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Transcript

Speaker 1

It's time for the Outspoken Cyclist, your weekly conversation about bicycles, cyclists, trails, travel, advocacy, the bike industry, and much, much more. You can subscribe to our weekly podcast at outspokencyclist.com or through your favorite podcasting app to listen anytime. Now here's your host, Diane Jenks.

Speaker 2

Hello and welcome to the Outspoken Cyclist. I'm your host, Diane Jenks. Thanks for tuning in today. While we will be celebrating our 250th anniversary here in the States, the grande de par of the 113th Tour de France will lead off with a team time trial this year in Barcelona on Saturday. As always, I turn to our friend in resident all things Tour de France, Joe Lindsay, managing editor of Escape Collective. He knows the ins and outs of the stages, the courses, the riders, and the teams for all the European races, but we focus this conversation pretty much on the tour this time around. Before the Tour de France Femmes in September, we'll catch up with Joe once again. Today my questions go to topics such as which riders might surprise us. how the intense heat could impact the race as well as the teams, and what this year's course has in store for us. Jonas Venkigo is apparently 100% healthy and ready to go, two full years after his horrific crash in 2024, and he's already shown some stellar results this year. He and Tati will be the ones to watch for that head-to-head rivalry. but perhaps there's someone else on the horizon. And who is Paul Sexus anyway? Joe has some thoughts. Hi, Joe. Welcome back to the Outspoken Cyclist. It's always good to speak with you. How are you?

Speaker 3

I'm doing great.

Speaker 2

You ready for the tour?

Speaker 3

Yes, well, as much as anybody in my position can be ready for the tour.

Speaker 2

That's a lot of work for you. It's a lot of work. It is. So, Grande Parde, 113th tour, Barcelona. So tell me about the start.

Speaker 3

So this year the start for the men's race is going to be a kind of an unusual one. There is a, the first stage is a team time trial. So instead of individual time trial, the teams will all set off together. And the most interesting thing about this is in the past, a team time trial was sort of a very difficult stage for strong riders on weak teams. because they need to cross the line with their teammates to get their time and that would hold strong riders back would basically penalize them in the general classification. So this year the UCI changed the rules on this and Now team time trials are still a team time trial, but the time is taken from the first rider across the line rather than the 4th rider across the line. So this has changed the tactics pretty significantly where teams can basically launch their protected rider, whoever that is, you know, at the end of the race and let them kind of finish on their own if they're strong enough to break away from the other guys. So what you'll see is there's a shift where instead of in the past, teams tried to basically stay together as long as possible. Now there's a tactical approach where they will basically use riders strategically and burn them up. So if you are Team Visma Lisa Bike and Jonas Vinigo is your protected rider, but you have a guy like, for example, Bruno Armarel or Eduardo Affini, both of whom are good time trialists, you may use those guys as motors in the first part of the stage and just ride them real hard. Go as fast as you can, as long as you can, tow the other riders, and then they will pull off and basically like pull the rip cord, the parachute goes out and they'll go back about as fast as if they had a parachute on them, and you won't see them again the rest of the season. stage. And that doesn't matter because what they're trying to do is get Jonas to the finish as fast as possible. If anybody's with him, great. But if it's only him, that's all that really matters to them.

Speaker 2

So what is the length of the time trial? Do you know?

Speaker 3

The length of that stage is 19.4 kilometers. So at these speeds, they will be going, I would guess they'll be going about 55 kilometers an hour or so. this will take a little shade over 20 minutes for the best riders on the best teams to diminish this. It's a really short, really intense effort.

Speaker 2

Got any prediction?

