

Froome pedals closer to third Tour de France title

BY JULIEN PRETOT
REUTERS

FINHAUT-EMOSSON, Switzerland — Britain’s Chris Froome took another big step toward a third Tour de France title when he dropped his main rivals in the finale of the 17th stage, a 184-kilometer mountain trek won by Russian Ilmur Zakarin on Wednesday.

Froome (Team Sky) attacked inside the final 2K in the last ascent, a punishing 10.4K climb at an average gradient of 8.4 percent and Dutchman Bauke Mollema, second overall, as well as last year’s runner-up Nairo Quintana, could not follow.

The Briton finished on the wheel of former team mate Richie Porte (BMC), the Australian emerging as a potential podium finisher in Paris.

Froome, who stayed behind Porte in the final straight, extended his lead over Mollema (Trek-Segafredo) to 2:27 and compatriot Adam Yates (Orica) to 2:53.

“There was no real need to get on the front tactically, obviously it was the first

day of a four-day block, tomorrow is going to be critical,” said Froome, referring to Thursday’s 18th stage, a brutal 17K uphill time trial from Sallanches to Megeve.

Colombian Quintana (Movistar), who has been lacking his usual stamina in the long climbs, is fourth, 3:27 off the pace after losing 28 seconds to Froome when he was expected to attack.

The decisive move was made by Porte, who jumped away from the favorites’ group about 2K from the line, with Froome the only rider able to follow him thanks to a short but brutal acceleration.

Porte climbed from seventh to sixth overall, 4:27 off the pace, but his recent form suggests he will continue to move up the GC (general classification), taking sole leadership at BMC after teammate Tejay van Garderen cracked in the penultimate climb of a grueling day in the Swiss Alps.

Frenchman Romain Bardet (AG2r-La Mondiale) continued his fine Tour, moving up one spot to fifth, 4:15 off the lead.

A 14-man breakaway, fea-



Team Katusha rider Ilmur Zakarin of Russia wins at the finish line on Wednesday.

turing world champion Peter Sagan and his Tinkoff teammate Rafal Majka, the polka dot jersey wearer, took shape after a crazy first hour of racing during which the peloton covered 51.8K.

They reached the foot of the penultimate ascent, a 13K climb to the Col de la Forclaz at an average gradient of 7.9 percent, with a 13-minute advantage.

Majka was the first at the

top, strengthening his lead in the mountain classification.

The main bunch was quickly skimmed down to about 20 riders and American Van Garderen, who was

targeting a podium finish in Paris, was dropped midway through the ascent.

Quintana’s teammate, Spaniard Alejandro Valverde, also fell behind in the last climb, losing all reasonable hope of repeating his third-place finish of 2015.

Majka (Tinkoff) and Colombian Jarlinson Pantano (IAM Cycling), winner of the 15th stage, attacked the leading group in the descent. They were joined in the final climb by Zakarin (Katusha), who jumped away 6.5K from the finish, followed by Pantano.

The Russian went again with 5.8K left and never looked back, his medallion tapping on his bare chest until he managed to zip up his jersey before crossing the line, his face a mask of pain, for a first Tour stage win.

“I’m really happy, I want to thank my teammates. I gave everything. It’s really, really big for me,” said Zakarin, who is back at the top after a horror crash in this year’s Giro d’Italia.

Golf

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Thompson played solid, if unspectacular, to round out a six-shot win over Topsham’s Caleb Manuel and Camden’s Cole Anderson. Thompson carded a 3-over 75 after shooting a 73 on Tuesday to finish at 4-over 148.

“It was tough because Logan played so consistent and we couldn’t really keep up,” said last year’s champ, Cape Elizabeth’s Austin Legge, who played in the final group Wednesday with Thompson.

“I’m happy to lose to a kid who plays really well. And that’s what he did. He just played so consistent, and he definitely deserved that win.”

Thompson held a two-shot lead over Thomas Higgins and a three-shot lead over Legge, Manuel and John Witt. The lead grew to five shots over Manuel at the turn, then shrunk to as little as two over Manuel on the back nine. But the new champ finished strong by going par, par, birdie on the final three holes.

“I think I was on 14 or 15 and I heard that [Manuel] was 3 over, and I think I was 3 [over] at the time, too,” Thompson said. “So I thought if I just finished out even with the round that I would be in a pretty good spot, since I had a three-shot lead on him to begin with the day.”

Higgins was alone in fourth with a 9-over 81 and a two-day total of 156. Legge struggled to a score of 162 with a second-round 86 and tied for 10th.

Plourde, who didn’t even play in the event last year because of a schedule conflict, was even more solid than Thompson. The Newcastle native found herself tied with Val Halla member Erin Plourde at the turn, then parred each of the last nine holes to finish with a 5-over 77 and a tournament score of 152.

