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### **THRILLING BATTLE OF THE BIKES PLANNED FOR CHESTER**

Chester's historic city centre will be riding high when the country's best cyclists descend for a leg of a cross-England competition – The Tour Series. On the evening of Tuesday 23 June Chester's residents and visitors will be able to enjoy top-level cycling on their doorstep.

Excitement will build towards the main race event from mid-afternoon on 23 June, with a festival atmosphere and events such as a *Cycle through the Ages* parade.

Local celebrities are also getting behind the event. Radio 2 DJ, Mark Radcliffe, lives in the borough and, as a champion of the Northwest, is delighted to see such a high-profile activity in the area.

He said: "Bringing big and prestigious events like the Tour Series to West Cheshire really raises the profile of the area, particularly as its wonderful countryside is so perfect for getting out and about on a bike.

"I'm sure watching such a thrilling race will inspire everyone to think about cycling more often – whether it's just for fun and exercise, or as a cheaper and greener way of getting around."

The Tour Series consists of fast and furious cycling races taking place in ten cities or town centres across the country. Chester is the penultimate venue for the biking battle.

The race events pit ten British squads with five riders in each team against each other, all wrestling for that prized leader's jersey.

Cllr Neil Ritchie, Portfolio Holder for Environment, said: "I'm delighted that Cheshire West and Chester Council has been able to bring such a fabulous and high-profile event to the borough.

"It's extremely timely with the launch of the city's new Cycling Demonstration Town status and reflects the new Council's commitment to investing in cultural opportunities for local people and visitors. I'm looking forward to the event and it's sure to be an exciting evening for everyone."

"We are extremely pleased to have Chester as part of The Tour Series, especially as it is one of 17 towns in the UK that has Cycling Demonstration Town status," said Mick Bennett, Technical Director for The Tour Series.

"By bringing residents, local businesses and cycle sport together, Chester will help celebrate the best of British cycle racing as well as promote a healthier way of living."

The prestigious Tour Series events have attracted the attention of TV executives, and ITV4 are dedicating a series of hour-long highlights programmes to be broadcasted the day after each event from 7-8pm.

With its new status as a Cycling Demonstration Town, historic Chester is an ideal pit stop on this year's Tour Series circuit.

In April 2009, Chester launched its Cycling Demonstration Town status – part of a £2.4 million initiative to improve Chester's cycling infrastructure. It's one of just 17 demonstration towns nationwide and the investment will see cycling become a real transport option, improve the local environment, reduce city centre congestion and promote health and fitness.

Please visit the Tour Series website at [www.tourseries.co.uk](http://www.tourseries.co.uk) for details of the route to find out more about the events.

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