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LaBerge claims first stage of 2010 Tour de l'Abitibi

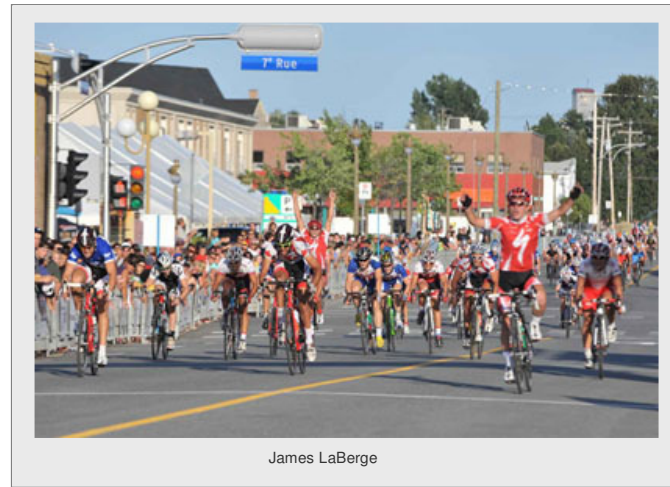
Val-d'Or, Quebec, Can. (July 20, 2010) — James LaBerge (Napa, Calif./Team Specialized Junior Development) won the first stage of the Tour de l'Abitibi, a seven-stage, six-day race covering 585.8 kilometers in the Canadian province of Quebec.

The stage ended with a sprint to the finish, where Laberge edged out Jean-Samuel Deshaies of Team Canada and Philippe Nadon from Team Quebec. The 17-year-old LaBerge also won the best young rider jersey (blue) and the sprinter's jersey (brown). He will wear the overall leader's orange jersey in Wednesday's stage 2 from Amos to Val-d'Or.

The start of Tuesday's stage, a 96-kilometer route from Preissac to Val-d'Or, was marred with crashes on a course that made it very difficult to regain contact with the peloton because of the many short, steep hills in the first 20 km. The riders eventually settled in once they hit the main Canadian highway, where they rode a clean race the rest of the way into Val-d'Or.

LaBerge credits his teammates for attacking early in the race and setting up a breakaway at midpoint. This allowed him to ride on the wheels of the teams chasing down the break and be in good position for the intermediate sprints. The time bonuses earned for the sprints helped set the stage for a week that will surely see the other teams chasing Team Specialized.

Of the 26 teams competing in the Tour de l'Abitibi, 14 are from the United States — including the USA Cycling Development Program — while the host nation of Canada is fielding eight teams. The USA Cycling Development Program The event is the final stop in the UCI's Coupe des Nations Junior series before the Junior Road and Time Trial World Championships in August.



James LaBerge

Racing continues through Sunday, July 25 with a tough road race on Wednesday, an individual time trial and 52-km road race on Thursday, a long road stage on Friday, an urban circuit race on Saturday and a final road stage on Sunday. The ITT on Thursday is the signature event, with the start beginning in the bottom of the old gold mine in Val-d'Or.

Watch a post-race interview with James LaBerge

James LaBerge, Winner of Stage 1 of the 2010 Tour de L'.
by USACyclingOrg

0:49 / 1:26 360p

Tour de l'Abitibi
Province of Quebec, Canada
July 20-25, 2010

Stage 1: Preissac to Val-d'Or

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For more results, visit www.tourabitibi.qc.ca

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USA Cycling is a family of organizations that promote and govern different disciplines of the sport, and that work as one to build the sport of bicycle racing, assist with athlete development and sustain international competitive excellence.



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