

**NEWS RELEASE >>> For immediate release**

## **ULISSI TAKES 8TH GRAND PRIX CYCLISTE DE MONTRÉAL**

Montréal, Sunday, September 10, 2017 - Diego Ulissi outwitted his breakaway companions in a nail-biting finale to win the 8th Grand Prix Cycliste de Montréal ahead of Spain's Jesus Herrada and Dutchman Tom-Jelte Slagter. Better renowned for his six stage victories in the Giro d'Italia, the UAE Team Emirates leader led the successful move in the final lap to upset the pre-race favorites and sprint for his best victory to date in a one-day race. Frenchman Tony Gallopin, member of a six man breaks also including Belgian Jan Bakelants and Dutchman Bauke Mollema, tried to force the decision by attacking with 1.5 km to go, but Ulissi was the fastest on the final stretch and easily overpowered his opponents. Taken off their guard in an eventful finale with countless attempts, favorites Peter Sagan or titleholder Greg Van Avermaet were forced to concede defeat with two kilometers to go as the chase failed to find momentum.

Canadian road champion Matteo Dal-Cin (Team Canada) and compatriot Benjamin Perry (Israel Cycling Academy) broke clear on the gun. The peloton gave them the go-ahead and their lead rose to 5:45 after 20 km. Several counterattacks and a steady effort by Cannondale Drapac Professional Cycling Team brought the lead down. At km 43, UAE Team Emirates Ben Swift raised the tempo and the peloton split in two parts. While title-holder Greg Van Avermaet managed to stay in the first part of the pack with former winner Simon Gerrans and fellow-Australian Michael Matthews, Peter Sagan found himself trapped in the second part of the bunch, which at most trailed the first by one minute. But the Sagan group made it back at kilometer 55. The world champion replied in similar fashion in lap number 8, when he briefly attacked with a team-mate with 105 km to go before being reeled in. Team Cannondale Drapac Professional Cycling Team kept leading the way with Alex Howes and Lawson Craddock and the two escapees were finally caught shortly after kilometer 120. At the junction, Team Sunweb and Lotto Soudal seized the reins and took turns to increase the pace, dropping several riders. Ian Boswell (Team Sky) made his move in the 12th lap (km 140), quickly followed by Eritrea's Natnael Berhane (Team Dimension Data). The two were later joined by Michael Albasini (Orica-Scott) and Edward Ravasi (UAE Team Emirates). But the break was run down at kilometer 164. With 38 km to go, Canada's Guillaume Boivin (Israel Cycling Academy) also tried his luck before Alberto Bettiol (Cannondale Drapac Professional Cycling Team) countered and went on his own. He was later joined by Gianluca Brambilla (Quick Step Floors), Lukas Pöstlberger (Bora-Hansgrohe), Dylan Teuns (BMC Racing Team), Danilo Wyss (BMC Racing Team), Roman Kreuziger (Orica-Scott), Matthias Frank (AG2R La Mondiale), Valerio Conti (UAE Team Emirates) and Enrico Gasparotto (Bahrain-Merida). The nine were caught with two laps to go and the next attacker was Jan Bakelants (AG2R La Mondiale), who moved in the descent. The Belgian was later part of a 16-man group who broke clear in the last lap and included Tony Gallopin (Lotto Soudal), Jesus Herrada (Movistar Team), Bakelants, Bauke Mollema (Trek-Segafredo), Ulissi and Slagter. The six parted with their breakaway companions in the last ascent of Camillien-Houde and were left to battle it out for final victory. They managed to keep the pack at bay, setting the stage for Ulissi to take the final laurels.

Diego Ulissi: "I had been looking for a victory in a one-day classic for a long time and the Grand Prix Cycliste de Montréal was the perfect one for me as I finished third last year. In the finale when we saw that the favorites like Greg Van Avermaet or Peter Sagan were not there in the leading group I started to believe in my chances. I knew I was probably the fastest in this group but you never know. I want to thank my team-mates like Conti and Marcato who did a great job to help me. I haven't talked to (Italian selector) Davide Cassani about the world championships but if he had questions my answer was this."

Jesus Herrada: "It's a very hard race, I'm glad to be on the podium, it's a great satisfaction. In the finale, we were a strong group of riders while Van Avermaet and Sagan did not have team-mates with them. It played in our favor."

Tom-Jelte Slagter: "I want to thank my team-mates for we were the only team who decided to take the reins and make the race hard. It was the plan to lead early on and then go first with Alberto Bettiol while I had to wait for the very last minute. It nearly worked even if I would have preferred to be in the middle of the podium than in third place."

## ABOUT THE GPCQM

The Grands Prix Cyclistes de Québec et de Montréal, the only two spots on the International Cycling Union (UCI) World Tour in the Americas, contribute to fulfilling one of the primary objectives of the International Cycling Union (UCI): the globalization of the WorldTour circuit. These tour stops are in addition to the existing, officially sanctioned events in Europe and Oceania. Since 2010, the organization has been responsible for the planning and the conduct of the GPCQM and counts on the invaluable support of public and private partners: the Government of Canada, the Gouvernement du Québec, the city of Québec, the city of Montréal, the National Battlefields Commission, Québec City Tourism, Tourisme Montréal, Québecor, Air Transat, and TVA Sports (official GPCQM broadcaster).

The International Cycling Union (UCI) is the international federation of cycling, recognized by the International Olympic Committee (ICO). The UCI oversees the worldwide management and promotion of the eight disciplines of cycling.

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**SOURCE** >>> Grands Prix Cyclistes de Québec et de Montréal

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