Speaker 3

Yeah, so Visma is definitely a strong candidate for this stage. They have kind of spent the spring fine-tuning their ability in these kinds of races at other races that had similar stages like this, and that included Pyrenees and a race in June called the Tour of Aaron Rhone Alps, which raced fans might remember as the Criterium du Dauphine before it

was renamed. And the Dauphine, now Auvergne, is one of the last kind of key tune-up races before the Tour de France. Visma won the stage at Auvergne. They also wanted at Paris-Nice. Slightly different lineup of riders than is going to be in the Tour, but they've obviously really, really set themselves apart as a team to watch here. I think You definitely also have to watch Red Bull Bora Hansgrohe, the team of Renko Venipol and Florian Lipowitz. And of course, I don't know if they will win this stage or not, but UAE Team Emirates with Tadek Bogacia is, they're not going to want to cede any ground to their rivals at any point in this race. So they will be on the front as well.

Speaker 2

Yeah, So What about the women's tour? I mean, we'll kind of go back and forth between the men and the women for the tour. So the Tour de France Femme is not happening until well after the regular tour. What do you see that? Has anything changed in the way they've put that race together?

Speaker 3

Yeah, so that race will start August 1st, and it starts in Switzerland this year with kind of a hilly stage around Lausanne. The first actually 3 stages are going to be in Switzerland before they get into France proper. The big thing to watch there is that the race will effectively be decided probably by stage 7, which is the women are going to finish on top of Mont Ventoux. The first time that the Tour de France femmes has ever been at Ventoux, just like two years ago, it was the first time that they had been up Alpe d'Wez. So you have another iconic climb. The summit finish is going to be a really important stage. And then the two stages after that are kind of more transitional, hilly, but not decisive stages. So unless somehow we come out of Von Von Tu with more or less a photo finish on GC, those last two stages are probably not going to decide the overall. But Von Tu, that seventh stage is going to be really, really critical.

Speaker 2

Okay, let's reintroduce you. And then I want to talk about some of the riders we're not going to see this year, who we thought we might. We're speaking with Joe Lindsay. He is the managing editor of Escape Collective. If you do not subscribe and you like racing, I think you should. Go out and take a look. It is a very comprehensive site. You get to participate when you want and you get to lurk when you don't want to participate. But there's always like really good articles out there. So we are going to be missing some riders we thought we would be able to see this year. Let's start with Wout Van Aert and what happened to him.

Speaker 3

Yeah, Wout was injured in a training crash a few weeks back and had an elbow injury, but he was still good enough to start the Tour au Verne that we just discussed. And he had a really interesting race because Wout won, earlier this spring, Wout won Pirie du Roubaix. So he had his first monument win I got that out of the way. Not a dry eye in the

house. Everybody loves Walt. So it was fantastic to see him get that. He took a little time off after that, let's just say. He took some time to enjoy the win. And so when he came back, you know, he had this crash and everything, he was not in good shape. In this team time trial that we just talked about that was at Auverin, he was dropped very early from business lineup. And this is surprising for him because he's a top time trialist. So he didn't look like he was on very good form. And then two or three stages later, sprint stage turns around, he wins the stage. So, okay, while it's back, all of this kind of stuff. It's the last day of the race, he doesn't show up to the start. And apparently what happened is this elbow that he injured in this crash in training got infected. And so he had to drop out. And we learned this week that when Visma announced his tour team that he was not sufficiently recovered enough from that. And so he will not unfortunately bathe the tour, which is a huge blow to Visma and Jonas Binigo, because he's such a versatile all-around teammate who, especially in tour contexts, can either, you know, be freed up to sort of ride for his own purposes and do really well. But when asked to, he's always been an extremely selfless teammate. really willing to put himself forward for, to ride for the team, to protect Yonas on flats, to chase breakaways down, all kinds of different things. He's the Swiss Army knife. Whatever you ask him to do, he's going to do it and he's going to do it really well. So missing him is absolutely a huge blow to the team.

Speaker 2

And it's a huge blow to fans.

