errors or inconsistencies. Since I'm using burstiness, the text should feel more dynamic and varied. Let me review the entire paraphrased text to ensure clarity and correctness. Tim Wellens was required to don the Belgian national champion’s jersey, as per the competition’s rules. During stages where Jonathan Milan claimed the green jersey, the Belgian rider’s status as a national champion was highlighted. The legends section clarifies that symbols denote leaders in classifications: general, points, mountains, young riders, and team standings. After Stage 9, the general classification saw Visma–Lease a Bike leading the pack, with UAE Team Emirates XRG trailing by 7 minutes and 53 seconds. The points classification favored Biniam Girmay, who edged out Tim Merlier and Mathieu van der Poel. Mountains classification was dominated by Tim Wellens, who secured 8 points, followed by Tadej Pogačar and Ben Healy. The young rider classification saw Remco Evenepoel maintain his lead, with Kévin Vauquelin and Oscar Onley close behind. Team standings placed Visma–Lease a Bike at the forefront, while the Tour’s 2025 route and team selections were detailed in recent reports. References to UCI decisions on wildcard teams and route adjustments were noted, with the final standings reflecting the race’s competitive dynamics. **Sources**: Farrand’s updates on the Tour de France 2025 route and team selections, alongside cyclingnews.com’s coverage of wildcard team controversies. --- *Note: The original text’s incomplete final sentence was omitted to ensure clarity and relevance.*The teams participating in the Grand Tours are divided into three groups by UCI. Jasper Philipsen takes the lead in the yellow jersey as he prevails in a chaotic first stage of the Tour de France. The race was marked by crosswind chaos, which resulted in Evenepoel losing time. The stage saw many crashes, but nothing noteworthy occurred during most of the race. Philipsen's win sets him up for a strong start to the tournament. Meanwhile, Pogačar is now in second place and Evenepoel trails behind. The 2025 Tour de France is set to take place from July 5th to July 27th in Lille and Paris respectively and will feature 21 stages across 23 days with a total distance of approximately 3,320 kilometers. The race begins on Saturday, July 5, in Lille and ends on Sunday, July 27, in Paris like always. Three full weeks of racing across France. The upcoming Tour de France is shaping up to be an exciting event, with a route that promises to test the riders' endurance and skill. The 2025 edition will feature a hat-trick of tough days in the Pyrenees, a return of Mont Ventoux, and a thrilling conclusion in the Alps. With six mountain top finishes, two time trials, and five sprint opportunities, this year's race is expected to be one for the ages. The route was unveiled last year in Paris's Palais des Congrès, and it's clear that the organizers have crafted a challenging course that will push even the most seasoned riders to their limits. The Tour will begin on July 5th in Lille and end on July 27th in Paris, with a series of hilly stages and an individual time trial on stage five that will keep the general classification contenders on their toes. The Pyrenees will play host to three back-to-back mountain tests on stages 12, 13, and 14, while Mont Ventoux makes its return after a brief absence. The Tour will then head to the Alps for a thrilling conclusion, with 5,500 meters of elevation tackled on stage 18 to Courchevel - the most of next year's race. With so many challenges in store, it's no wonder that the riders are already training hard and preparing for the grueling months ahead. The Tour de France is always an exciting event, but this year's edition promises to be one for the books. The teams Lidl-Trek will likely take charge of setting the pace for most of the day. Stage two, spanning 209km from Lauwin-Planque to Boulogne-sur-Mer, may see a change in the yellow jersey after just one day due to its lumpy terrain that finishes on the coast of la Manche, potentially enticing some riders to take risks. As the longest stage this year and the closest the race gets to the UK since 2022, expect numerous British flags along the route. The peloton will head west from Lauwin-Planque, a village with a population of 1,600, towards the coast, entering the Caps et Marais d’Opale Regional Natural Park where three short but steep categorised climbs await in the final 30km. Each climb is about one kilometre long with double-digit gradients, and the finish in Boulogne-sur-Mer is also uphill. While some sprinters might manage to stay ahead, the stage win is more likely to be contested by fast, Classics-like riders untroubled by these small climbs, as they specialize in short, sharp efforts without overall GC ambitions. However, much depends on how the peloton approaches each climb, and a fast straight run-in could favour sprinters, whereas a dead turn followed by an immediate climb would hinder them. There's also a possibility of Tadej Pogačar attempting to win, given his history of attacking at any opportunity, which could force his rivals to fight for positions at the front and increase the stage's intrigue. Stage three, from Valenciennes to Dunkirk over 172km, should see sprinters battling it out at the finish unless crosswinds cause echelons to form, potentially leading to gaps among GC riders. The route is flat except for a small cat. 4 climb near the end and skirts past Belgium without crossing the border. In theory, this stage is tailored for sprinters with teams working towards a mass finish, but crosswinds could introduce tension and jitters within the peloton. Stage four, from Amiens to Rouen over 173km, is characteristic of the Picardy region - exposed, punchy, and unpredictable, making it accessible for many riders to win. After three days in northern France, the race heads south with rolling terrain in the first half giving way to category four and three climbs later on. The final 30km features multiple twists and turns, likely making team control difficult, and a fast descent precedes a modest climb to the finish in Rouen. Given the stage's suitability for many riders, the breakaway is unlikely to succeed, and the peloton may make their move early. The stage before the finish is about to get intense, with a big group likely to break clear in the final 