

Over in 2 minutes?

When the Tour visits villages throughout France it creates a huge amount of 'disruption' but also brings enormous benefits for the area. One person I spoke to last night said they didn't know what the fuss was all about, 'they'll all flash by and it's over in 2 minutes'.

Anyone who's visited a stage or watched it on TV will know that it's not just the 200 or so riders flashing by that make the 'show'. It's a huge event!!

For example, advertising is a big part of the Tour and the 'Advertising Caravan' along consists of around 80 vans and cars that sets off two hours before the start and then regroups to precede the riders by an hour and a half. It spreads 20–25 km and takes 40 minutes to pass at between 20 and 60 km/h. Vehicles travel in groups of five. Their position is logged by GPS and from an aircraft and organised on the road by the caravan director, an assistant, three motorcyclists, two radio technicians, a helicopter plus a breakdown and medical crew. In France it is escorted by six motorcyclists from the Garde Républicaine, so I guess we'll do the same BUT THAT'S JUST THE ADVERTISING!

When the Tour goes through each of the 22 or so teams has 2 support cars that travel with the riders plus the Tour director, an assistant, up to eight motorcyclists, two radio technicians, a Tour helicopter plus a breakdown and medical crews.

Along with them go the TV stations. France 2 and France 3, still hold the domestic rights and provide pictures for broadcasters around the world. In 2010 the stations use a staff of 400 with five helicopters, two aircraft, two motorcycles, 35 other vehicles including trucks, and 20 podium cameras.

Television covers the most important stages of the Tour, such as those in the mountains, from mid-morning until early evening. Coverage typically starts with a survey of the day's route, interviews along the road, discussions of the difficulties and tactics ahead, and a 30-minute.

Leaving the official side, then you have spectators. Many take their whole holiday based around one or two stages. They turn up in tents, camper-vans etc a week before to get the best views and I can't see the first day of the Tour in Yorkshire being any different!!!!



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When the Tour has gone through the route is left open the following day for enthusiasts to cycle through!

Small villages that have the Tour going through put all sorts of events, advertising and catering together to promote themselves.



Not just a few bikes flashing by and over in 2 minutes!!