Speaker 3

Yeah. Wow, does a fan favorite. Like I said, when he won Paris-Roubaix, not a dry eye in the house, I think other than maybe, Tare Pogaccia, who he beat with the bikes roll on the line, I don't think there was anybody who was really disappointed to see him win. And even Tare, you know, afterward was like, hey, that was amazing. Like, so happy for you that you won this. So everybody loves Walt. And yeah, it sucks for fans that he's not there.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Toddy's a good guy. I mean, he's got a good sense of sportsmanship. I really appreciate his attitude as he rides. So I want to talk a moment about the UCI's heavy hand with Matthew Vanderpoel. So we are seeing triple digit heat-ish in Europe. He was waiting to see if his time would hold in the time trial, which it almost He just did till the end, and then Toddy decided to one up him, but he decided to take his jersey either off or down or whatever, and the UCI slapped him with a fine. You want to explain that rule and why it's so hard to understand UCI rules. I mean, to me, that one's just silly.

Speaker 3

Yeah, I can't really defend the rule necessarily, or even the circumstances. And just to frame it for people, Matthew and Tade were racing at the Tour of Switzerland last week,

and the race finished with this time trial. And Matthew had not actually done a whole lot all race. You know, the expected battles that we thought we might see in the early going between him and Tade just never really materialized. And Matthew has also never necessarily been a standout time trial. So this was kind of unusual. he was in 74th position on overall time. And in time trials, individual time trials, right or start in reverse order of GC. Tade was in first. So they were quite a ways apart. And so Matthew lays down this excellent time. And as you mentioned, it's hot. I think it was about 33 degrees C that day, which is in the low to mid 90s, I believe. Celsius to Fahrenheit transitions are always a little difficult, but that's my ballpark. So here's Matthew and he's, you know, he's set the fastest time. And when a rider sets the fastest time in a time trial, they're put into this kind of space near the finish, which is called the hot seat. And the idea is that this is the person who's at the fastest time and they're waiting to see if anybody else beats it. And the television cameras will go back and forth between the riders who are on the course and kind of the reactions of the rider in the hot seat as riders come across the line. Does anybody come close to them? That kind of thing. Point being, Matthew's stuck in this space. He's not allowed to leave. He's in his skin suit, which is tight fitting. Not always the most ventilated material because skin suits are designed first and foremost to be aerodynamic. So they use little... textural fabric cues and things on the shoulders and things like that to be more slippery in the wind. So I don't honestly know how cool it is, but they're also extremely tight fitting. They're meant to be, they're meant to fit in this, you know, extreme tuck position, aero tuck position. If you're just sitting there in a chair, it's probably going to be pulling down on your shoulders. It's going to be pulling up in your crotch, all this kind of thing. So he unzips it and, you know, undoes the jersey. And so he's sitting there basically bare chested. Again, because he was in 74th overall, he's sitting there for quite a while. Peak riders are coming by, nobody's beating his time, nobody's beating his time, that kind of thing. So he's probably getting hot. There's no air conditioning, anything like that. And as a result, he's on TV and every time they show him on TV, he's bare chested. And the UCI decided to, you know, find him for, I forget exactly what the infraction is, but it's, you know, something about like, you know, the harming the image of the sport. Yeah, it's a very, the UCI is extremely French in this respect and that they have these rules that are written vaguely that sort of can be interpreted to their whim on a given day. And so they slap them with a fine of 500 Swiss francs because the UCI is based in Switzerland, that's how they assess their fines. And everybody's talking about this, everybody's like, what did he do? Was the UCS stupid? Was Matthew stupid? Did he harm his sponsors because he didn't have the Alpeas and de Kooning logos visible and all this kind of stuff. And honestly, like the way I feel about it is the whole hot seat thing is kind of tired anyway. You've got this person who really would prefer to probably just be on the team bus having a recovery shake and getting some cool down. that kind of thing. It's a way to try to make time trials more exciting than they are. I've always said time trial results are exciting. Time trials themselves are not. You just see one writer go by again and again and again. There's no suspense to it. You're just looking at the time checks and that kind of thing. To me, at least, it's never been that great. And if you're going to do this, then you need to have,

this is to me a failure of the organizer and also a little bit of Matthew's team. If you're going to do this, you have to have a space that's comfortable for them to be in. You've got this guy stuck out in 90 degree heat, sitting in a tent, you know, just sweltering his **** off. The team needs to be able to bring him clothing, cool down drinks, that kind of thing. If he strips off his jersey, there should be a lightweight shirt with the team logo that they give him. Like this is this classic bike racing tempest in a teapot where people talk about the dumbest things and it's just like, all right, whatever. By the way, Todd, everyone the top trial.

