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VIRTUAL TOUR DE FRANCE ON ZWIFT: RIDING FOR SOLIDARITY

MEN AND WOMEN TO COMPETE OVER THREE WEEKENDS IN JULY, PLUS THREE MASS PARTICIPATION VIRTUAL L'ÉTAPE DU TOUR DE FRANCE EVENTS ALL IN AID OF FIVE GLOBAL CHARITY PARTNERS.

In the context of a completely unprecedented health crisis in which most cycling events have been cancelled or postponed, Zwift and Amaury Sport Organisation have decided to do something useful together and create the very first virtual Tour de France. It will be the starting point for a strong solidarity campaign around cycling.

During the first three weekends of July 2020, men's and women's professional races will be organised as part of virtual stages of the Tour de France. Continuing on from the major increase in cycling at home in recent months, cycling lovers from all over the world will also have a chance to ride the Virtual l'Étape du Tour de France on the same weekends. All events are organized in aid of five global charity partners.

- First Virtual Tour de France for Men and Women.
- 23 Men's Teams and 17 Women's Professional Teams Confirmed. Confirmed names include Chris Froome, Geraint Thomas, Egan Bernal and Greg Van Avermaet for the men's race. Marianne Vos, Chloé Dygert Owen, Kirsten Wild and Anna Van der Breggen are amongst the names confirmed for the women's race.
- Racing to be broadcast to over 130 countries worldwide over the 3 weekends.
- Virtual l'Etape du Tour de France to offer mass participation opportunity for cyclists worldwide on the same roads as the professionals.
- The event sees two new maps added to Zwift: France and Paris.
- Tour de France United (#TDFunited) to raise funds for five charity partners: Emmaüs, Secours Populaire, Jeugdfonds Sport and Cultuur, BiJeWa and Qhubeka.

Racing is to return this July with the first Virtual Tour de France on the online training and racing platform, Zwift. Starting on Saturday, July 4th, the Virtual Tour de France is to form a part of the Tour de France United, a charity initiative in celebration of the Tour de France that will run until the conclusion of the rescheduled Tour de France in August.

Designed to deliver both the best virtual racing experience for both competitors and viewers, the Virtual Tour de France will be held over six stages, each around an hour in duration. Racing will commence on Saturday, July 4th with the first women's stage, followed immediately by the men. Stages for both races are held on identical courses and over the same distance. Both events will receive equal broadcast coverage.

The stages of the Virtual Tour de France will provide opportunities for all types of rider. Stages 1 and 2 will be held on Zwift's biggest map, the fantasy volcanic island of Watopia. For the Tour de France, Watopia will receive several visual additions inspired by Nice, the planned host town for this year's 'Grand Départ'. Stages 3, 4 and 5 will be held on an entirely new French map designed specifically for the Virtual Tour de France. Stage 5 is marked as the Queen Stage, and one for the climbers, with a summit finish at Chalet Reynard on the formidable Mont Ventoux. Stage 6 will see the racers take to the iconic Champs-Élysées, finishing in front of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

"I cannot imagine the month of July without cycling," Says Christian Prudhomme, Director of the Tour de France. "Thanks to the virtual Tour de France, which will be widely broadcast on TV, the champions and their fans will fill in the void left by the Tour de France, which will reunite with the public in Nice on 29 August. The Tour Virtuel puts technology to work for passion and the cause of cycling for everyone."

Yann Le Moenner, ASO General Manager adds, "Our joint project with cycling teams, Zwift, charities and broadcasters is all about leveraging the newest esport technologies to put the spotlight on the champions who were supposed to ride the Tour de France in July, as well as bringing bicycles to people who do not have any."

The Virtual Tour de France wouldn't be the same without the famous Yellow, Green, Polka-dot and White jerseys held by the leaders of the race. Standings for all jerseys will be calculated using a points-based system. The best overall team will be calculated by combining the total points earned across all competitions. In addition, each stage will also see a rider awarded the Most Aggressive rider award, sponsored by Antargaz.

"There's nothing bigger than the Tour de France in cycling, so to say I'm excited would be an understatement", says Eric Min, Zwift CEO and Co-Founder. "Since I was a boy, I would always be glued in front of the TV for three weeks in July, so I feel incredibly privileged for Zwift to be able to play host to the first virtual edition this year. Of course, we all very much look forward to the race returning this August, but the good news is there will still be racing in July. The Virtual Tour de France will be a celebration of the event featuring the stars of the men's and women's pro pelotons, all in aid of five great causes. Let's also not forget, there is a great chance to take part through the Virtual l'Étape du Tour de France rides as well!"

Taking place on the same three weekends that will see the professional riders in action, will be the Virtual l'Étapedu Tour de France series. L'Étape du Tour de France provides cyclists with the opportunity to get a slice of the Tour de France experience through a mass participation cyclo-sportive held on one of the Tour de France mountain stages. The Virtual l'Étape du Tour de France will be no different, allowing participants to test themselves on the same roads as the professionals. There will be three different stages, held over each of the three weekends in July.

