

= 2016 Paris ? Nice =

The 2016 Paris ? Nice was a road cycling stage race that took place in France between 6 and 13 March 2016 . It was the 74th edition of the Paris ? Nice and was the second event of the 2016 UCI World Tour .

The race took place over eight stages , travelling south from Conflans @-@ Sainte @-@ Honorine to finish on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice , although one stage was cancelled due to weather conditions . After a prologue individual time trial , the first few stages were suited to sprinters . The decisive stages came on the final two days , with routes taking the riders through the Alps . The favourites for victory were therefore the climbers , including the defending champion Richie Porte (BMC Racing Team) , Alberto Contador (Tinkoff) and Geraint Thomas (Team Sky) .

Michael Matthews (Orica ? BikeExchange) won the prologue and took the leader 's yellow jersey . He kept the jersey through the next five days , winning one more of the stages in a sprint . He lost the jersey on the summit finish on Stage 6 to Thomas , who in turn came close to losing it on the final day . After he was dropped by Contador on the final climb of the race , the Col d 'Èze , he had to chase back on . At the end of the race , Thomas beat Contador by four seconds , with Richie Porte third a further eight seconds back . Matthews won the points classification and Antoine Duchesne (Direct Énergie) the mountains classification ; Movistar won the team classification .

= = Route = =

The route of the 2016 Paris ? Nice was announced on 17 December 2015 . The race began with a 6 @.@ 1 @-@ kilometre (3 @.@ 8 mi) prologue individual time trial in Conflans @-@ Sainte @-@ Honorine , near Paris , on Sunday 6 March and continued for the following seven days . The remaining stages were all road stages , with no other time trials . Stage 1 included two dirt tracks in the final part of the stage , with exposed roads made a possibility . Stage 3 was scheduled to finish on Mont Brouilly , a 3 @-@ kilometre (1 @.@ 9 mi) climb at a 7 @.@ 7 % gradient . Stage 5 included part of the climb of Mont Ventoux , but this came towards the beginning of the stage and was followed by more than 120 kilometres (75 mi) of roads to the finish . The crucial stages were expected to be the final two : Stage 6 finished on the Madone d 'Utelle , a 15 @.@ 3 kilometres (9 @.@ 5 mi) climb at 5 @.@ 7 % . The final stage included six categorised climbs , with the Col d 'Èze the final climb before the descent into Nice for the finish on the Promenade des Anglais .

While Stage 3 was underway , the weather conditions became very poor , with snow on the final climb . After attempting to restart the race , the race organisers cancelled the stage , with Amaury Sport Organisation 's Christian Prudhomme saying " The road was very slippery and safe conditions could not be assured . "

= = Participating teams = =

The race organisers invited 22 teams to participate . The 18 UCI WorldTeams were automatically invited and obliged to send a squad . The race organisers also invited four UCI Professional Continental teams as wildcards . These were all French teams : Cofidis , Direct Énergie , Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM and Fortuneo ? Vital Concept .

Each team could include up to eight riders . All the teams except Lotto ? Soudal filled all eight slots ; Lotto ? Soudal 's team of seven meant that the peloton at the start of the race included 167 riders . Lotto ? Soudal also chose to compete under a different name from the rest of the season : they became Lotto ? Fix ALL , taking the name of one of a product made by Soudal , their normal sponsor . They also wore grey and white jerseys in place of their normal red and white .

= = Pre @-@ race favourites = =

Stages 1 , 2 and 4 were expected to favour the sprinters , with the other stages likely to be decisive for the general classification . There were a large number of climbers present for Paris ? Nice , but

the overwhelming favourite was Alberto Contador (Tinkoff) , racing in what was possibly his final season in the peloton . Contador had won the race on two previous occasions , but this was his first participation since 2010 . Contador had shown some form with a stage win in the Volta ao Algarve . Contador was the only one of the top four Grand Tour contenders to start Paris ? Nice : Vincenzo Nibali (Astana) was riding Tirreno ? Adriatico , while Chris Froome (Team Sky) and Nairo Quintana (Movistar Team) opted to wait until the Volta a Catalunya to begin their European seasons .