Speaker 2

By such a minuscule number.

Speaker 3

Yeah. But that's exactly like, what's everybody talking about? They're talking about, you know, what nibblegate, I think they called it. And it's just kind of dumb. You just sort of shake your head up like this is the status of like what passes for interesting commerce. The most interesting thing out of the Jordan Suisse. No wonder the race is dying.

Speaker 2

Well, and to me, the UCI still is focusing on some arcane stuff.

Speaker 3

Yeah, it's silly like window dressing, basically, when there's a lot of things that they could and should be focusing on.

Speaker 2

If it was Tour de France femme and it was in France, chances are if the women took their tops off, everybody would be going, ooh, la, la. Who knows?

Speaker 3

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Who knows? I couldn't resist that one. I'm sorry.

Speaker 3

That's okay.

Speaker 2

All right, let's talk a little bit about the heat. It is going to be a factor, it looks like. I'm not sure if the UCI is prepared for what might happen if they don't do some things. Will there

be any changes, do you think, in the feeding or the water or the other hydration or any of it?

Speaker 3

Yeah, there are. So at this point, it looks like the worst of the heat will break just before the start. But then it's supposed to be the weather models that I'm looking at. It looks like it's going to be as far out as July 10th. And unfortunately, that's far enough out, but it's a little hard to know with any certainty what's going to happen. But it looks like we back off some into the high 80s, low 90s. for the start in Barcelona. So still hot, but not anywhere near as extreme as it is right now. And then the heat comes back on around July 10th. So kind of going closer toward the end of the first week of racing. Further other than that, I don't know. Some of this is a bit of a quirk of the tour route this year because not only do they start in Barcelona, then they go into the Pyrenees, then they cut across the center of the country, kind of through the Massif Central and go to the Vultures region and then back down kind of through the Alps before they go to Paris. So they are, this year, they're avoiding the entire northern half of France. And that's significant because it's when you get out into places like Normandy and Brittany that you really get a break from the heat. Those are the cooler regions of France. So right now, where they're going to be is kind of the hottest parts. And that's really sort of set them up in a position where, at least with the weather pattern that we have this year, it's really not good. The UCI does have an extreme weather protocol that can be invoked for not just things like hail, or dangerous weather that way, but dangerous heat as well. Some of the things that you might see are changes to the feeding protocol, where right in normal times, riders can get feeds from the car only to a certain point in the race, and then they kind of, and even feeds, from swan yours on the roadside to a certain point in the race, and then after that, they cut it off. You'll probably see that relaxed so that riders can get bottles handed up from the car, that kind of thing. You'll see Especially at starts, you'll see a lot of riders with these humps in their back. That's basically a pair of pantyhose filled with ice designed to keep them cool. They will drop back to the car and get those for themselves and for their teammates as well during the stage. You may see in extreme conditions, you may see stages shortened where they will cut out certain parts of the course. to lessen the amount of time that guys are out there in these conditions, they may also adjust start and finish times. So this is something for us here in the US, especially if you're on the East Coast, it's a little less of an issue. But if you're waking up to watch this stuff, you kind of know that the stage finishes around 10, 11 Eastern every day. You know, it's for me here in the mountains, in a mountain time zone, it finishes around 9 o'clock. if they change the start times, then that's going to necessarily change the finish times too. And so you'll want to kind of keep, if you're interested in watching, you'll want to kind of keep an eye on that to see if the start time for the next day stage has been changed so you can kind of adjust your viewing habits as necessary. But those are some of the things that we will probably see if we do run into this, you know, this wave of extreme temperatures.

