

SPORTS  
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# Thomas, Froome to ride in Tour of Britain

Froome set to appear in race for first time since 2009



Geraint Thomas and Chris Froome

AFP | London

**T**our de France champion Geraint Thomas and the man whose crown he took in July, Chris Froome, will compete in next month's Tour of Britain rather than the final Grand Tour of the season, the Vuelta a Espana.

Both riders have rarely graced their home Tour in the past decade, Thomas finishing seventh last year in what was his first appearance since 2011 and Team Sky team-mate Froome last competing in 2009 when he finished 50th for his previous team Barloworld.

Thomas, 32, was only drawn to compete last year because the race finished in his home city of Cardiff and has been lured back for what will be his first major race since the Tour de France as this year's edition begins in Pembrey Country Park, Carmarthen-shire, Wales, on September 2.

The Vuelta gets underway on August 25.

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GERAINT THOMAS

told the Team Sky website.

"It starts in Wales which will be special, and then I get to go and race across the whole of the United Kingdom. I can't wait.

"I want to go to the race in the shape to compete and enjoy it. We'll have to see how the next few weeks go but I'm looking forward to it and I know we will have a strong team there."

Four-time Tour de France champion Froome, who finished third behind

Thomas in this year's Tour, said he had focussed on the Vuelta in the past four years finally winning it in 2017.

"It's been a long time since I've raced the Tour of Britain," said Froome.

"The Vuelta a Espana has always been such a big goal and sadly coincided with the Tour of Britain, but not doing La Vuelta this year gives me the chance to come back to the UK and race on what looks like a great parcours.

"I'm really looking forward to riding. I always remember there being a great atmosphere at the Tour of Britain and the race has only got bigger over the years. I'm really looking forward to coming back," added the 33-year-old Kenyan-born star.

Surprisingly given their dominance especially of the Tour de France, Team Sky has only won the Tour of Britain once when Bradley Wiggins prevailed in 2013.

Following the start in Wales, this year's race will take riders into the West Country and up to Cumbria before returning to its regular finishing circuit in central London on September 9.

# Sainz to replace Alonso

Reuters | London

**C**arlos Sainz has signed a multi-year deal to replace Fernando Alonso at McLaren from the 2019 Formula One season, the team confirmed on Thursday.

Double world champion Alonso announced his retirement from the sport on Tuesday, ending months of speculation about his future.

Sainz will enter his fifth season of Formula 1 when he joins the McLaren team next year.

The 23-year-old Spaniard, currently on loan at Renault from Red Bull, sits 11th in the drivers' championship standings with Renault.

"I'm delighted to finally be able to confirm that I'll be a McLaren driver from the 2019 season," Sainz said.



Carlos Sainz

"It's something I've been looking at for a while and I'm very excited about this next chapter in my career.

"Fernando is of course one of them, so it's particularly special that I'll be taking his seat as part of the next generation of Spanish racing drivers be-

hind the wheel of a McLaren."

It is not clear who will be Sainz' team mate at McLaren next season, though current driver Stoffel Vandoorne and British youngster Lando Norris are favourites for the seat.

McLaren chief Zak Brown executive said Sainz, who began his Formula One career with Red Bull-owned Toro Rosso, would bring a lot of racing experience to the role.

"We've been assessing him for some time now and rate him very highly among the next generation of young talent emerging through the ranks in Formula One," he said.

"Although he's just 23, he'll be starting his fifth season in the sport with us and will bring with him a huge amount of racing experience, both in Formula One and with our partner Renault."

# Bahrain's first global sports media streaming platform launched

TDT | Manama

**B**rave Combat Federation announced the launch of Brave TV, the first online sports media streaming platform from the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Brave Combat Federation will provide two events exclusive for those who subscribe the platform initially.

Brave Combat Federation expanded its global reach by being broadcasted live through Abu Dhabi Sports in the MENA region, StarSat and VodaCom for Africa, FloCombat for the United States of America, Combate in Brazil, BIB in Bulgaria and Fite TV in USA, UK, Canada and Australia.

The rest of the world will be covered through online services provided by Brave TV.

The launch marks a major success for the initiative which functions under the instructions of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The platform will feature extensive martial arts content as well as related licensed material, including docu-

mentaries, programs, live events and competitions.

Brave Combat Federation has estimated that more than a billion mixed martial arts fans it can potentially reach through online streaming.

Brave TV will give global exposure to athletes and the sport by ensuring total global coverage for the organisation found in Bahrain.

The launch marks the first of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Currently Brave Combat Federation is the fastest growing mixed martial arts organisation in the world. The launch of Brave Combat Federation had enabled swift growth of sports media and online powered web streaming services.

Currently Brave Combat Federation has announced upcoming events in Colombia, UAE, Pakistan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, India and South Africa. The development will boost the upcoming Brave International Combat Week 2018 which is the largest sports initiative to be hosted in Bahrain with participation confirmed from over 103 nations.

# BRAVE 14 features two Combat Sambo champions



Ikram Aliskerov with the Russian squad during 2017 Combat Sambo World Championships

TDT | Manama

**B**rave Combat Federation features two Combat Sambo World champions in the fight card for Brave 14 hosted in Tangier, Morocco.

Velimurad Alkhasov claimed the gold in Combat Sambo World Championships in 57 kg category during 2016 while Ikram Aliskerov had secured the gold in Combat Sambo World Championships during the year 2017.

This marks the first time a global mixed martial arts promotion is featuring multiple Combat Sambo World Champions in the same fight night.

Ikram Aliskerov will be facing Diego Gonzalez from Sweden in his third

appearance for the Brave Combat Federation.

Ikram is undefeated in his professional MMA career with five straight wins. In his previous appearance he defeated South African superstar in a bout that went the distance.

The former ACB flyweight champion Velimurad will be competing after an absence of two years.

The flyweight division will have a decisive battle when Velimurad clashes with the veteran Brazilian Jiu Jitsu specialist, Sean Santella. Sean Santella had specified that he will not be discounting Velimurad for his professional record due to his vast Combat Sambo experience and background.

