

North Yorkshire to Benefit Greatly from Tour de France Grand Depart

The 2014 Tour de France Grand Depart is imminent and New Yorkshire cannot wait. After a determined campaign by “Welcome to Yorkshire” to have the Tour de France come to Yorkshire, the Tour is now set to begin in North Yorkshire. It is indeed a fantastic chance for the residents of the region to turn up and watch the third biggest sporting event worldwide.



The mega cyclist competition that brings together 200 of the globe's finest cyclists will have the first two stages in Yorkshire. Stage 1 of the competition will dazzle North Yorkshire cycling fans on July 5, Saturday, when the cyclists will begin the Grand Depart in Leeds and then run through Yorkshire Dales before finishing in Harrogate. During stage 1, the cyclists will cover 190 km (118 miles), with over 80 percent (161 km) in North Yorkshire.

On Sunday, June 6, stage 2 of the competition will begin in North Yorkshire and run through Harrogate, then to Skipton, before finishing in Sheffield. The total distance in stage 2 will be 200 km (124 miles), with 42 km being in North Yorkshire.

During the competition, at least 680,000 spectators will throng the first stage route for over five hours to watch their favorite riders. Apart from the 200 riders, the spectators will watch the run of a caravan of sponsors and race vehicles prior to the arrival of the riders. The huge multitude of visitors will generate immense economic gains for North Yorkshire while the over 3.5 billion global TV audience will boost the international reputation of the county. It is predicted that Yorkshire will gain at least GBP 100 million for hosting the Tour.

Tour de France also comes with remarkable business opportunities. North Yorkshire will definitely get economic boost in many sectors during and after the event. The mass of spectators will need food, drinks, and various services. They will also seek accommodation in local hotels and look for self-catering, bed and breakfasts, camp sites and caravan parks. The county's tourism will also get a huge boost as well as improved earnings in transport, laundry, printing, and shops. Since 20% of the county's economy and employment comes from tourism, the Tour will stimulate economic growth substantially.



The Tour is also likely to attract a huge number of British spectators owing to the recent successes of British riders. Bradley Wiggins and Chris Froome have recorded extraordinary performances in recent times and inspired British interest in riding. Therefore, those who are planning to watch the event live should begin to book their favorite Yorkshire hotels, camp sites, and B&B early to avoid frustration.

Moreover, to boost their conveniences during the Tour, fans can watch a new film at www.watchletour.co.uk and then share where they intend to watch the Tour. Doing this gives a fan the rare opportunity of winning VIP passes to the Yorkshire Grand Depart on July 5 at Leeds and the stage 3 finish on July 7 in London. There are also brand new bikes and many other prizes to win.

Similarly, there are remarkable efforts to ensure that the Tour leaves behind a legacy in North Yorkshire economy. The efforts include the establishment and promotion of tourism and leisure cycling, permanent signing of the route for convenient usage by tourists, sensitisation of businesses to exploit the opportunities presented by the Tour, and raising the profile of cycling within and without the county. Equally, cycling for families will be promoted through training of cycling in British Cycling-led ride initiatives and primary schools. Health improvement through cycling take-ups, such as cycle training schemes from GP referrals, and secondary school cycling promotion via the Sainsbury's School GamesOpens new–window event will also help to establish a legacy.



The Sainsbury's School GamesOpens new–window event run by North Yorkshire Sport brings together year 7 and year 8 pupils of North Yorkshire in a district-level competition. The event is organised in partnership with British Cycling, North Yorkshire School Games Organisers, and North Yorkshire SportOpens new–window and the finalists take to a closed road-circuit competition on July 3, 2014. To augment these efforts, Harrogate Borough Council has also produced a video that explains the benefits of cycling to the district and the entire county.

The buzz and excitement should not be left to die as soon as it is experienced. Therefore, the Stockton Cycling Festival will follow, a weekend after the Grand Départ 2014, between Friday 11 July and Sunday

13 July, to keep the thrill alive.

Photos: www.letouryorkshire.com

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