Speaker 2

So do you have any indication of whether or not the heat will continue? I guess we don't know that far out for the FEMs.

Speaker 3

No, I can't see much past July 10th. I mean, like I'm sure I could ring up a meteorologist and ask them about the, kind of prevailing weather patterns that they're seeing for summer, but generally we don't have any certainty past a couple of weeks out.

Speaker 2

Let's take a short break, and when we return, Joe and I will talk about some of the stages and who might or might not benefit from them. You're listening to the Outspoken Cyclist. We will be right back. We are back on The Outspoken Cyclist. I'm your host, Diane Jenks, and today we're talking with Escape Collective's managing editor, Joe Lindsay, about the Tour de France, which will step off this Saturday, July 4th, in Barcelona. Are there any stages that you think will be decisive that will actually change things that might be different this year?

Speaker 3

In what sense?

Speaker 2

Well, that would be more challenging for the usual leaders and maybe open something up for some of the riders who we wouldn't expect to see.

Speaker 3

You mean as a result of the heat or in general?

Speaker 2

No, just in general.

Speaker 3

Okay. I mean, this year, the organizers have really kind of back-weighted the difficulty of the tour again. We've got the The first uphill finish is on stage 3, but it's not really, it's not really a classic Pyrenean stage. We don't really get through a summit finish until stage 6, which is the only classic Pyrenean stage on this year's parkourse. After that, you get, you've got to go all the way to stage 14 before you get another summit finish. And then the last week from stage 14 on has five summit finishes. including two that happened on Alpe d'Ouez in the last few days of the race. So what they've done is basically tried to build a route that keeps the suspense high late in the race. What organizers are hoping doesn't happen is what happened on stage one of the Tour of Switzerland, where Pogacha attacked with like 60 kilometers left to go and broke away and had like 2 1/2

minutes at the finish and the race was effectively already over on stage one. Now, the tour being 3 weeks long, that's much more difficult to do, that kind of thing. But what they're really hoping for is that a guy like Tade doesn't just put the race to sleep in the first week. That's bad for the racing and it's bad for the, you know, the viewer numbers and all that kind of thing.

Speaker 2

Yeah, it is. It is. I mean, it's the expectation that no matter what happens, he's going to win. And hopefully that is not necessarily the case. It would be nice to see sort of a battle of the best.

Speaker 3

I think we'll see more of a challenge this year. The way that Jonas and Wisma have been talking about it in particular, and for people who don't know Jonas, raced and won the tour of Italy in May. So he, in so doing, he became just the 8th men's rider of all time to have won all three of the Grand Tours, tours of Italy, France, and Spain. And in that, he beat Tade to that mark. Tade may get there in September at the Tour of Spain, but so far, Jonas beat him there. So Jonas is going to try to do the double, you know, the win the Giro and the Tour in the same year. And of course, Tade is the last guy to accomplish this two years ago. And in that, Tade was the first person in 25 years to be able to do that. So it's significantly difficult. But the way that Jonas and Wisma are talking about it is that he's Basically, it took him two full years to recover from the effects of this awful crash that he had in spring of 2024. It left him in the hospital for about two weeks. And he, has come back to finish second overall at each of the tours, in 2024 and 2025. But he said that he wasn't really ever back to full strength until basically this spring. He's making, he and the team are making a lot of noises about his, basically being in his best shape ever. Conversely to that, Tade basically said the same thing about himself at Switzerland, that his numbers are the best ever. And then into the mix and on into all of this is this, as we can talk about any minute, if you want, is this young, unknown French kid. less or not unknown, but unknown quantity, Paul Sexus.

Speaker 2

Yes, he is the up and coming guy. Tell me about it.

