

Froome extends lead, Sagan wins stage

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Defending champion Chris Froome of Britain extended his overall lead and Peter Sagan won the 11th stage of the Tour de France on Wednesday.

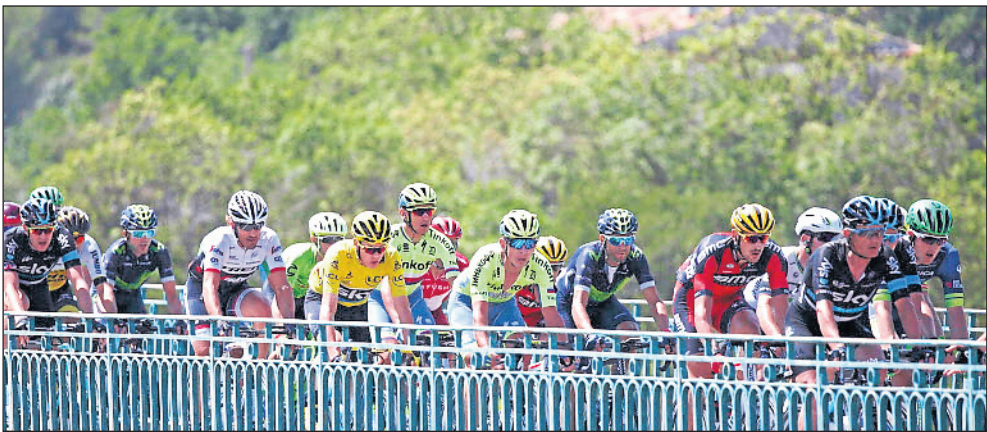
TOUR
DE
FRANCE

Sagan of Slovakia got in a four-man breakaway that included Froome with about seven miles remaining in the 101-mile leg from Carcassonne to Montpellier, France, near the Mediterranean coast. It was Sagan's second victory in this Tour and sixth career win.

Froome and Sky teammate Geraint Thomas joined the Tinkoff duo of Sagan and Maciej Bodnar of Poland in the lead.

Sagan won the sprint finish ahead of Froome, with Bodnar crossing third.

"It was crazy," Sagan said. "Froome and Geraint came with us and I said, 'we are too strong, they are never going to



JUAN MEDINA | REUTERS

Yellow jersey leader Team Sky rider Chris Froome of Britain (center) cycles with the pack of riders during the race.

catch us.' So we pulled hard and it happened.

"There was a crazy wind and I was not planning to go in the break with the yellow jersey and Geraint and Bodnar. You cannot plan that — it just happens."

Froome gained a six-second bonus for his second-place finish as he retained the race leader's yellow jersey.

The 31-year-old Froome,

seeking his third Tour title in four years, moved 28 seconds ahead of fellow British rider Adam Yates.

"Obviously I took a few seconds on the downhill and then again on the finish here," Froome said. "Any opportunity I can see I'm going to take it. This is bike racing at its best. I feel like I'm enjoying it, I'm not feeling I'm being forced into this because of pressure."

Thursday's mountain-top finish at Mont Ventoux will be the 12th stage, a 114-mile leg from Montpellier. The race's first time trial comes Friday with a hilly 23.3-mile leg from Bourg-Saint-Andeol to La Caverne du Pont-D'Arc.

Daniel Martin of Ireland is third overall, 31 seconds behind, and two-time runner-up Nairo Quintana of Colombia is fourth, 35 seconds back.

Lobster

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Bowl's East team coaching staff.

"It's a lot, and by [mid-] Monday we had already gone through 100 pounds of ice."

Plenty of water also is available at practice, as well as shade tents that enable the players and coaches to escape the mid-July sun.

"We're going to be careful with our kids," said East head coach Bob Sinclair of Orono High School. "We've got a shade tent to get them in the shade when we can. We give them water breaks, and we tell the kids, 'If you're not in a drill and you feel like you need water, go get it.'"

"We're not going to take any chances."

The players and coaches are supported by a training staff that includes Foxcroft Academy trainer Jackie Tourtelotte, Chris Sementelli and his sports medicine staff from MaineGeneral Medical Center in Augusta, and J.P. Stowe, who provides athletic training services for Orono High School.

"Safety is the first priority, no question," said Sin-

clair. "First of all, we don't want to put the kids in a tough situation where many of them haven't had a lot of physical activity until now, and we don't want them to be in a situation where they can't play."

Sinclair and West head coach Stacen Doucette of Oak Hill High School in Wales also can adjust the amount of protective pads their players wear during practices to account for weather conditions.

"We'll take stuff off," said Sinclair. "[Tuesday] afternoon we're going with just uppers. [Tuesday] morning we went with full pads because we felt we had to get that out of the way and it was a little bit cooler then, but we didn't want to put them in full pads later in the day."

"We'd rather take it a little easy on them and go uppers or just helmets. At some point in time [Wednesday] we're going to go just with helmets and review all of our special teams because we need to do that."

"We don't need to be out there banging heads every day," he added. "We just don't need to do that."

Johnson

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Johnson is aware Americans have won the last six Opens played at Troon but doesn't think nationality had anything to do with their success.

"If you look at the winners the last few times, they're all good players, all good putters," he said. "That's the key in every major. It has no difference in whether you're playing here or in the U.S. ... you've got to putt it well."

Johnson is a very good putter, but he is better known for his performance

at the other end of the scale — hitting gargantuan drives, the kind John Daly in his prime might have envied.

Some people think links courses like Royal Troon negate the advantage long drivers usually have.

With humps, bumps, hills and hollows, pockmarked by deep bunkers and festooned with punitive rough, links can swallow errant drives but Johnson is not worried.

"No, links courses are just how they are," he said. "Their defense is the bunker, so for me it's all about just navigating the bunkers ... if you can stay out of the bunkers this week, I think you're going to do pretty well."

Amateur

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Baker didn't tee off until 11:10 a.m. but got off to the start he wanted, making par on each of the first five holes. He birdied No. 6 and bogeyed No. 7 to stay even, then birdied 13 and put himself at 1-under for the day heading to the final two holes — holes that he called "easy."

But a tee shot off the green on the par-3 17th turned into one bogey, and a three-putt on the par-4 18th became another, moving Baker from one shot ahead of Jones to one shot behind.

"It was just lack of focus right there at the end," Baker said. "That was the first three-putt of the week right there, on the last hole. It wasn't really the way I wanted to finish, but tomorrow's another day."

The top three players will all tee off together in Thursday's final round at 9:40 a.m.

The next-to-last group for the final round features Pittsfield's Gavin Dugas, who sits at even par for the tournament after playing in Jones' group Wednesday, along with Kyle Alexander (3-over) and York Golf & Tennis Club member Judd Parsons, who played an even-par second round and is 2 over for the tourney.

All-Star

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Ortiz said during a 20-minute media session, during which he praised the game's brightest young stars.

Ortiz took a curveball for ball four, jogged to first base, then began his exit from the stage. When Edwin Encarnacion entered as a pinch runner, Ortiz raised his batting helmet to acknowledge the ovation from the crowd.

On the mound, Fernandez laughed, as if to blame the

pitch selection on his catcher, Buster Posey.

"He basically looked at me and said, 'It's the catcher's fault, he called it,' "

Ortiz said.

The American League dugout emptied to greet Ortiz on the field as the National Leaguers offered a round of applause. He was embraced by the likes of Mike Trout, and the rest of the new generation that Ortiz called "the face of baseball."

"That tells me that this game is in unbelievable hands," Ortiz said. "With a great future."



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