

# Cycling Tour de Edinburgh!

Scotland will welcome two stages of the Friends Life Tour of Britain this September, as British Cycling's premier road cycling event comes to the country on two separate days for the first time ever.

Stage Three will take place on 8 September starting in Cumbria and concluding at Floors Castle, Kelso in the Scottish Borders, before the UK's biggest professional cycle race resumes a day later from Edinburgh, the first visit to Scotland's capital for the modern race




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Departing from Holyrood Park, Stage Four will pass through the centre of Edinburgh before heading into East Lothian and then through the Scottish Borders to Northumberland, where the stage will finish in Blyth.

Paul Bush OBE, Chief Operating Officer for EventScotland said: *"The Friends Life Tour of Britain is the country's top bike race and we are proud to host two stages in Scotland this year. With stunning scenery throughout the Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, and East Lothian, Scotland will undoubtedly provide the perfect stage for the action. The Edinburgh start in particular will be of particular interest to Scottish cycling fans as we see the peloton ride through the capital for the very first time."*

*"With excitement and passion for cycling at a record high following the hugely successful road race at the Commonwealth Games last year, we look forward to welcoming some of the world's top riders to Scotland once again."*

Stage Three, which begins in Cockermouth, will cross into Scotland at Gretna, first heading through Dumfries & Galloway before the Scottish Borders, where the world's top riders will race through Hawick, Selkirk and Melrose before the final kilometres through Kelso and the finish in the grounds of Floors Castle.

Councillor Stuart Bell, Scottish Borders Council's Executive Member for Economic Development, said: *"I am delighted that the Scottish Borders will host a stage finish of Friends Life Tour of Britain and that more visitors and local residents than ever before will be able to take in this fantastic event at close quarters with the following day's stage also passing through the area."*

*"The return of such a prestigious event emphasises our ability to host high profile events here in the Borders and is further recognition of the fact that the Scottish Borders is*

*Scotland's leading cycling destination.*

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September will be the first ever visit for the modern Friends Life Tour of Britain to Edinburgh, and the first visit for a national cycling Tour since the final stage of the PruTour in May 1999.

After taking in the world famous city centre during the neutralised start, the stage will depart via Musselburgh and East Lothian and into Berwickshire, both firsts for the event, visiting Duns and Coldstream before crossing into Northumberland for the run to the finish in Blyth.

Councillor Richard Lewis, Edinburgh's new Festivals and Events Champion, said: *"This will be an exciting event for the city and a highlight for 2015. Elite cyclists from all over the world will descend on the Capital and the dramatic backdrop of Edinburgh's winding streets will make for a spectacular sight. This is going to be a must-see event for both local people and visitors to the city."*

Commenting on the announcement, Mick Bennett, Race Director of Friends Life Tour of Britain organisers SweetSpot said;

*"This year's route gives us the fantastic opportunity to have two days of racing in Scotland and to make first visits to the east of the Scottish Borders and Edinburgh. I am sure many cycling fans will be excited, just like we are, at the prospect of seeing the world's top riders on the streets of the Scottish capital, and will hopefully use the race as an opportunity to visit the areas we pass through".*

Further details of both stages, including Ordnance Survey stage maps, will be announced in the Summer, along with details of the 20 competing teams.

Stages Three and Four will mark the second and third chances to see top-level professional road cycling in Scotland this Summer, following February's announcement that Motherwell

would again host a round of the televised Pearl Izumi Tour Series on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May.

The 2015 Friends Life Tour of Britain will start in Wales for the first time in the modern race's history, with Anglesey hosting the start of the opening stage to Wrexham, finishing eight days later in the heart of London with an iconic new circuit taking in many of the capital's world famous sights.

Once again ITV will screen three-hours of live coverage of every stage, starting on ITV for the opening Wales stage before reverting to ITV4 for Stages Two to Eight. ITV4 will also screen a one-hour highlights programme each evening during the race.

The Friends Life Tour of Britain is British Cycling's premier road cycling event giving cycling fans the opportunity to see the world's best teams and riders competing on their door step. The two stages in Scotland will once again be supported by Scottish Cycling.

Stage One	Sunday 6 September	Beaumaris,
Anglesey to Wrexham		
Stage Two	Monday 7 September	Clitheroe
to Colne		
Stage Three	Tuesday 8 September	
Cockermouth to Floors Castle, Kelso		
Stage Four	Wednesday 9 September	Edinburgh to
Blyth		
Stage Five	Thursday 10 September	Prudhoe to
Hartside Fell		
Stage Six	Friday 11 September	Stoke-
on-Trent to Nottingham		
Stage Seven	Saturday 12 Septmber	Fakenham to

Ipswich

Stage Eight                  Saturday 13 September  
stage presented by TfL

London