Speaker 3

So Paul is 19 years old.

Speaker 2

It's unbelievable. He's one of those child prodigies.

Speaker 3

Just a baby. He is in his second team with a French team called Decathlon CMA CGM. who my colleague, Ian Treller, has renamed Chumachukam, so he just pronounced it

phonetically. So it's Decathlon Chumachukam. Paul is a French rider on a French team, and not just a French rider, but he is the first French rider to win a world tour level stage race since 2007, which he accomplished earlier this year. He is the next coming. And the cultural importance of this to France cannot be understated. The question all spring, as he was winning races, as he, as he was winning Izzulia, as he was winning Flech-Volone, all this kind of stuff was, is he going to the Tour? And because he's never done any Grand Tour before, he's just in his second season, he's never raced in Italy or Spain. So by the time he gets to the first rest day, will already be the longest stage race he's ever done. There's an incredible amount of pressure on them. Nate, like the team is completely locked down now. We've tried to get not just interviews with Paul, but like tried to get interviews and conversations with other people on the team. And it's just like, no, they will just, it's not possible. And so they're going to bring them to the tour, I think. And part of the reason they're going to bring them to the tour is they feel this incredible pressure to basically give him these opportunities because he has a contract through 2027 and is already the subject of this, that this rumored huge bidding war with other teams who want to sign this kid who could be sort of, the next great stage race champion in bike racing. And so this is, I find this dichotomy really interesting because he's undeniably talented. He's really, really good. And he's good all around. He's good on climbs. He's good on time trials. He is, for a 19-year-old kid, races with a very sort of evolved sense of tactics. He's level-headed. He doesn't get rattled easily. He seems to have, like when you watch him talk in interviews and things like that, he's calm, he's collected. He seems like he's a kid who's comfortable in his own skin, I think is the phrase. And that's all really remarkable for a guy to be sort of that developmentally mature physically, but also mentally mature at 19. Everybody recognizes he is the biggest talent out there. But at the same time, he's never done even a single pedal stroke in the Grand Tour yet. So we'll see what we get. But it's that three-way kind of battle between the four-time winner of the race, the best cyclist of his generation, the challenger, Jonas, the only guy to ever beat him in the tour, who's supposedly back at full strength. And then this new unknown, you know, quantity who's, you know, has the potential to basically set the entire country on fire if he somehow manages to get the yellow jersey is going to be really, really fascinating and fun to watch.

Speaker 2

It is exciting. That to me is probably one of the most exciting triumvirates, if you want to call it that, this triple vision that we're going to see of these three riders, none of whom is really very old when you think about age.

Speaker 3

No, although Jonas has said that he does not see himself racing until he's like 35. No. He said this at the Giro. He said he doesn't see. He doesn't see himself racing much more than into his early 30s. And that's coming up pretty good for him. I think he's 28, 29 years old now. So he's only got a few more years left. Tade is 28. I don't see him racing for forever either. He's like this year in particular, he's started to target a few of

these races that he'd never really done before, like Switzerland, with the idea that he's said this broadly, that you'd kind of like to win every race on the World Tour if possible. before he retires. So there's a few things that are out there for him. obviously a win this year would put him in the five times winners club for the tour. He has won a couple of world championships, but he skipped the 2024 Paris Olympics. So 2028 in Los Angeles is, of course, it's really ideally suited for him. And I could see for sure if he races for another couple seasons and basically walks it off at, in LA with an Olympic Rd. gold medal, that would make him the, on par with, certainly on par with Mercks, maybe even more than Mercks as the most successful men's cyclist of all time.

Speaker 2

Wow. And right here in the USA, that would be really interesting, wouldn't it?

Speaker 3

Right in downtown Los Angeles.

Speaker 2

Downtown LA. So let me just ask you, before we end our conversation, this is so much fun, although we do need to talk about the Tour de France femme. We need to talk about these amazing women who just, You know what? Women's bike racing has really turned into something exciting to watch. So who are we watching this year?