The defending champion was Richie Porte (BMC Racing Team) who had won the 2015 Paris ? Nice after winning the individual time trial on the final day ; he had also won the 2013 edition . Since his 2015 victory , Porte had moved from Team Sky to BMC . In the absence of the traditional Col d 'Èze time trial , the route was expected to favour him less than previous editions , but his strength in the mountains meant that he was still one of the major favourites . After a strong beginning to the season at the Tour Down Under , Porte had struggled in the Tour of Oman . Porte was replaced as Team Sky 's leader for the race by Geraint Thomas , who had finished fifth the previous year . Thomas had won the Volta ao Algarve and was expected to perform strongly in the prologue time trial .

The other major general classification riders included Tom Dumoulin (Giant ? Alpecin) , Jon Izagirre (Movistar Team) , Andrew Talansky and Pierre Rolland (both Cannondale ? Drapac) and Romain Bardet (AG2R La Mondiale) .

Among the sprinters , the biggest name was Marcel Kittel (Etixx ? Quick @-@ Step) , who had won four stages so far in the season as well as the overall title in the Dubai Tour . Other prominent sprinters included André Greipel (Lotto ? Soudal) , Alexander Kristoff (Team Katusha) , Arnaud Démare (FDJ) and Nacer Bouhanni (Cofidis) .

= = Stages = =

= = = Prologue = = =

6 March 2016 ? Conflans @-@ Sainte @-@ Honorine , 6 @.@ 1 km (3 @.@ 8 mi) individual time trial (ITT)

The prologue was a 6 @.@ 1 @-@ kilometre (3 @.@ 8 mi) individual time trial in Conflans @-@ Sainte @-@ Honorine . It began on the bank of the Seine with a 2 @-@ kilometre (1 @.@ 2 mi) straight road . There was then a sharp left @-@ hand turn as the road turned away from the river ; there were then several more corners and two roundabouts before the end of the stage . The riders set off at one @-@ minute intervals with Porte , the defending champion , the last to set off .

The riders who started earlier in the day were affected by rain . As the final riders set off , Cannondale 's Patrick Bevin was in the lead , with a time of 7 ' 41 " . Tom Dumoulin beat this by one second , but was in turn beaten by one second by Michael Matthews , the seventh @-@ last rider to take to the course . The final riders , including Porte and Geraint Thomas , were unable to beat Matthews 's time . Thomas finished seventh , losing seven seconds to Matthews , with Porte eleventh , a further three seconds back . Contador finished 27th , sixteen seconds behind Matthews , with Talansky and Bardet finishing even further behind . Matthews described it as " very special " to beat Dumoulin , one of the best time @-@ triallists in the world , and said that he hoped to stay in the yellow jersey of the race leader " as long as possible " .

= = = Stage 1 = = =

7 March 2016 ? Condé @-@ sur @-@ Vesgre to Vendôme , 198 km (123 @.@ 0 mi)

Stage 1 was a broadly flat stage that covered a 198 @-@ kilometre (123 mi) route from Condé @-@ sur @-@ Vesgre to Vendôme . There were no classified climbs in the first 173 kilometres (107 mi) . The final 25 kilometres (16 mi) , however , followed a circuit around Vendôme that included both climbs and gravel roads . The riders entered the circuit half @-@ way round . They

crossed the first gravel sector , the Chemin de Tourteline , then the Chemin du Tertre de la Motte . The second sector included a third @-@ category climb . There were just over 3 kilometres (1 @.@ 9 mi) to the finish line at the end of the second sector . The riders then rode a complete lap of the circuit , crossing both gravel roads and the climb a second time , before reaching the stage finish . The stage took place in difficult conditions , with snow , rain , wind and cold temperatures .

