



Race Riders Quote Sheet Compiled After The Men's Opening Press Conference

Kristin Klein, race president and executive vice president of AEG Sports

"Something that has always been special about this race, is that along with seeing so many of the absolute best cyclists in the world in action on our California roads every year, there are so many new young riders looking to make their mark. This is America's greatest race....the future of the sport is bright."

"We always say it's an honor to host the very best in the world on a course that shows off the very best of our state. This race is truly a postcard for the state of California."

Peter Sagan, BORA-hansgrohe

"I have only good memories from the Amgen Tour of California. Every year I've taken a stage, and one year I won the GC. I'm very happy to come back here."

On using this race for Tour de France prep

"The fact is that this year the Tour de France is a little bit later, so everything has changed a little bit. So for me, it's better to be here now, because racing is better than training."

Marcel Kittel, KATUSHA ALPECIN

"The California lifestyle is very relaxed. The people are really friendly and always welcome us, and celebrate us when we do the race, and that's really cool."

"For me this is the third time I've done the Amgen Tour of California. There haven't been many sprint stages like there are this year, and I think this year is a really good race for the sprinters."

Mark Cavendish, Team Dimension Data

"It's great seeing how this race has grown. I remember I did my first one in 2008, and now it's a WorldTour event and it attracts the best sprint fields and the best GC fields, and it's just nice to be part of that."

"Team Dimension Data is here with a group of guys that can do well across all stages. After such a crash like Manson Remus is not easy, and like Caleb said, it's a great way to test yourself, but for sure I'm not here to mill around. You only get better by trying to get involved."

Taylor Phinney, Team EF Education First-Drapac p/b Cannondale

“There’s a rhythm and ease with being in America. There’s a level of comfort, being able to race here.”

Caleb Scott, Mitchelton-SCOTT

“This is probably going to be the last chance for all the sprinters to test themselves against each other before the Tour (de France). I’ve had a bit of time off, and it will be good to get back into racing and to be sprinting against such a good field.”

Fernando Gaviria, Quick-Step Floors

“This race I’d like to win a stage that’s flat, but it’s tough because there are a lot of sprinters. For the rest of the season, it’s getting ready for the Tour (de France) with conditioning, trying for a victory there.”

Peter Stetina, Trek-Segafredo

“It’s always a treat to come back home and let everyone race on your home roads. I prepared just by going to my house in Lake Tahoe and training with my teammate there, then back to Santa Rosa for some sea level stuff. We’re looking forward to Gibraltar. I think everyone is. It’s early out of the gate. You have to be primed, you can’t really race into it. You gotta be ready to go on Stage 2.”

On the impact of the California wildfires to the course and communities:

“We’ve had a lot of fires in California, and for Stage 2 we’re going to go through some of the Southern California burn scar and with the mudslides... Once you’re in it, and you see it and you feel it, it’s a different presence than just seeing a picture of it. I think it’s important for the community...because with the media, the attention goes to it, and people see how it has affected people’s livelihoods...there’s a lot of people without homes right now...”

Evan Huffman, Rally Cycling

“It’s really cool to be on home roads in front of all your friends and family doing such a big event. It gives you a little bit of extra motivation.”

“Our approach to the race will be similar to last year. We had a lot of bad luck on Stage 2 last year with Rob having some mechanical problems, who was our GC (General Classification) hope, so we had to refocus and go for breakaways, which worked really well for us, with two stage wins. This year we’re going to do the same thing, and if things go well on Stage 2, hopefully we can have a couple guys going for GC.”

Adam Yates, Mitchelton-SCOTT

“It’s been a few years since I’ve been here, but happy to be back. Hopefully my fitness is good and we can try and win some stages.”

Neilson Powless, Team LottoNL-Jumbo

On what it feels like to be racing back home

“I’m coming off of three months of racing in Europe, my first season in the WorldTour, and that’s been a really cool experience, racing in bigger races. I’m super happy to be back in California, as I have only good memories of this race.”

Brent Bookwalter, BMC Racing Team

On how he’s approaching the race this year:

“Trying to do it the same way I did the past two years when I was in the hunt for the win. We have a great team, and Tejay (van Garderen) is coming in as our trump card. We’ve got a really deep team, and I’m happy to be back.”

Tejay van Garderen, BMC Racing Team

On team mounting two possible GC contenders:

“We’ve got a two-pronged approach. Brent (Bookwalter) is very motivated, and so am I...we’re both very capable of podium results, even top step podium results. It’s only going to help us having two cards to play, and a lot will be decided out on the road. It only makes us stronger to have two of us out there.”

On what brings him to California:

I had a few crashes this year. I was looking at the programs looking at how to make up some race days, and they said “what if you go back to California?” I first thought “pump the brakes,” that’s a lot of traveling, but when I started thinking about it, it was an idea that got me really motivated as I have great memories here. So once we decided to put it in, it gave me new motivation and got me really excited.

Coryn Rivera, Team Sunweb

“I had a pretty long spring in Europe and came back home after Fleche, took a week off, then have been training at home since then. I’ve had a pretty good build up to this race. Last year it marked the end of my spring, but this year it’s the beginning of my summer. I’m just getting good training in at home, and looking forward to racing on home grounds.”

About the Amgen Tour of California

The Amgen Tour of California and the Amgen Tour of California Women's Race empowered with SRAM are Tour de France-style cycling road races created and presented by AEG. Running concurrently, the races challenges the world's top professional cycling teams to compete along demanding courses that traverse hundreds of miles of California's iconic highways, byways and coastlines each spring. The teams chosen to participate have included Olympic medalists, Tour de France contenders and World Champions, and award important, world-ranking points to the top finishers. More information is available at amgentourofcalifornia.com.