Speaker 3

Well, I think for the women's race, it's basically my read on this, and this is extremely productive, and my colleague, Abby Mickey, would certainly object to me reducing it like this because she's going to identify, she is going to identify all kinds of riders who I don't see as capable of having a breakout tour, and she's probably going to be right because she's really good at this stuff. But I see it as basically a three-way race between Pauline Ferran-Privo, last year's winner, and Demi Vollering, who won in... 2023, and this new rider named Paula Blasi, who has really kind of broken on the scene this year. And Paula rides for the UAE 80, the women's version of Tade's team. And this is a team to watch because they really are building a very strong, deep team that wins on all kinds of different courses. They have three riders who they'll be bringing to the tour who are exceptionally good. Paula is one of them. And she's really had a kind of a breakout year this year.

Speaker 2

Where is she from?

Speaker 3

She's from Spain. She is 23 years old. This is her first full season with the team. She joined basically last spring. But this year already, she has won the Women's Vault Espana. and the Volta Catalunya Feminina, which was just ended like last week. She's

absolutely a remarkable talent. She also won the Amstel Gold race this spring, and she's just a phenomenal racer. And she's backed up by this extremely strong team. That also includes Elisa Longo Borghini, who is the two-time winner of the Women's Tour of Italy, and another rider named Sylvia Priscica, who is sort of a perennial, you know, all-arounder GC contender herself. So, I really rate Paula as a very likely sort of dark horse, you know, contender against Demi and Pauline, who are proved, you know, proved competitors at the Tour de France Femmes. I think Paula this year will show that she's got the capability for it. I don't know if she'll be able to overcome Demi and Pauline, but I think you'll definitely see her battling for it. Demi and Pauline are, you know, they're so experienced. They're so professional in how they go about their preparation and stuff. Pauline in particular has had a very quiet year so far. She really hasn't had the kind of results that she had last year. But no one in cycling, I think women or men, knows how to prepare and peak for a specific event better than she does, whether that was the Olympic mountain bike race in 2024 or the Tour de France last year. She knows exactly what she needs to do and goes about it with laser precision.

Speaker 2

Which must make her coaches very happy.

Speaker 3

I would imagine so, yeah. I mean, people like this are probably the easiest or the hardest person in the world to coach, right?

Speaker 2

Right, exactly. You just don't know. They might be really easy or they might be really difficult, but.

Speaker 3

Yeah, easy in that when you get the coaching file, you know that you're gonna be like, if you set it out to do like, you know, whatever over unders at, you know, X percent of like, lactate threshold, that file is going to come in and it's going to be a perfect set of rectangles, you know, going up and down.

Speaker 2

Right.

Speaker 3

It could be difficult in that like, who knows what, you know, I don't know what she's like to deal with as a person, but no one point being, no one does the kind of the prep that she does the way that she does it. No one comes to a race better prepared.

Speaker 2

So can we just touch upon the world's coming to Montreal this season?

Speaker 3

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Okay, so it's supposed to be the largest sporting event Montreal has seen since the 76th Olympics. That was a long time ago, right?

Speaker 3

That was a long time. I'm sure hockey fans would probably find something in there to gibble with, but.

Speaker 2

Probably. Well, you know what, don't talk to me about hockey or soccer right now. I don't want to hear about football or rock.

Speaker 3

Okay, all right, no, no, I'm not talking.

Speaker 2

So what teams, or what riders are looking to make a name at the Worlds this year, do you think? It's in September, so it's like sort of after the end of the regular European, the continental season.