The stage began with a four @-@ man breakaway , formed by Thomas De Gendt (Lotto ? Soudal) , Steven Tronet (Fortuneo ? Vital Concept) , Thierry Hupond (Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM) and Perrig Quéménéur (Direct Énergie) . With the peloton not trying hard to chase them , they built a ten @-@ minute lead by the middle of the stage . In the second half of the stage , there was some sunshine , but also strong crosswinds : with Sky , Tinkoff and Etixx ? Quick @-@ Step working hard at the front of the peloton , there were splits in the group . Alexander Kristoff was in the second group on the road , but he was able to get back to the front as the groups came together .

On the first gravel section , the breakaway 's lead had been reduced to ten seconds and they were soon caught with Sky 's Luke Rowe working at the front of the peloton . Pierre @-@ Luc Périchon (Fortuneo ? Vital Concept) attacked on the first time over the climb ; he was caught by work from Orica ? GreenEDGE as the riders rode through Vendôme . On the second lap , Marcel Kittel was dropped on the final climb and , despite an attack from Tony Gallopin (Lotto ? Soudal) that was followed by Geraint Thomas , a large group crossed the final climb together . Around 2 kilometres (1 @.@ 2 mi) from the finish , Edward Theuns (Trek ? Segafredo) attacked and went under the flamme rouge alone . He was caught , however , by Sky . Sky 's Ben Swift was the first to sprint and came close to taking the victory , but he was passed by Démare in the final metres , with Bouhanni finishing third .

Michael Matthews increased his lead by winning two bonus seconds at an intermediate sprint . After finishing fifth at the end of the stage , he retained the yellow jersey ; there were no significant changes to the general classification . Démare said that the stage victory was " an immense relief " after he had failed to win any races in 2015 .

= = = Stage 2 = = =

8 March 2016 ? Contres to Commentry , 213 @.@ 5 km (132 @.@ 7 mi)

The second road stage was held on a 213 @.@ 5 @-@ kilometre (132 @.@ 7 mi) route from Contres in Loir @-@ et @-@ Cher to Commentry in Allier . The route was flat for almost the entire stage , with only one third @-@ category climb that came 50 kilometres (31 mi) from the finish line . After the peloton reached Commentry , there was a lap of a 17 @-@ kilometre (11 mi) circuit with a small , uncategorised climb . The final kilometres were slightly uphill , with a 90 @-@ degree turn at a roundabout 500 metres (550 yd) from the finish line .

There was again a four @-@ main breakaway at the beginning of the stage , with Evaldas ?i?kevi?ius (Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM) , Anthony Delaplace (Fortuneo ? Vital Concept) , Matthias Brändle (IAM Cycling) and Tsgabu Grmay (Lampre ? Merida) earning a 10 @-@ minute lead by the time they had raced 20 kilometres (12 mi) . This was quickly reduced to under four minutes , however , by Etixx ? Quick @-@ Step and Orica ? GreenEDGE . On the climb , Delaplace won the maximum points . Grmay dropped out of the break with 30 kilometres (19 mi) remaining and as the riders reached Commentry the breakaway had just a 40 @-@ second lead .

?i?kevi?ius and Brändle attacked at the start of the final lap , with Delaplace unable to follow , but with 10 kilometres (6 @.@ 2 mi) remaining they were caught by the peloton . In the final 2 kilometres (1 @.@ 2 mi) , Cofidis came to the front on behalf of Bouhanni and gave him a good lead @-@ out . Bouhanni followed the wheel of Christophe Laporte and opened his sprint with 200 metres (220 yd) remaining . He was on the right @-@ hand side of the road , with Michael Matthews coming up on his left . In the final 100 metres (330 ft) , Bouhanni drifted to the left and leaned into Matthews ; the two riders nearly crashed . Bouhanni crossed the line first , with Matthews just beating Niccolò Bonifazio (Trek ? Segafredo) for second place , but the result was changed shortly after the stage . Bouhanni was relegated to third place after the jury decided that he had driven the sprint dangerously , giving Matthews the stage victory and putting Bonifazio into

second . Alexander Kristoff led the rest of the field home , one second behind . Marcel Kittel , one of the favourites for the stage victory , finished 65th .

