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A TIMED STAGE IN QATAR

The sixth Tour of Qatar, which will take place from the 28th January to the 2nd February 2007, will begin with an innovation. The first stage, a team time trial of six kilometres in Doha, promises to be an intense induction session for the champions who have chosen the Qatar as their first race of the cycling season. Over the next five days, the going will be tough. On the flat and straight routes of Qatar, team tactics will already be in operation. If he is true to his traditional start of season, Tom Boonen, perhaps accompanied by his new power rider Gert Steegmans, could embark upon a new series of victories. But there is also every chance that the ex-Belgian world champion will face fierce opposition from the Italian rider Alessandro Petacchi, eager to test his finish in the Middle East after a season disrupted by injuries in 2006.

A starting block to the cycling season for some, the Tour of Qatar represents for others one of the landmark events of the year. Hence the Iranian cyclists, who hold the first three places in the Asia Tour continental ranking, are invited to form a team to challenge Europe's elite. Similarly, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates will make up a mixed team determined to follow the pace set by the top professionals.

The programme

- Stage 1, Sunday 28th January: Corniche Doha (team time trial, 6 km)
- Stage 2, Monday 29th January: Al Wakra – Qatar Olympic Committee (135, 5 km)
- Stage 3, Tuesday 30th January: Dohat Salwa – Khalifa Stadium (140 km)
- Stage 4, Wednesday 31st January: Camel Race Track – Doha Golf Club (139, 5 km)
- Stage 5, Thursday 1st February: Al Zubarah – Mesaieed (160, 5 km)
- Stage 6, Friday 2nd February: Sealine Beach Resort – Doha Corniche (134 km)

Details of the route and further information are available at the web site: www.letour.fr

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