Speaker 3

Right. And so the thing to remember about Montreal Worlds is this is taking place on a very similar course to what has been the Grand Prix Montreal over the last many years, which is a one-day race, a one-day World Tour race that happens at the end of the season. So it's GP Montreal is going to happen again and it's this year. It doesn't, Worlds does not replace it. And it will probably be a pretty key tune-up race. So that's the race to watch if you want to look at like, okay, here's who to pick out. Here's who's going to succeed here. And this course is not the hilliest, you know, most difficult World Championships Rd. course that we've ever seen, but it's going to be pretty stiff. And so it's going to favor riders like Tade Pagacha, like Remco Venapol, these kind of all-around guys who can win on any course any day. I think, you look at somebody like Walt van Arndt or Matthieu van der Poel, two other writers we talked about today, it's a pretty good course for them. It's probably, I think, in some ways close to the course in Glasgow that van der Poel went on in 2023. The question is always with these things is the sort of the steepness of the climbs. When you get bigger riders like Matthew and Wout, sometimes just the simple power to weight ratio will privilege a guy like Tadia Remco who's lighter but puts out remarkable amounts of power.

Speaker 2

So we will just see where Montreal goes. We will talk after that. We've been speaking with Joe Lindsay. He is always so well informed about what's going on in bike racing. Please go to Escape Collective. and see what they're doing because they will be following the tour. Are you doing any live stuff for the tour?

Speaker 3

No, in terms of like live video or things like that. We will have several people on the ground for basically the entire race for the men's and then again for the women's race. We do everything from stage reports, which are a great way if you are in a situation where you can't follow along live, but you want to find out what happened. They're a great way to kind of keep up on what's happening. We do analysis, we do interviews, we do a daily podcast called Spin Cycle that you can get wherever you get podcasts. We'll have tech coverage. You know, I think people probably from this, from these podcast interviews with you, no escape coverage as a racing coverage site, but we do a lot of technological coverage, a lot of mountain bike coverage, that kind of thing. So we'll have coverage of all the interesting tech that's at the race and that kind of thing as well. So all kinds of stuff we post about typically between 5:00 and 8:00 stories a day, plus the daily podcast. And we'll have daily podcasts for the women's race as well. So which those typically include writer diaries and that kind of thing. So there's a lot of great content, whatever you're interested in, if you like to read, if you like to listen.

Speaker 2

Yeah, escapecollective.com. Joe Lindsay, managing editor. I have so many people who say when they learn that you're coming on, I can't wait to hear this conversation. So I always...

Speaker 3

Well, that's great to hear. I'm glad people are willing to put up with my rambling.

Speaker 2

You know what? I edit it really well, you know. No, all I do is take out the ums and ahs, we just, and fill in the spaces when people lock on the door, knock on the door or the dogs start to bark.

Speaker 3

Right.

Speaker 2

Thank you so much once again. We'll see you again in the fall and let's watch the tour.

Speaker 3

Sounds great. Look forward to it.

Speaker 2

As always, my thanks to Joe for taking time to chat with me so close to the start of the tour. Keep up with Joe and the team at escapecollective.com and listen to their daily TDF wrap-up at Spin Cycle, wherever you get your podcasts. Follow the Outspoken Cyclist on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube, and go to outspokencyclist.com for photos, links, and a written transcript of the show. Subscribe to the podcast so you never miss an episode, and take a look at my Substack for added commentary on a variety of subjects. You can buy me a coffee there too, although with this weather, maybe we should be drinking beer. So happy 4th of July to our U.S. listeners and subscribers, and everyone get ready for the biggest race of the year on Saturday. Please stay safe, stay well, and remember, there's always time for a ride. Until next time, bye-bye.

Speaker 1

Thanks for joining us today on The Outspoken Cyclist with Diane Jenks. We welcome your thoughts and contributions on our Facebook page, or visit outspokencyclist.com to leave a comment on any episode. We will be back next week with new guests, topics, conversations, and news in the world of cycling. Subscribe to the show in your favorite podcast app and you'll never miss an episode. The Outspoken Cyclist is a copyrighted production of DBL Promotions with the assistance of WJCU-FM Cleveland, a service of John Carroll University. Thanks again for listening, ride safely, and we'll see you next week.