== Stage 3 ==

9 March 2016 ? Cusset to Mont Brouilly , 168 km (104 @. @ 4 mi)

The third stage was scheduled to follow a 168 @-@ kilometre (104 mi) route that took the riders east from Cusset in Allier to the climb of Mont Brouilly in Rhône . The route crossed five categorised climbs in the first 120 kilometres (75 mi) , then entered a circuit that took the riders on two climbs of Mont Brouilly , a 3 @-@ kilometre (1 @. @ 9 mi) climb at 7 @. @ 7 % with the final 1 @, @ 000 metres (1 @, @ 100 yd) at 9 @. @ 3 % .

A group of sixteen riders escaped early in the stage . Alexis Gougeard (AG2R La Mondiale) attacked along with Laurent Didier (Trek ? Segafredo) and Alexey Lutsenko (Astana) . They were joined by Jesús Herrada (Movistar Team) and Thomas De Gendt (Lotto ? Soudal) as the rest of the group was caught by the peloton . The stage took place in cold , wintry conditions , with increasing quantities of snow falling and temperatures as low as ? 5 ° C (23 ° F) recorded . At the top of the third climb of the day was the feedzone and the racing was suspended there . It was initially intended to restart some way down the road , but several minutes later the decision was taken to neutralise the stage . The results did not count for the general classification , but points were awarded for the intermediate sprints and mountains that had already been contested .

== Stage 4 ==

10 March 2016 ? Juliéna s to Romans @-@ sur @-@ Isère , 195 @. @ 5 km (121 @. @ 5 mi)

Stage 4 took the peloton 195 @. @ 5 kilometres (121 @. @ 5 mi) south from Juliéna s in Rhône to Romans @-@ sur @-@ Isère in the Drôme department . There were three categorised climbs in the stage : two third @-@ category and one second @-@ category . The final climb came 22 @. @ 5 kilometres (14 @. @ 0 mi) from the finish .

The early breakaway included four riders . These were Thomas Voeckler (Direct Énergie) , Matthew Brammeier (Dimension Data) , Florian Vachon (Fortuneo ? Vital Concept) and Evaldas Siskevicius (Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM) . They were not allowed to build a large advantage , with the peloton keeping them just a few minutes ahead . The main action of the day came on the second @-@ category final climb . In the breakaway , now just a minute ahead , Voeckler attacked and dropped the other breakaway riders . Nathan Haas (Dimension Data) attacked the peloton at the top of the climb , but made a mistake on a corner and ended up in a field . On the climb , Marcel Kittel and Arnaud Démare were dropped , with Démare then pulling out of the race . Geraint Thomas was one of several riders to crash on the climb , but he was able to return to the peloton .

After the climb , with Voeckler being caught , Sylvain Chavanel (Direct Énergie) , Sep Vanmarcke (LottoNL ? Jumbo) and Delio Fernández (Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM) attacked and built a lead ; with 7 kilometres (4 @. @ 3 mi) remaining they had a 15 @-@ second lead . Katusha and Cofidis rode very hard in the peloton to bring them back , but the breakaway was finally caught with less than 1 kilometre (0 @. @ 62 mi) remaining . Cofidis again gave Bouhanni a strong lead @-@ out and he comfortably won the sprint . Edward Theuns (Trek ? Segafredo) finished second , with Greipel third . Matthews finished fifth to retain his lead of both the general and points classifications . Bouhanni said after the stage that his victory made up for his disqualification on stage 3 .