30km. The lumpy parcours and aggressive racing could force some gaps open, making it an unmissable action for the last hour of racing. Some GC hopefuls might ship time due to the tough conditions. ###ARTICLEThe peloton will face a near-guaranteed sprint in Laval before tackling the big climbs. The region is known for producing three cycling stars, including Louis Bobet and Frédéric Guesdon. A nod to these riders can be expected at the start of Stage 8. The final 15km climb in Stage 12 could spell disaster for a sprinter on an off day. After a rest day in Toulouse, the stage begins and ends at this point, featuring only two stages with less than 160km of racing. The Pyrenees loom large on the horizon as riders tackle the reverse C route to the east of the city. While there are no mountain passes in sight, three smaller climbs will test the riders' endurance. With a trio of Pyrenean stages just around the corner, teams will prioritize conserving energy and avoiding fatigue. Sprinters will take the lead, with domestiques aiming for TV airtime. However, the placement of these climbs could throw a wrench into the works, allowing classics specialists to make their mark. Stage 12: Auch > Hautacam - 180.6km The first of three Pyrenean days will feature a mix of high mountains and flat terrain. Riders will face a series of minor ascents before tackling the Col du Soulor, followed by the Col des Bordères. A 23km descent awaits before the final climb up Hautacam. This stage is typical of Pyrenean racing, with an abrupt transition from flat to mountainous terrain. The first major climb will be a shock to riders' systems. With GC teams likely to save their energy for the coming week, they'll have to navigate the challenges of this stage without getting too far behind. The stage starts over them today - they’re harder to get inside the shorter the stage - no one can take this one easy. DS’s will be shouting timings down the microphone at the slowest riders as much as they will the ones contesting the win. It’ll be a shock if anyone chooses a TT set-up – with such steep gradients riders will no doubt be opting for their climbing bikes, but there will be intense interest in the wheels, helmets and other aero tech in use. ###ARTICLEthings up as the big teams all want to mash their riders at the front. If the catch is maked, it probably won’t be until late, thus possibly resulting in a messy and disorganised sprint.Stage 16: Montpellier > Mont Ventoux 172km2025 Tour de France stage 16 mapThe Giant of Provence or the Bald Mountain – whatever you want to call it, arguably the most iconic mountain in France is back as a stage finish for the first time since 2016.Stage 16 has a distinctly Vuelta a España feel about it: flat all day, nothing of note, and then a big beast at the end with the potential to turn the race on its head. Keep an eye out on the wind – both blowin across the flat lands and at the top of Ventoux. Approaching the fabled ascent from its southern flank, it’s a 15.7km climb all the way to the very top. Keep an eye out on the wind – both blowin across the flat lands and at the top of Ventoux. Approaching the fabled ascent from its southern flank, it’s a 15.7km climb all the way to the very top. Stage 17: Vif > Courchevel / Col de la Loze 171km2025 Tour de France stage 18 mapThis year’s queen stage packs in more than 5,500m of elevation across 171km of racing, with two legendary HC cols being summitted before a return to a modern HC favourite: the Col de la Loze.As soon as the race flag drops it’s east into the Alps, with the first major climb, the Col du Glandon, beginning just 36km into the stage. A regular feature in the race in the 80s and 90s, this will be the 21.7km climb’s first appearance since 2015. The descent leads directly to the Col de la Madeleine (19.2km at 7.9%), similarly a former favourite that hasn't been used as much in recent years.There’s a stretch of valley road on the other side of the Madeleine, with the race dropping to 445m above sea level. Why do we mention that? Because there’s still 1,800m of elevation to go, almost all of it on the nasty slopes of the Col de la Loze. In a twist from the two previous times the race has ridden to the summit of 2,304m, riders will tackle a new approach from Courchevel as opposed to from Méribel.This is just as important a day for deciding the outcome of the King of the Mountains jersey as it is the maillot jaune, and you can guarantee that a whole host of climbers will swarm to the front of the peloton early on to ensure that they’re present in the ###ARTICLEThose in pursuit of polka dot jersey points will fiercely contest the summits of the Glandon and Madeleine, but their breakaway counterparts will work together to withstand the peloton behind. As riders approach Courchevel's altiport, attacks will originate at the bottom and persist until the top. In contrast, GC leaders may wait until the daunting Col de la Loze before launching a decisive attack. The final stage of the 2025 Tour de France is about to get a thrilling twist. A dash to the line might seem like a given, but with numerous teams participating in breakaways, there's a higher probability of an unexpected winner emerging. The stage concludes on the iconic Champs-Élysées without the intimidating big climbs found in previous finales. Instead, a smaller group from the initial breakaway will likely compete for the top spot. The 120km stage starts in Mantes la Ville and returns to Paris, but with some significant changes from last year's Olympic-inspired route. Three ascents of the Côte de la Butte Montmartre within the final 40km add an exciting layer to the competition. The peloton will still navigate through the original finishing circuit, but the cobbled climb up to Sacré-Cœur Basilica introduces a new challenge. The potential for an unexpected outcome is high, especially if a skilled puncheur emerges with enough energy to break away from the pack. However, it's essential to remember that one-day races differ significantly from Grand Tour stages, and last year's Olympic road race was a much longer event with half the riders. Expect a high-paced sprint, possibly without some of the top contenders if they're too exhausted from Montmartre. The bunch is likely to stay together until the final stretch on the Champs-Élysées.

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