

Stage Two rider quotes

Post-race quotes

Stage Two winner, General Classification Leader and Sprints Jersey Leader: Lorena Wiebes (Team DSM)

“I am really happy with how my legs are and how the team is riding, so I am pleased that I could finish it off. It’s always hard to know your condition after a block of training, but right now it’s great.

“It was a hard final climb but I’m happy I survived and was able to recover for the sprint. The climb after the first intermediate sprint through Epping was super tough, there were hard areas and a lot of attacks, but the girls covered it and for me it was all about following them.

“We go again for the best result tomorrow and we are targeting the win. There’s no better way to finish than through the streets of London so we will go for it.”

Stage Two second-placed rider: Marta Bastianelli (UAE Team ADQ)

“I am happy with the team as they worked a lot for me today. Lorena is very fast and in great form, which makes it hard for me, but I am pleased with second place. The hilly sections were difficult, it was up and down, and the breakaway was hard to chase. We did the best we could and we worked well.

“Tomorrow is very fast, and I will try my best as I want to finish strongly. Everyone will try to sprint tomorrow, but I will be ready.”

Stage Two third-placed rider: Emma Norsgaard Bjerg (Team Movistar)

“It is nice to be on the podium, but I am not here for third place. It’s a nice feeling, but I’m still a bit disappointed.

“I see myself as being as good as them [the other sprinters] and now should be my time to be on top but today wasn’t that day. Tomorrow is totally flat, and it may not suit me 100 per cent but I will go for it.

“Today suited me well despite its challenges and tomorrow is different, but we will try our best.”

Ford Queen of the Mountains Jersey winner and Best British Rider Jersey Leader: Anna Henderson (Jumbo-Visma)

“The target was to keep the Ford Queen of the Mountains jersey and to have a team goal through the stage. The girls positioned me well on the climbs and it paid off. At the start, Veronica [Ewers] had four minutes, which I thought would be a tough gap to close, but we

managed it so we could score in the first two Ford Queen of the Mountains points opportunities, which was great.

“I expected the climb to perhaps be a bit more challenging, but it turned out to be quite fast. It’s nice to tackle some hills on the Essex roads and to see so much support – I saw some good barbecues going on, which was great.

“Tomorrow I’m going to soak up the atmosphere, but we will still have opportunities. We can exercise the lead out train to get some practice and end the race on a high.”

On the Best British Rider Jersey...

“It is the battle of the Brits! When we race abroad there’s always some friendly competition about who wins the Best British Rider, but it is a great jersey to hold ahead of tomorrow. I’m most proud of the Ford Queen of the Mountains Jersey as the team worked so much for it.

“I was joking with Alice [Barnes] about taking the jersey ahead of the race. It’s special as you don’t get it in a lot of races, so I want to keep it now.”

Best Young Rider: Vittoria Guazzini (FDJ Nouvelle-Aquitaine Futurescope)

“Today was hard, I crashed early on and cut my knee. In the end I wanted to finish as soon as possible but I found the strength to do the sprint. In the circumstances I am very pleased. I think the adrenaline helped me a lot in the final, so perhaps I didn’t feel the pain as much, but it was a long race.

“The route was really nice, in particular the final lap, and I’m hopeful I can recover for tomorrow.

“Tomorrow doesn’t suit me as it’s very flat, and it has a very fast finish, so we have Clara [Copponi] for the sprint as an option. But I want to keep this jersey.

“The sprinters are flying, and I knew it would be hard to beat them, but we will give it everything tomorrow. We are here to try to win as always.”

Pre-Stage Two quotes

Lorena Wiebes (Team DSM), General Classification Leader

“I feel good today; I had a really good night’s sleep and am ready for today’s race.

“We want to defend our lead in the General Classification so it will be a hard day out, but we will go for the win again, of course. There’s a hard final section today with hills, and it will be more a case of surviving, I think. But I hope to be in the front and compete in the sprint.

“The team has the confidence from yesterday and the girls and I are motivated to do well.”