== Stage 5 ==

11 March 2016 ? Saint @-@ Paul @-@ Trois @-@ Châteaux to Salon @-@ de @-@ Provence , 198 km (123 @. @ 0 mi)

The fifth road stage followed a 198 @-@ kilometre (123 mi) route from Saint @-@ Paul @-@ Trois @-@ Châteaux to Salon @-@ de @-@ Provence in Bouches @-@ du @-@ Rhône . The stage included five climbs , the most significant of which was the partial climb of Mont Ventoux . This

was a first @-@ category climb , taking the riders 9 @.@ 5 kilometres (5 @.@ 9 mi) at an average gradient of 9 @.@ 3 % . Rather than riding all the way to the summit , the riders descended after Chalet Reynard . This climb came with more than 125 kilometres (78 mi) remaining in the stage . Before Mont Ventoux was a third @-@ category climb ; afterwards there were three second @-@ category climbs . The last of these came with 38 @.@ 5 kilometres (23 @.@ 9 mi) to the finish line ; this last section was mostly flat , although there were two sharp left @-@ hand turns in the final 1 @.@ 000 metres (1 @.@ 100 yd) .

The early breakaway included Stijn Vandenbergh (Etixx ? Quick @-@ Step) , Arnaud Courteille (FDJ) , Lars Boom (Astana) , Wouter Wippert (Cannondale) , Edward Theuns (Trek ? Segafredo) , Matthias Brändle (IAM) , Antoine Duchesne (Direct Énergie) and Jesús Herrada (Movistar) . In the first 30 kilometres (19 mi) , their lead extended to over eleven minutes . On the climb of Mont Ventoux , Brändle was dropped from the breakaway , while Bouhanni , Kittel and Greipel were among those dropped from the peloton . Greipel was among seven riders to drop out during the stage . Wippert and Theuns were next to be dropped from the breakaway ; Boom and Vandenbergh were also temporarily dropped but were able to rejoin the front group , although the group 's lead was reduced to just over three minutes by the third climb of the day . Herrada won the first two climbs of the day and came second on the following two to take the lead in the mountains classification , then dropped back to the peloton .

Duchesne attacked on the penultimate climb , the Côte de la Roque @-@ d 'Anthéron , and had a 33 @-@ second lead over the peloton . On the descent from the final climb , Alexey Lutsenko (Astana) attacked from the peloton and came across to Duchesne . Lutsenko quickly dropped him and , with 15 kilometres (9 @.@ 3 mi) remaining , had built a 39 @-@ second lead , putting him into the virtual lead of the race . The chase only began in earnest in the final 3 kilometres (1 @.@ 9 mi) , with Katusha chasing on behalf of Alexander Kristoff , but the peloton were unable to catch Lutsenko and he crossed the line for a solo victory , 21 seconds ahead of the chasing group . Kristoff won the sprint for second , with Matthews finishing third . Lutsenko moved into second place overall , six seconds behind Matthews .

After the stage , Matthews said that he felt he could win the overall general classification . He said , " I think if I can survive Saturday [Stage 5] , I can win . With the way I 've been climbing , I think it 's possible . " Contador , meanwhile , said that the final climb of Stage 6 was not very steep and that it might be difficult to put significant time into Matthews .

== = Stage 6 == =

12 March 2016 ? Nice to Madone d 'Utelle , 177 km (110 @.@ 0 mi)

The penultimate stage of the race took the riders 177 kilometres (110 mi) through the Alpes @-@ Maritimes . The route started on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice , then left the city to the north for a course that included seven categorised climbs . The first 50 kilometres (31 mi) of racing crossed two second @-@ category climbs , which were followed by a 35 @-@ kilometre (22 mi) section of flat roads and descents . This was followed by another second @-@ category climb and a first @-@ category climb , the 8 @.@ 5 @-@ kilometre (5 @.@ 3 mi) Côte d 'Ascros with its average gradient of 5 @.@ 4 % . After a long descent came two more second @-@ category climbs , bringing the riders to Utelle . They had a summit finish at the shrine of the Madone d 'Utelle above the city , with a 15 @.@ 3 @-@ kilometre (9 @.@ 5 mi) climb at an average gradient of 5 @.@ 7 % . The climb was fairly regular , but had two sections above 9 % , including the final 300 metres (330 yd) .

