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TIBCO-SILICON VALLEY BANK AND NTT PRO CYCLING TEAM CROWNED VIRTUAL TOUR DE FRANCE CHAMPIONS ON THE CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES



The sixth stage saw the grand finale after a third weekend of racing draw this historic event to a close, and just as we usually see on the final stage of the real Tour de France, the virtual Champs-Élysées saw the pace gradually wind up with each lap, as teams prepared themselves for a rapid sprint finish after 42.8km of racing. With six intermediate sprints during the race there was still the possibility for teams in the women's peloton to challenge Canyon//SRAM for the green jersey, which TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank successfully managed.

The women's race saw a collage of pained faces on their home video links as the pace set out high from the start and increased with each lap, causing some big names to fall out the lead group early on; sprint hopefuls Marta Bastianelli, Jolien D'Hoore and Tanya Erath along with Marianne Vos didn't make it to the finish with the front group down to a mix of unable to hold the pace or technical mechanicals. With each lap TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank put in an acceleration with the aim to continuously whittle the group of lead riders down. With 1.6km to go a group of 23 riders were storming down towards the home straight. With only a few hundred meters to go Ellen van Dijk (Trek-Segafredo) opened up the sprint with all riders engaging their power ups in unison. Yellow jersey wearer Lauren Stephens (TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank) timed hers to perfection with the help of her team manager Racheal Hedderman, to cross the finish line first, helping secure nearly a clean sweep of all classification jerseys; high-fives between the pair demonstrating what taking the overall win meant to the team. TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank took every jersey classification bar the young rider jersey which was won by Canyon//SRAM Racing.

NTT Pro Cycling Team pretty much mirrored the success of Tibco-Silicon Valley Bank by taking all jersey classifications, but on the day they didn't quite time the sprint right. By midway through the race over half the peloton had been distanced from the front group including Chris Froome (Team Ineos), Elia Viviani (Cofidis) and the entire Deceuninck - Quick-Step team. With a kilometer to go Groupama - FDJ riders, Benjamin Thomas and Bruno Armirail attacked off the front but we caught with 400m to go. Ryan Gibbons (NTT Pro Cycling Team), who was wearing the yellow jersey, looked like he was going to take the win until just a few meters to go when Will Clarke (Trek-Segafredo) came through to take the win, producing another stage victory for his team. NTT Pro Cycling Team still happily basked in their incredible success of this Virtual Tour de France as team manager Doug Ryder addressed the post-race interview with a fully charged glass of champagne in hand.

The most combative riders of the day were Marianne Vos (CCC - Liv) and Luke Durbridge (Mitchelton - Scott).

Stage six winner race quotes

Stage winner: Lauren Stephens - TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank

"It's been an incredible race winning the yellow jersey as a team and then winning the final stage was more than what we expected coming into this first ever women's Virtual Tour de France.

“We came into the stage today focused on taking the green jersey as we knew we were going to keep the yellow jersey so we made a plan to go for the green jersey and I think a hard controlled race is the best for our team and that’s what we did today.”

Stage winner: Will Clarke - Trek-Segafredo

“As far as Zwift racing goes this is the most prestigious race so far so it’s a nice way to finish the Tour for our team getting another stage win, it’s been a good experience and good exposure.

“I had an invisible power up early so I got rid of that one and then on the second or third lap I had the power up sprint so I kept that in the pocket until the end. Last week I also had a power up but I engaged it too early, at around 450 meters to go, so this week I went later but when you’re sitting at around 500watts it’s not easy to hit the remote to activate it, but I managed to do it today.”

Overall GC winner team manager quotes

Racheal Hedderman - TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank

“It’s been a lot of fun but it’s been hard work trying to coordinate it all, if nothing else just due to the timezones. We’ve had riders racing at four in the morning and 11 at night, but the riders fully all bought into the idea and were committed to racing so we made sure coming in that we all communicated in the week leading up to each of the races and building a plan together and then on race day we’re also communicating together really well and that communication is what has been key.

“We’ve had a fantastic reception, like you say TIBCO and Silicon Valley Bank have been sponsoring the team for 15 years but this is the biggest race that we’ve done, the biggest stage that we’ve performed on. To be able to perform as a team on this size of stage for our sponsors has been incredible.”

Doug Ryder - NTT Pro Cycling Team

“It’s been absolutely brilliant. It’s been an amazing opportunity for us to engage with this platform, and to win the first ever Virtual Tour de France has been great. We’ve put a lot of hard work into this, NTT has also put a lot of effort into this showing all the analytics and data that you can see on screen which brings the fan base closer to the riders more than ever. For Zwift to have this platform to be able to run the race on has been something that we’ve been really excited to be a part of.

