

Friday, 2 July 2010

COUNTDOWN BEGINS TO THE 2011 SANTOS TOUR DOWN UNDER

Premier Mike Rann today unveiled the race routes for the 2011 Santos Tour Down Under with news that the race will visit new areas as well as returning to some old favourites.

Mr Rann revealed that the UCI ProTour event will head east of the River Murray for the first time, with a stage from Tailem Bend to Mannum.

“Tailem Bend will host a start of the race for the very first time and the route will also include regular favourites with cycling fans including Old Willunga Hill and Stirling,” Mr Rann said.

“The Santos Tour Down Under creates huge benefits for South Australia and it’s great to bring the Tour experience to new towns and regions while ensuring the quality of the race is maintained.

“The support from local councils and sponsors has been integral to the event’s success and I’m sure the regions are looking forward to welcoming the cycling stars and fans next January.

“The 2010 Santos Tour Down Under drew record crowds of more than three quarters of a million people, including nearly 40,000 visitors from interstate and overseas - providing a \$41.5 million boost to the State's economy.

“The Santos Tour Down Under gets bigger each year, and continues to prove its worth as a major tourism drawcard for our State,” Mr Rann said.

Tourism Minister John Rau says the 2010 event was also the most successful race on record in terms of participation, with more than 8,000 cyclists taking part in the Mutual Community Challenge Tour recreational ride.

“Registrations are now open for the 2011 Mutual Community Challenge Tour and with four distance options created for the ride on 21 January, even more people will have the chance to take part,” Mr Rau said.

Santos chief executive David Knox said the company was pleased to again be associated with the most important cycling event in the southern hemisphere.

“Last year’s Tour was the best ever, and I’m sure that in 2011 the Santos Tour Down Under will be even bigger and better again,” Mr Knox said.

“The calibre of athlete it attracts, the global coverage that it receives, its immense and growing popularity and the exceptional competence and energy with which it is executed are all hallmarks of its success.”

The 2010 Santos Tour Down Under saw the strongest field of riders ever assembled for the race with many then going on to have a very successful racing season.

World Champion Cadel Evans is currently leading the UCI's individual world rankings, Lance Armstrong finished second in the Tour de Suisse and third in the Tour de Luxembourg and 2002 Santos Tour Down Under winner Michael Rogers won the Tour of California.

The launch of the 2011 Santos Tour Down Under race routes coincides with the start of the Tour de France, which begins tomorrow.

“Among the cyclists that raced here in January, 37 will be competing in the Tour de France and we wish them the very best of luck,” Mr Rann said.

The 2011 Santos Tour Down Under will be held in Adelaide and regional South Australia from 16-23 January 2011. For more information, visit www.tourdownunder.com.au.

For travel and accommodation details, contact the South Australian Visitor and Travel Centre on 1300 674 630.

The race routes of the 2011 Santos Tour Down Under are:

Sunday, 16 January – Cancer Council Classic - Rymill Park, Adelaide (51 km)

Monday, 17 January – Rest Day

Tuesday, 18 January – Stage 1 - Mawson Lakes to Angaston (138 km)

Wednesday, 19 January – Stage 2 - Tailem Bend to Mannum (146 km)

Thursday, 20 January – Stage 3 - Unley to Stirling (129 km)

Friday, 21 January – Mutual Community Stage 4 - Norwood to Strathalbyn (124 km)

Saturday, 22 January – Jayco Stage 5 – McLaren Vale to Willunga (131 km)

Sunday, 23 January – Stage 6 – Adelaide City Council Street Circuit (90 km)

Total Santos Tour Down Under UCI ProTour race distance (Stages 1-6) is 758 km.

For further information contact Rik Morris 0400 269 602