The day 's breakaway included nine riders . These were Antoine Duchesne (Direct Énergie) , Florian Vachon (Fortuneo ? Vital Concept) , Niki Terpstra (Etixx ? Quick @-@ Step) , Cyril Gautier (AG2R La Mondiale) , Grégory Rast (Trek ? Segafredo) , Evaldas ?i?kevi?ius (Delko ? Marseille Provence KTM) , Tsgabu Grmay (Lampre ? Merida) , Andrew Talansky (Cannondale) and Thomas De Gendt (Lotto ? Soudal) . The gap never exceeded two and a half minutes , with Tinkoff chasing hard on behalf of Contador and , with 55 kilometres (34 mi) remaining , was just one minute . De Gendt won the first four climbs to move into second in the mountains classification ,

while Rast and ?i?kevi?ius were dropped . Talansky crashed on one of the descents and abandoned the race with a wrist injury . Vachon and Duchesne dropped the rest of the breakaway and continued alone , but with 35 kilometres (22 mi) Duchesne was left alone , just over a minute ahead of the peloton . He won the fifth and sixth climbs of the day and moved into the lead of the mountains classification .

As the riders approached the final climb of the day , Sky came to the front of the peloton . With 15 kilometres (9 @. @ 3 mi) remaining , Duchesne was caught , and the peloton was reduced to 30 riders . Matthews , the race leader , was among those dropped from the leading group . With 10 kilometres (6 @. @ 2 mi) remaining , Rafa? Majka (Tinkoff) attacked , with Contador following ; this caused the group to halve in size and Sky were reduced to two riders , Thomas and Sergio Henao . Porte , Dumoulin , Izagirre , Bardet and Katusha 's Ilnur Zakarin were among those left in the group . With 5 @. @ 5 kilometres (3 @. @ 4 mi) remaining , Majka pulled off and a group of five leaders formed : Contador , Thomas , Henao , Porte and Zakarin . Contador and Porte attempted attacks but were unable to escape the group , with Henao supporting Thomas . In the final kilometre , Porte was dropped and Zakarin accelerated . Thomas and Contador followed , but Zakarin took the stage victory . Thomas finished second , on the same time as Zakarin , and Contador was a second back in third . Thomas therefore moved into the race lead , fifteen seconds ahead of Contador .

= = = Stage 7 = = =

13 March 2016 ? Nice to Nice , 134 km (83 @. @ 3 mi)

The final stage was a 134 @- @ kilometre (83 mi) loop that started and ended on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice . The route took the riders out of Nice to the north . They crossed two third @- @ category climbs , then came back south for two second @- @ category climbs . The final 64 kilometres (40 mi) included two first @- @ category climbs . The first was the Côte de Peille , a 6 @. @ 5 @- @ kilometre (4 @. @ 0 mi) climb at 6 @. @ 9 % . The riders then descended into the outskirts of Nice . Here they turned back inland for a final climb , the 7 @. @ 7 kilometres (4 @. @ 8 mi) of the Col d 'Èze at an average gradient of 5 @. @ 7 % . They then descended back into Nice , where the final 2 kilometres (1 @. @ 2 mi) were fairly flat , before ended on the Promenade des Anglais at the Albert I Garden .

The stage began with an 18 @- @ rider breakaway within the first five minutes of racing . This included Contador 's teammate Robert Ki?erlovski and this group was joined shortly afterwards by several more riders , including Yuri Trofimov , another Tinkoff rider , while others were dropped and returned to the peloton . Thomas De Gendt and Antoine Duchesne were again in the breakaway ; Duchesne won the first four climbs of the day , with De Gendt second on each occasion . Duchesne won enough points to secure victory in the mountains classification .

On the Côte de Peille , Contador attacked in the peloton . He quickly built an advantage , with Kiserlovski and Trofimov dropping back from the breakaway to assist him . They built a lead of around a minute , but Team Sky pulled the lead back and Contador 's group was caught by the foot of the Col d 'Èze , with only Tim Wellens (Lotto ? Soudal) ahead . Romain Bardet attacked , but Contador chased him down . Contador himself attacked several times , with Sky 's Sergio Henao and the Orica ? GreenEDGE team chasing him down ; Thomas appeared to be struggling . In the final part of the climb , Contador got away , initially with Majka and then with Richie Porte . At the top of the climb , they caught Wellens and had a 30 @- @ second advantage over the chasing group .

