



# LE TOUR

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The world's biggest annual sporting event, the Tour de France, is coming to the South of England on Wednesday, 6th and Thursday 7th July 1994. It will be the first time that British crowds will see the full road race stages of the Tour, which on its only previous visit to this country was confined to a closed circuit.

*Dover Castle will be the focal point for the start of the UK stages of this prestigious event, with TV cameras capturing the scenes for 950 million viewers worldwide – all eyes will be on Dover Castle, the town and the District.*

First staged in 1903, the Tour de France is the toughest endurance event in the world, involving 2,500 miles of racing over three weeks. It is also the world's most lucrative bike race with prize monies totalling a massive £1.2 million.

For 1994 the race begins on 2 July in Lille for the first three stages in Northern France, then crossing to Britain via the Channel Tunnel for Days 4 and 5. From Dover Castle on Day 4, the race will move on to Folkestone and then along Stone Street to Canterbury, then the A28 to Ashford and on to Royal Tunbridge Wells before the finish on Madeira Drive, Brighton. On the following day Hampshire will host the race, starting and finishing in Portsmouth and taking in a circuit through Havant, Petersfield, Basingstoke and Winchester. The Tour de France will be completed on 24 July in Paris – on the famous finishing stretch along the Champs Elysees.

Le Tour comes complete with a full line-up of riders, officials, back-up personnel and media; in total over 3,000 people will be travelling with the race in some 1,500 vehicles. Accommodation, restaurants, petrol stations and many other businesses will benefit from the entourage alone who will be staying within a 30 mile radius of Dover. With an annual event budget of almost £13 million, and each sponsored team costing in the region of £3 million, it is good that some of this will be spent in Dover District and will benefit the local economy.

As this is a truly European event, Dover District Council is working with the towns hosting the race across the Channel in an exchange of information and ideas. The British Police motor cycle escort of at least forty officers will be joined on the UK stages by an equal contingent of French Gendarmes.

A normal Tour de France race day begins the night before when Le Tour team moves into the start location to set up the tented village, the signing-on podium, the safety barriers and general equipment. While the team members rest, the host town's



40 off a programme of curriculum projects with the schools throughout the District. This will culminate in a schools exhibition during the week of Le Tour celebrations. It is estimated that one million people will line the route between Dover and Brighton with approximately 50,000 visiting Dover on that day alone in addition to those staying for the week of the activities. An estimated £2 million will benefit the local economy.

By July 1994 it will have taken over two years of extensive planning and organisation to enable this event to be staged. Similar to the Open Golf Championships at Sandwich last year there are many agencies and individuals involved in the staging of such a major project. There will inevitably be disruption, but Dover District Council is working closely with the Police to keep this to a minimum by setting up public meetings around the town for the various areas affected. Special hotlines will be set up in the next couple of months to answer queries from residents, and new information on the event, road closures, diversions, etc. will be publicised throughout local newspapers.

To celebrate the arrival of the Tour de France in Dover, a series of events are planned from 2 – 6 July. The programme is entitled 'L'EVENT' and will include the Carnival, Summer Ball, Concerts, Cycle Trails, Fairs and Fireworks. Full details and brochure will be available late spring from local Tourist Information Centres.

It is hoped that residents will support the race and local businesses will seize the opportunity to capitalise on the visit to Dover of the world's biggest annual sporting event, to help raise Dover's profile for everyone's benefit.

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## SHIPPING NEWS ————— BRUCE LILLEY

LLOYD'S LIST of 28 January 1994, devoted a large section of several pages to the Cruise and Ferry Trades in general and to Dover in particular. Several articles took up the question of the effect of the Channel Tunnel on the ferry trade. P&O, Sealink and Hoverspeed each had a report, as did Dover Harbour Board, with its plans for the Western Docks. Another article defined the rôle of George Hammond plc in expanding facilities for importing fruit via the Dover Cargo Terminal, opened in 1990 at Dover Eastern Docks and now being expanded to provide 50% extra storage.

In an article entitled "Fillip for the Ferry Service" Dover's General Manager, Ferries, suggested that the ferry industry is "going to fight very hard for its market share", with big, new, super ferries and four large berths for them now available at Eastern Docks, concluding that the overall effect on ferry traffic may, after all, be "quite minimal".

The cruise industry was discussed at length in different articles, which high-lighted the increasing popularity of holiday cruises, with the United States the largest market and Europe the second largest. It was stated that the UK market soared 150% in the last six years. With twenty-two cruise ships expected to put in at Dover in 1994, there are indications that Dover could become a desirable stop on cruise liner itineraries in the future.