



Teams assemble big-name squads for the North American premiere of the ProTour circuit

A sprint is added as a demonstration event

Québec City, Wednesday, August 25, 2010—The main objective—ensure that a peloton of the highest calibre will compete in the North American premiere editions of the prestigious ProTour circuit—has been achieved. A total of 176 riders representing the 18 ProTour teams, the three Continental Pro teams and the Canadian national team are entered in the Québec City and Montréal Grands Prix Cyclistes.

Following the UCI registration procedure, each team was required to register, 20 days prior to each race, a group of 8 racers plus a maximum of 4 substitutes. Teams will have until 72 hours prior to each race to confirm the name of 8 racers and 2 substitutes. The field includes nine reigning national road race champions as well as the top climber and five stage winners from the 2010 Tour de France (see the “Introduction to the Teams” backgrounder).

“We have a high-quality peloton that will be racing on two difficult, up-and-down courses, with repeated hill climbs that will favour climber-*puncheur* riders and all-rounders,” said Charly Mottet, *Sport Manager*, Grand Prix Cycliste ProTour Québec - Montréal, who officially sanctioned the two Québec courses on behalf of the International Cycling Union (UCI). A road racing legend in France, Mottet finished third at the Grand Prix des Amériques in 1989, on the Mount Royal course in Montréal.

The many high-calibre racers confirmed for the races include several who are coming off outstanding recent performances: **Samuel Sanchez** (ESP), who is 9th in the world rankings, finished 4th in the Tour de France and is the reigning Olympic champion, will race for Euskaltel-Euskadi; **Robert Gesink** (NED) of Rabobank is ranked 10th in the world and was 9th overall in the Tour de France; Canada’s **Ryder Hesjedal**, with Garmin-Transitions, is 11th in the world and finished 7th in the Tour de France; **Christopher Horner** (USA), 12th in the world, was 10th in the Tour de France; the Team RadioShack racers include **Sergio Paulinho** (POR), who won a stage in the Tour de France; **Ivan Basso** (ITA) is 15th in the world; and **Peter Sagan** (SVK) of Liquigas-Doimo is a young racer to watch.



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Other high-caliber racers include **Sylvain Chavanel** (FRA) who won two stages in the Tour de France and will race alongside countryman **Jérôme Pineau** for Team Quick Step; **Edvald Boasson Hagen** (NOR) with Team Sky; **Sandy Casar** (FRA), who won a stage in the Tour de France, races for FDJ; **Jens Voigt** (GER) representing Team Saxo Bank; **Damiano Cunego** (ITA) with Lampre-Farnese Vini; **Pierrick Fedrigo** (FRA) and **Thomas Voeckler** (FRA), France's reigning National Champion and a Tour de France stage winner, both with Bbox Bouygues Telecom; finally, **Alessandro Ballan** (ITA), of BMC Racing Team, is another Tour de France stage winner.

Looking at the rider selections, certain teams have great strength and depth, and clearly emerge as early favourites, especially Team RadioShack, Euskaltel-Euskadi, Bbox Bouygues Telecom, Team Quick Step and Team Sky.

"I am very happy with the positive response from the teams. Each has entered riders who will be a great match for the two racecourses we have prepared for them," noted Serge Arsenault, President, Grand Prix Cycliste ProTour Québec - Montréal. "This is the first time that the ProTour has come to North America since its inception, and this great response is proof of their commitment to the globalization of cycling. The welcome we will extend to them will be worthy of their performances," he concluded.

An innovative event in demonstration

The organizers will be taking advantage of the presence of the ProTour teams and UCI officials to mount a demonstration of a spectacular new event in the hopes that it may be added to the official UCI disciplines. The Challenge Sprint, showcasing 16 top-level Canadian sprinters, is a series of sprint races featuring four racers each in a single-elimination format, and promises explosive, head-to-head duels.

The Challenge Sprint will be presented starting at 5 pm on September 9, along the final kilometre of the Grand Prix Cycliste de Québec course, on Rue St-Louis. This one-of-a-kind event was designed in close collaboration with the Canadian Cycling Association (CCA) and the Fédération québécoise des sports cyclistes.



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The national team is announced

Lastly, the CCA has unveiled the names of the riders who will make up the Canadian national team powered by SpiderTech and directed by Steve Bauer, entered in the Québec City and Montréal Grands Prix Cyclistes. The team will be bolstered by the presence of Québec's Dominique Rollin, granted special leave by the Cervélo TestTeam for the occasion, as well as the current Canadian National Road Race Champion, Will Routley.

All documents pertaining to today's announcement are available at www.protourquebecmontreal.com.

About Grand Prix Cycliste ProTour Québec - Montréal

In 2009, the UCI awarded a pair of licences to present the first-ever North American stops on the ProTour racing circuit. The organization is in charge of planning and presenting the Québec City and Montréal races from 2010 to 2014 inclusively. Please see the www.protourquebecmontreal.com website for full details on these races emblematic of the highest level of international cycling.

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