

Tour of Britain 2008 South East Stage Unveiled:
SEEDA Backed stage brings Tour to 2 new venues
Milton Keynes to host Race HQ
Newbury to host stage first ever stage finish

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10am 19th MAY

Organisers, Sponsors and hosts of the second stage of this years Tour of Britain today came together to unveil the route of the second stage of the 2008 Tour of Britain.

Once again, with the backing of SEEDA, the Tour of Britain returns to the South East region for a third consecutive year and once again the riders are to be taken to the limit over a route of nearly 150km that they will be expected to cover in a little under 4 hours.

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is one of the main sponsors of the Tour of Britain. SEEDA's Director for Sustainable Prosperity Oona Muirhead said: "This race can create a major economic boost for both Milton Keynes and Newbury as it provides them with a unique opportunity to showcase both locations as well as the villages and towns en-route. This kind of event really does help to put the South East on the map as a competitive, professional and desirable destination for hosting major sporting events, especially in the run up to the 2012 Games."

Milton Keynes – Stage start and race HQ

When the riders line up for the start of stage 2 of the race on 8th September they will already be familiar with Milton Keynes as the town will also be the location for the race HQ or 'permanence' in the days leading up to the race. As such, Milton Keynes will see all the 96 riders, 100 team personnel, 300 race staff and volunteers arrive in the town to begin the task of assembling and preparing the infrastructure for the race

Newbury is one of the smallest towns ever to host a stage of the Tour of Britain so far, thanks in no small part to the enthusiasm of the local community and the generosity of businesses in and around the town. September 8th will be a huge day for Newbury, a pretty market town that is currently better known for racing on 4 legs rather than 2 wheels!

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The arrival of The Tour of Britain will attract thousands of people to the town to witness the race and provide a welcome boost to the local economy as well as putting the town on the map and the TV with the race due to be screened on ITV4 that night.

Ian Grose, leader of Newbury Town Council commented:

"Newbury is looking forward to hosting this fantastic event for the first time. The final couple of kilometres will prove to be a real test for the peloton, with every chance of a spectacular sprint finish in our picturesque market town, and the route offers spectators plenty of opportunity to watch the riders. Newbury will be "en fete" for the day with something to suit everyone – come along and make a day of it!"

The Tour of Britain is more than just a sporting event, it is a cultural phenomenon that brings colour, excitement and inspiration to the places it visits as well as boosting the economy throughout the region. September 8th is set to be a big day for the region and the organisers of the race are looking forward to the welcome they will receive in the region.