



# TOUR OF THE GREAT SOUTH COAST 2017

JULY 26 - 30

## YOUNG ROSS FLIES HIGH TO LEAD ELITE CYCLISTS

YOUNG Victorian Matt Ross upstaged elite cyclist Scott Sunderland and Malaysian visitor Harrif Saleh to snare the major honours on the opening day of the 2017 Port of Portland- Fulton Hogan Tour of the Great South Coast.

The 21-year-old from the Carnegie club ended the two stages a 36km criterium and a 65km circuit of the Blue Lake in Mount Gambier boasting the tour leader's guernsey as well as the Scody King of the Mountain and the Campolina Sprint Championship jackets.

He rode the 65km in 2:18.26 to hold a 4 sec gap over Sunderland, with Saleh a further 5 sec adrift.

Importantly for both the major contenders, Ross's Drapac teammate Brad Evans is only 10 sec adrift, and for Sunderland's Isowhey Sports Swiss Wellness team, Robbie Hucker is only 11 sec from the leader.

Ross paid tribute to his teammates.

"I got a little bit excited at the start by going for sprint points but we are definitely concentrating on the overall win. We have some riders and this was a really pleasing opening day," he said.

The rare collection of guernseys gave Ross the honours on the day, but Sunderland and his team looms as the major threat to all the titles.





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Sunderland shook off “jet lag” to improve as the day progressed. He was pipped by Saleh in the criterium but was too powerful for the pack to salute in the Blue Lake second leg of the 509km five day tour.

The London Olympics bronze medallist, Glasgow Commonwealth Games gold medallist and 2015 winner of the Melbourne to Warrnambool classic said ominously that he “should improve with each passing day.

“I’m still a big jet-lagged because I only returned from Europe late on Friday night.”

He said he was greatly helped by teammate Anthony Giacoppo during the demanding second stage which included four sprints and four hill climbs.

“He provided a great lead up and that took a bit of bravery because it was a bit dangerous with the fast decent before the up-hill finish.”

That certainly proved the case for Ross’s teammate Oliver Kent-Spark who crashed heavily on the final turn into the straight. He suffered a broken collarbone, a neck complaint and extensive cuts and bruises after careering into a steel post and was taken to hospital.

The Geelong cyclist had returned from Europe especially for this tour but his opportunity is now dashed.

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Mobius Future Racing's Jesse Coyle won both the criterium and road race Most Aggressive Rider awards with seemingly incessant break-aways.

Inform Tinel's Thomas McFarlane heads the CFMEU Rising Star award, which is being contested by 28 under-21 cyclists.

The third stage on Thursday is a demanding 137.6km journey around Port MacDonnell, including six sprints and one hill climb.

<http://my2.raceresult.com/g2468/?lang=en>

## Stage 1

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/tqi4dmife9px6sp/AABkKbWIAMKCXUIX2znRYwFCa?dl=0>

## Stage 2

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5jze7kucyffl22v/AACfztk5Rk5tVyFlzsd4f8oya?dl=0>

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## FURTHER INFORMATION:

**Kipp Kaufmann**  
Cycling Australia  
0430 303 577

**Rod Nicholson**  
Media Officer – Caribou Publications  
0417 134 673

**John Craven**  
Caribou Publications  
0408 558 469

