

TOUR OF
BRITAIN



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PRESS RELEASE

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TOUR OF BRITAIN, WOMEN'S TOUR AND BRITISH CYCLING UNVEIL RIDE FOR HEROES INITIATIVE

Following this week's announcements of the Tour of Britain and Women's Tour routes for 2021, event organiser SweetSpot Group and British Cycling have today unveiled plans to celebrate the unsung heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic at this year's races.

The organisations will work together, as a part of their ongoing relationship, to engage with the ever-growing cycling community in the UK this summer. Ride for Heroes will honour and celebrate the often unnoticed and underappreciated work of key workers and community champions since March 2020 at each stage start and finish venue of both the Tour of Britain (Sunday 5 – Sunday 12 September) and Women's Tour (Monday 4 – Saturday 9 October) this year.

Brian Facer, British Cycling CEO, said: *"I don't think that anyone can overstate the vital work which has been done by key workers over the last year, whether they are NHS staff or everyone who kept the country functioning. The Tour of Britain and Women's Tour are two of our key events which visit towns and cities across the country, so it is an ideal opportunity for us to thank the key workers and community champions for everything that they have done."*

"Supporting this initiative is just about the easiest decision I have had to make since joining British Cycling, and I'm looking forward to working with SweetSpot Group and our own network of volunteers to deliver outstanding and memorable events later in the year."

Hugh Roberts, CEO of SweetSpot Group, added: *"We want to make both races not just about the world-class racing and superstar riders but also through our campaign, Ride for Heroes, to ensure it is a celebration of 'all things British'".*

"It will be an occasion for ourselves and British Cycling to thank all those who have worked tirelessly over the past year to ensure our wellbeing and safety. The SweetSpot team are determined that not only will there be great racing to enjoy but the Tour of Britain and Women's Tour will also be ways by which communities across the country can come together and show their appreciation for our COVID heroes over the past 12 months."

SweetSpot will work with British Cycling's regional development staff around the UK and local authorities that host the races to call on the cycling community nominate these unsung heroes via the event websites at tourofbritain.co.uk/ride-for-heroes and womenstour.co.uk/ride-for-heroes

Groups of riders will then have the unique and never to be forgotten experience of leading out the peloton at each start or to be part of the celebrations riding into each finish ahead of the professional races.

Working together SweetSpot and British Cycling will also explore other fundraising initiatives, including the return of The Great Tour, the 64-day circumnavigation of Britain's coastline by bike, and a potential One Day Ahead ride, whereby selected amateurs will be able to ride each stage in full 24 hours ahead of the professionals.

This year's Tour of Britain route was unveiled on Wednesday (17 March), with over 100 of the world's best riders set to tackle eight thrilling days of racing from Cornwall to Aberdeen. Both Wales and Scotland will host two stages of the event, while seven of the 12 start and finish venues announced to date – Penzance, Bodmin, Sherford, Warrington, Hawick, Stonehaven and Aberdeen – are new to the event.

Rescheduled for October owing to the pandemic, the seventh edition of the Women's Tour will feature the race's first-ever individual time trial, to be held in Atherstone, Warwickshire. The race, which forms a part of the prestigious UCI Women's WorldTour, will also visit Oxfordshire and Walsall, before concluding in Felixstowe, Suffolk after two stages in the East of England.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent rescheduling of the race from its traditional June dates, the original planned venue for stage four is no longer able to host the race. Therefore SweetSpot are seeking a new partner(s) to fill the vacated slot on Thursday 7 October.

The last year has seen a significant increase in the numbers of bikes sold and individuals of all ages getting more active on two wheels. British Cycling is working hard to ensure this spike in participation leads to a longer-term change in habits, which will have positive benefits across a number of areas, from combatting climate change to boosting health and wellbeing. Many of those who start to cycle will go on to make it their sport of choice, competing for podiums of their own and potentially joining the talent identification pathway in the future.

British Cycling also continues to work with other partners and stakeholders, including Sport England and the Uniting the Movement strategy, to make our roads, towns and cities more conducive to safer cycling.

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