“It feels good,” Plourde



Newcastle’s Bailey Plourde tees off on the third hole during the final round of the Maine Junior Golf Championship on Wednesday at Val Halla Golf Course in Cumberland.

said. “It got a little rough out there, and I was glad I could pull it through.”

Plourde held a one-shot lead over Holmes after the first round, and a three-shot lead over defending champ Lauren Schonewolf and Val Halla member Rachel Smith. She kept that lead for the first eight holes, overcoming a shot into the woods on the sixth hole to save for a double bogey, before finding trouble on the ninth and shooting a triple bogey.

Holmes, who parred just one hole of the first eight holes, nearly also ran into trouble on the ninth hole, but her second shot took one bounce off a water hazard and landed in the first cut. A par knotted her up with Plourde heading to the back nine.

“I did know it was really close,” Plourde said. “I knew I just had to play my game on the back.”

“I’ve had rounds where I had to bounce back from some bad shots or bad holes, so I knew I could do it. It was just trying to focus. I have the ability, I just had to do it.”

Plourde said it was that focus that helped her over the final nine holes. Even when Holmes birdied the

14th to get within two shots, Plourde kept plugging along with pars.

The greens, which hurt Plourde on Tuesday and saved Holmes on her home course, played the opposite for the pair in Wednesday’s final round.

Being in the lead after the first round was a welcome spot for Plourde, who played a horrible opening day in her last Maine Junior Golf Championship two years ago.

“I was 10 shots back after the first day. So I wanted to come back,” Plourde said. “I just wanted to win this.”

Schonewolf finished in third with an 85 and a two-day score of 163. Smith was fourth, while Lewiston’s Stephanie Rodrigue shot a two-day 174 for fifth.

Armand Ouellette of Saco won the 13-14 boys division with a final-round 85 for a two-day score of 24-over 168. He edged out Nick McGonagle by one stroke.

St. George native Parker Hilchey won the 12-and-under division by shooting a final-round 42 over nine holes. His two-day score of 85 beat out second-place Alden Griffiths by six strokes.

Coach’s challenge required

During its call on Wednesday, the Playing Rules Oversight Panel approved a rule that will require a coach’s challenge for video replay to be used to review goals relating to offsides and too many men on the ice, except for the last two minutes of the game and any overtime periods.

Officials will be able to review offsides during the

last two minutes of the game and all overtime periods. In postseason tournaments, all aspects of the video replay criteria will be used, including offsides, without the need for a coach’s challenge.

The panel also approved a rule that requires all officials and players to wear helmets anytime they are on the ice with the exception of during the playing of the national anthem.

Hockey

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in Florida at the end of April indicated that the majority of Division I coaches were against the four-on-four overtime.

University of Maine head coach Red Gendron said in June that he was opposed to the implementation of the four-on-four overtime proposal.

“I want to know what the purpose is,” Gendron said at the time. “If you’re going to change the game, you have to have compelling evidence that it’s going to make the game better.”

The NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel did approve a provision in which if a game is tied after the overtime period, an experimental rule can be implemented to allow teams to skate three-on-three for five minutes and then use a sudden-death shootout to determine a winner. Any conference interested in using the experimental rule may do so.

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Transfer

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from among some 800 candidates in attendance to participate in last weekend’s Top Gun camp, where his linebacker coaches were former NFL players Quentin Coryatt, Ricky Hunley and Emmanuel King.

“The coaches at FBU all have NFL experience and they try to teach you better techniques as well as the different coverages,” Carino said. “Then the competitive side comes out at the end of camp when they do one-on-ones and seven-on-sevens.”

While Carino earned a spot in the FBU All-American Game — which will be held just after the U.S. Army All-American Bowl for players from the Class of 2017 at the Alamodome next Jan. 7

— he also hopes to be one of 600 players nationally invited to the U.S. Army National Combine being held in conjunction with those events. He’ll learn this fall if his nomination has been accepted.

In the interim, Carino will join a junior- and sophomore-laden Hermon High School football program that went 0-8 last season in Class C North.

“He’s been working hard in the weight room,” said Hermon coach Brad Deuring. “There’s been days when I’ve had to kick him out. There’s been days when he’s keeping guys in for extra work, and since we’ve been on the practice field for our summer camp he’s been doing a good job working with his teammates.”

“He’s taught us some new things and he’s been pulling

guys under his wing and we’ve been all ears. He’s been a good kid.”

Carino expects to play linebacker and running back for the Hawks this fall, and Deuring sees the transfer’s versatility as beneficial to the team on both sides of the ball.

“He’s an athlete, and we’re trying to play him wherever we can,” said Deuring, who also has worked Carino out at cornerback during summer drills and is aware of his experience on the offensive and defensive lines. “We want to see him in pads, too, and we’re really excited for that.”

Carino is aware of his new school’s recent struggles on the gridiron.

“I’m just going to do whatever I can,” he said, “to help Hermon football get on the map.”

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