Both the France and Paris maps have been designed specifically for the Virtual Tour de France. The French map takes inspiration from the country and should evoke strong connections with the country as Zwifters pass through vineyards, over Roman aqueducts and through Sunflower fields. The new map also plays host to a virtual replica of Mont Ventoux. Zwift's Mont Ven-Top, meaning snowy peak in gallic, is a punishing climb that is sure to test the legs of any rider.

The Paris map is a smaller world, taking in the finishing circuit we've all come to associate with the final stage of the Tour de France. Zwifters will be able to ride around the famed Arc de Triomphe, navigate around the Place de la Concorde and sprint down the cobbled Champs-Élysées just like the best sprinters of the Tour de France. Zwifters will be able to join events on the new maps during the Virtual Tour de France.

The distinctive jerseys

Like the real-life Tour de France, the distinctive jerseys will be awarded to the leaders of the general classification (based on points rather than on time), best climber classification, best sprinter classification and best young rider classification (again, based on points rather than on time). Unique to the Virtual Tour de France, all classifications will be run as team-based classifications, therefore, allowing teams to rotate riders between stages. All riders in the race will be eligible to score points for their team in each of the respective categories. The teams leading the classifications will have the freedom to nominate one rider to wear the iconic jerseys for the following stage.

The 6 stages of the Virtual Tour de France:

- Saturday 4th July, stage 1: Nice, 36.4 km (4 x 9.1 km, hilly stage)
- Sunday 5th July, stage 2: Nice, 29.5 km (682 m of ascent, mountain stage)
- Saturday 11th July, stage 3: North-East France, 48 km (flat stage)
- Sunday 12th July, stage 4: South-West France, 45.8 km (2 x 22.9 km laps, hilly stage)
- Saturday 18th July, stage 5: Mont Ventoux, 22.9 km (finish at Chalet-Reynard, mountain stage)
- Sunday 19th July, stage 6: Paris Champs-Élysées, 42.8 km (6 laps of the circuit)

The 3 stages of the Virtual l'Étape du Tour de France (16 sessions spread over each weekend):

- 4th and 5th July, Stage 1: Nice, 29.5 km (682 m of ascent, mountain stage)
- 11th and 12th July, Stage 2: South-West France, 45.8 km (2 x 22.9 km laps, hilly stage)
- 18th and 19th July, Stage 3: Mont Ventoux, (22.9 km, finishing at the observatory)

For more information on the Virtual Tour de France, visit www.zwift.com/virtual-tour-de-france





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For further information, please contact:

Fabrice Tiano, +33 (0)6 33 86 28 64, ftiano@aso.fr

Chris Snook, +44 (0)7833 087 739, chris.snook@zwift.com

About Amaury Sport Organisation

Amaury Sport Organisation is a company that owns, designs and organises top international sporting events. Specialised in the ‘non-stadia’ events, it has in-house knowledge of professions linked to organisation, media and sales of sports events.

A.S.O. organises 240 days of competition per year, with 90 events in 25 countries.

A.S.O. is involved in 5 major sports including cycling with Le Tour de France, motor sports with the Dakar, sailing with the Tour Voile, mass events with the Schneider Electric Marathon de Paris and golf with the Lacoste Ladies Open de France.

Amaury Sport Organisation is a subsidiary of the Amaury Group, media and sport group that owns the newspaper L’Equipe.

About Zwift

Zwift is the fitness company born from gaming. We're dedicated fitness enthusiasts that also happen to be experienced software and video game developers. Combining that passion and deep understanding of the fitness world, Zwift is the first company to use massive multiplayer gaming technology to bring the outdoor experience indoors. Athletes from around the globe can train and compete with each other in rich, 3D-generated worlds simply by connecting their existing devices & hardware (e.g. cycle trainers, power meters, treadmills, heart rate monitors, etc) wirelessly via open industry standard ANT+ and BLE. From friendly competition, to racing & structured training programs, Zwift is building a community of like-minded athletes united in the pursuit of a better social fitness experience.

ABOUT ZWIFT

Zwift is the indoor training phenomenon taking the world by storm. An online platform helping everyone meet their fitness goals while having tons of fun along the way. Engaging gameplay meets fitness meets a global community of cyclists and runners. The result? Serious training made fun.

Meet new friends. Make new rivals. Ride up mountains. Run through jungles. Sprint through real roads made virtual or cruise across futuristic cities. Fun, flexible year-round training becomes the new normal with Zwift.

Build strengths and smash weaknesses with thousands of workouts. Train day or night, no matter the weather, and close the gap between where you are and where you want to be. Looking for something more specific? Flexible training plans by world-class coaches adjust to your schedule and help get you ready for race day.

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