“To be able to connect with people and the fan base in this way, to use technology and platforms in this way gives some hope, you know our team race to provide hope and opportunity to so many kids around South Africa and to be able to still engage with the fan base has been a huge amount of fun and long may it last.

“We’ll be having a bit of a celebration this evening, there has been a lot of support between the riders, today they came back from a six hour ride on our training camp here in Tuscany and they all wanted to support the final four in this final stage on this Virtual Tour de France which just shows our unity and how this team has come together. We’re now really looking forward to pinning numbers on our jerseys and getting back out there in the real Tour de France and other races and getting close to our fan base again.”

Race Highlights

RESULTS

Top 3 over the finish line

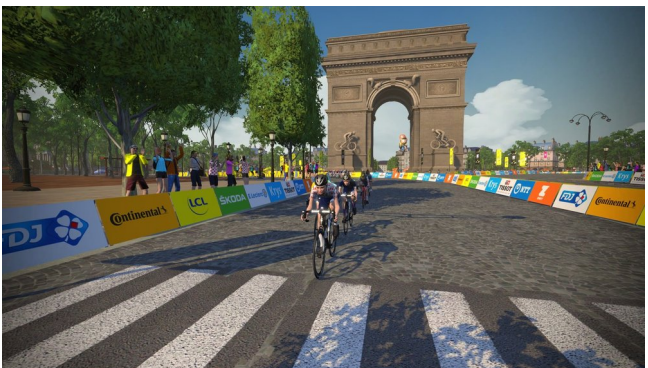
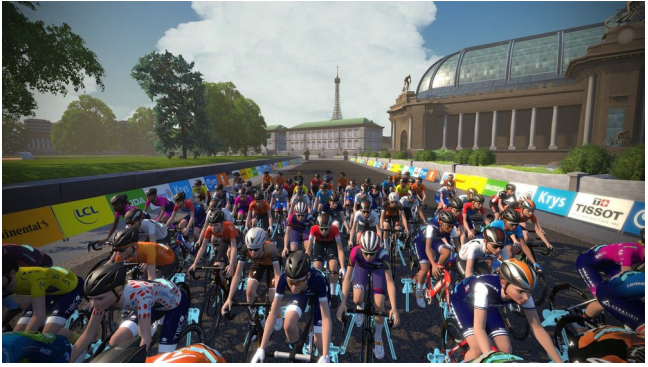
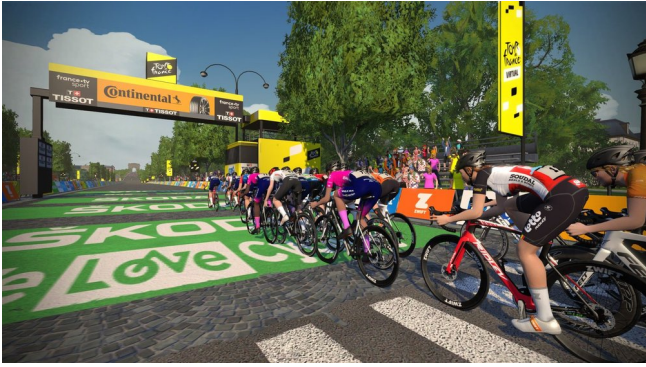
Women

1 Lauren Stephens (TIBCO - Silicon Valley Bank)

2 April Tacey (Drops Cycling)

3 Georgia Simmerling (Team Twenty20)

Women's Stage 6 Race Gallery





Men

- 1 Will Clarke (Trek - Segafredo)
- 2 Filippo Ganna (Team Ineos)
- 3 Ryan Gibbons (NTT Pro Cycling Team)

Men's Stage 6 Race Gallery





JERSEY CLASSIFICATIONS WOMEN

LCL Yellow Jersey General Classification - TIBCO-Silicon Valley Bank

Skoda Green jersey - TIBCO - Silicon Valley Bank

QOM Polkadot jersey - TIBCO - Silicon Valley Bank

Young rider white jersey - Canyon//SRAM Racing

JERSEY CLASSIFICATIONS MEN

LCL Yellow Jersey General Classification - NTT Pro Cycling Team

Sprint green jersey - NTT Pro Cycling Team

KOM polkadot jersey - NTT Pro Cycling Team

Young rider white jersey - NTT Pro Cycling Team

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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