



2018 Tour de Bintan: breaking records

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The Tour de Bintan is back bigger than ever on March 23-25, 2018, on the beautiful Indonesian island of Bintan. 1,200 cyclists, the highest number of cyclists since its inception in 2009, including dozens of teams from all over Asia and beyond will tackle the challenging course.

For the second year in a row, Asia's premier amateur stage race will also double as a qualifier for the UCI Gran Fondo World Championships (GFWC) taking place in Varese, Italy, from August 30 to September 2, 2018.

There are two routes to qualifying: the opening 17km Individual Time Trial of the three-day festival of cycling on the Friday afternoon, and the epic 144km Gran Fondo Classic mass start road race on the Saturday morning. To get to Varese, the Tour de Bintan racers need to finish in the top 25 percent in their respective age groups in the ITT and/or Gran Fondo Classic.

Dozens of teams are represented at the 2018 Tour de Bintan. Joining the usual Singapore-based squads such as Allied World Kemp Technologies, Anza Cycling, Ascenders, Greyhounds, Integrated Riding Racing Team, MatadorRacing, Specialized Roval Mavericks and TWC Racing Team, are many further flung teams. These include Strive Cycle Training (Perth), Project 852 (Hong Kong) and Specialized Roval Racing (Shanghai), and Indonesia is also well represented, with Sampah Cycling Company and KGB among the local squads.

Teams don't play as big a role as usual in GFWS races as the five-year age groups mean the riders are spread more thinly. Individual male names to watch out for include Firoz Loh and Mike Koreneff (18-34), Bastian Dohling and Gabriel Tan (35-39), Konstantin Fast, Pierre-Alain Scherwey and Chris Reynolds (40-44), Ben Arnott and David Creegan (45-49), and Youcef Cummings and Chris Glasby (50-54).

The women riders all race in one peloton. Watch out for the strong Perth-based Amanda Nabi and Singapore national cyclist Michelle Ho An, although an interesting dark horse could be Filipina pro triathlete Monica Torres.

While the Tour de Bintan, organized by MetaSport, is by its nature primarily a competitive affair, the event also opens the smooth roads of beautiful Bintan to riders who like a challenge but away from the hustle and bustle of racing: the Gran Fondo Challenge and the Gran Fondo Discovery.

The former takes place on the Saturday morning and at 82km is a modified version of the Gran Fondo Classic, while the Gran Fondo Discovery on the Sunday morning is aimed at newer cyclists and is just 55km in length.

Info and contact:

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