



Richard Brooks (West Midlands Railway) and Pro Rider Beth Crumpton at Redditch railway station

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Redditch Tour Series – the count down begins!

Organisers, sponsors and Pro Riders have come together to celebrate the Redditch Ovo Energy Tour Series being just two weeks away!

The race gets 'back into gear' on Thursday 9th May and is the first race in this season's Tour Series Programme.

The launch, which took place on Wednesday 24th April, pedalled past Redditch railway station – to say a huge thank you to the event's Sustainable

Travel Partner – West Midlands Railway. The train operator has decked out the station in Redditch Tour posters to help promote the event to commuters and families who pass through the station.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway said: “This is a great opportunity to show off the town and the surrounding area to thousands of visiting Tour fans, while creating a unique community event. We look forward to bringing people right into the heart of the action with our Cross City train services which, from next year, will start to see the arrival of a brand new fleet of dedicated trains on the route as we invest £1 billion in improving local rail services.”

The launch then powered up Unicorn Hill, following the route on the day, and into the Kingfisher Shopping Centre. Local sponsors, dignities and Pro Rider Beth Crumpton were waiting with ToBi, the Tour Series mascot, to celebrate the count down.

Headline sponsor Stofords Ltd, were delighted to be involved. Matt Burgin, managing director for the Company said: "We are delighted to be supporting this year's Redditch Tour, as a keen cyclist myself it is great to see Pro Racing at the heart of the town. It's especially important for us to give something back to the communities we are working in and we see the Race as a great way to promote the Redditch Eastern Gateway and the opportunities this holds for the town".

The 'Launch Party' was once again joined by Pro Rider Beth Crumpton , a local girl who needs little introduction. Racing for 13 years, she has competed Internationally in Mountain Bike, Road and CycloCross, representing GBR in all three disciplines at some point throughout her career – and it all started here in Redditch

Beth was asked – What do you think of the Redditch track? Are you gutted to not be Racing It this year?

She said: "I am gutted not to be racing on home turf, it's always cool to race in front of a home crowd but with my new team and new goals I'll be happy to spectate and enjoy the racing. The circuit meets all aspects of physical, mental and technical challenges, there isn't much flat terrain in the track, it's either downhill or dragging uphill with a good punch up Unicorn Hill. It provides a great platform for a great night of racing. I'll be cheering for a lot

of my past team-mates from Storey Racing and friends who are racing in the series this year, I always enjoy watching my friends race because I know how much work they put into achieve their results."

A number of other sponsors were in attendance, including Dominique Lippett from Kingfisher Shopping Centre. She said: "We are very proud to sponsor again for the 8th year of the Redditch Tour – it's great to see spectators coming out and enjoying the day and we are very much looking forward to the big day. Free Guides are available in advance of Race Day from our Information Points".

Lorna Jeynes the Business Growth & Engagement Manager from Worcestershire County Council said: "It has been great to get all the sponsors together, there is a real buzz for the event and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the businesses who have supported us so far. Kingfisher Shopping Centre, Stofords, and our travel partner WM Railway as well as our delivery partners such as the Police, Redditch Borough Council and Diamond Buses. Without everyone's support, we couldn't make the event happen".

For more information on the day, event times and how to get involved, please visit: www.redditchbc.gov.uk/things-to-do/events-in-redditch/tour-series-redditch

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Notes to editors

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The Tour Series is aired on ITV4 and has an audience of 2.4 million, as well as being broadcast to over 60 countries. 15,000 spectators watched last year's event in Redditch

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast mainline to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

The West Midlands Trains franchise started on 10 December 2017 and will run until 2025/26.

West Midlands Trains operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides over 70 million passenger journeys a year. Over the course of the franchise, West Midlands Trains will be investing £1 billion into the rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 400 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 85,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

The franchise is a joint venture between Abellio (70.1% share) and East Japan Railway Company / Mitsui & Co., Ltd (29.9% share in a 50:50 split). Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. In the UK, Abellio operates ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, Merseyrail services in a joint venture with Serco and buses through Abellio London. For more information visit www.abellio.com

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