Thomas had been dropped not only by Contador but also by the first chasing group , which included Ilnur Zakarin . Thomas was joined , however , by Sergio Henao . The two Sky riders then joined up with Tony Gallopin (Lotto ? Soudal) and chased hard throughout the 15 @- @ kilometre (9 @. @ 3 mi) descent . They caught the first chasing group on the descent , forming a ten @- @ man group behind Contador , Porte and Wellens . The gap was gradually reduced and was just five seconds by the finish . Wellens won the three @- @ man sprint , with Contador second and Porte third . Gallopin won the sprint for fourth place . Thomas therefore won the overall general classification , beating Contador by four seconds .

= = Post @-@ race analysis = =

Thomas said after the race that his victory demonstrated that he could compete with the top stage racers in the world . He said that Henao 's presence had been crucial to his victory and that , before the stage , he had chosen a 54 @-@ tooth chainring to help him chase back on if he was dropped on the final climb . He also said that he owed Gallopin " a few beers " for his assistance in chasing back to the leading groups on the final stage . Gallopin , meanwhile said that he had been happy to contribute to the chase of the second group on the final stage in order to have both a man in the leading group and in the chasing group . He added that he was also glad to help Thomas as the two men were friends and exchanged text messages whenever Thomas 's Wales played Gallopin 's France at rugby .

Contador 's approach to Stage 7 was described by Cycling Weekly as a " tactical masterpiece " . Contador himself said that the team had executed their strategy perfectly . His directeur sportif , Sean Yates , said that the team were " nearly there " in their attempt to take the overall victory and suggested that the cancellation of Stage 3 may have prevented Contador from winning the race . Richie Porte said that his performance , especially in the final stage , had given him confidence going into the rest of the season . He said that he had not been sure of his form going into the stage and that it was a good sign for the future , as Paris ? Nice had been very difficult .

= = = UCI World Tour standings = = =

Porte 's third @-@ place finish was his second consecutive podium place in the season @-@ long UCI World Tour competition , following his second @-@ place finish at the Tour Down Under . He moved up into first place overall , while Henao moved up from third to second , with the previous leader , Simon Gerrans (Orica ? GreenEDGE) dropping to third . Thomas moved into fourth and Contador into fifth , with Zakarin and Izagirre also moving into the top ten . Australia remained top of the nations ' ranking , while Sky moved to the top of the teams ' ranking .

= = Classification leadership table = =

In the 2016 Paris ? Nice , three jerseys were awarded . The general classification was calculated by adding each cyclist 's finishing times on each stage . Time bonuses were awarded to the first three finishers on road stages (Stages 1 ? 7) : the stage winner won a ten @-@ second bonus , with six and four seconds for the second and third riders respectively . Bonus seconds were also awarded to the first three riders at intermediate sprints (three seconds for the winner of the sprint , two seconds for the rider in second and one second for the rider in third) . The leader of the general classification received a yellow jersey .

The second classification was the points classification . Riders were awarded points for finishing in the top ten in a stage . Unlike in the points classification in the Tour de France , the winners of all stages were awarded the same number of points . Points were also won in intermediate sprints ; three points for crossing the sprint line first , two points for second place , and one for third . The leader of the points classification was awarded a green jersey .

There was also a mountains classification , in which points were awarded for reaching the top of a climb before other riders . Each climb was categorised as either first , second , or third @-@ category , with more points available for the more difficult , higher @-@ categorised climbs . For first @-@ category climbs , the top seven riders earned points ; on second @-@ category climbs , five riders won points ; on third @-@ category climbs , only the top three riders earned points . The leadership of the mountains classification was marked by a white jersey with red polka @-@ dots .

There was also a classification for teams , in which the times of the best three cyclists in a team on each stage were added together ; the leading team at the end of the race was the team with the lowest cumulative time .