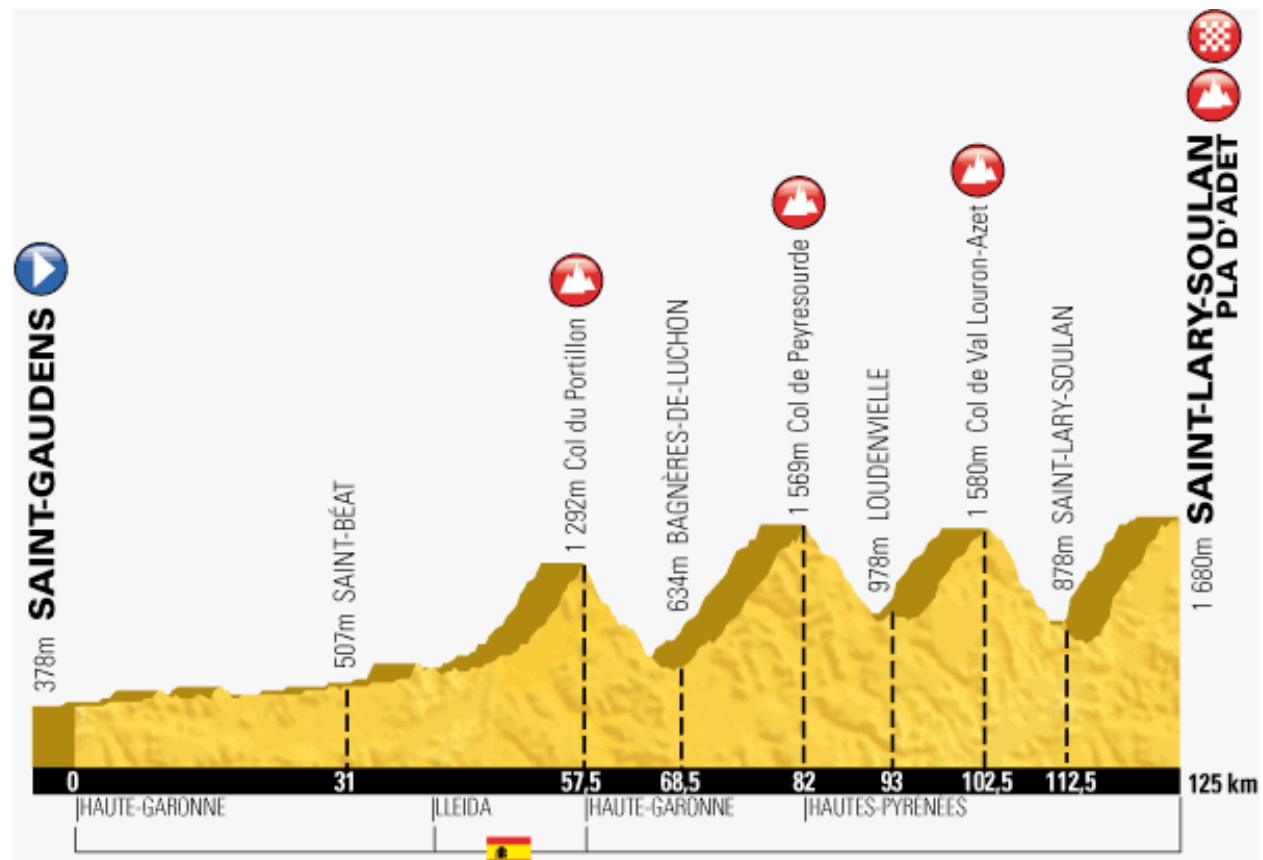


Created by **Robert Baldi**
 Training Type: **Race Simulation, Climbing**
 Working HR Zones: **Zone 2 to Zone 5c**
 Total Class Length: **approx 60 minutes**

Stage 17: Saint-Gaudens to Saint-Lary-Soulan Pla d'Adet

Profile Description

Whatever time gaps exist between the GC contenders from the Alps, they can and probably will be unravelled in the next few days in the Pyrénées. After the Tour's second rest day in Carcassonne and a relatively straightforward stage to Luchon, riders will be looking to attack each other on this stage and, on the following day, on the stage over the Tourmalet to the infamous Hautacam. The Tour won't be won today, but it could be lost if a rider is unable to follow the attacks on the mountains. As a GC contender, today is the day for weeding out those with tired legs and narrowing down the race for the *maillot jaune* to just one or two rivals, before the showdown on the Hautacam.



Objective and Intensity

After a long flat road at Zone 2, the road rises up slightly and it starts to bring our heart rates with it. The first climb is to be attempted in a steady Zone 3, with a little attack in Zone 4 to test the legs; the subsequent climbs are all in Zone 4, with the attacks taking our efforts above threshold briefly to Zone 5a. The road through Loudenvielle can be taken either at Zone 2 or 3, depending on how riders are feeling after the initial two climbs.

Saint Gaudens: Introduction and Warm-up Deep Space, John Stanford, 7:56

Set the scene and introduce the ride and how they should control their intensity on the climbs.

Today, we're GC contenders and we're looking to distance ourselves from most of our opponents by setting a challenging tempo up the climbs while attacking at opportune moments to rip the peloton apart.

We are riding from one "Saint" town to another, and through another "Saint" along the way. The Pyrénées are known for their pilgrimages over the past millennia, but pray as hard as you might, the "Saints" can't help you on this stage...it's going to be all up to you! They may be cheering you on from the side of the road, however!

Remind riders that whenever an attack is made mid-climb, it should be only to Zone 4/5a, as there will be no recovery and intensity will return only back to Zone 3/4. When an attack is to the summit of a climb, it can go to Zone 5b, as there will be recovery on the descents. Zone 5c should be reserved for the final attack to the finish line. Riders should be reminded to keep control of their effort when climbing, establish a solid baseline that they can maintain for the climbs, and, when attacking, it's only a 10% additional effort (unless it's to the summit).

Saint Béat: The Road Rises Up Shake Ur Body (Radio Edit), Shy FX & T Power feat. Di, 3:19

Invite your riders to increase their resistance so that they feel the rising slope of the upcoming climb. This is just the road heading gradually upwards towards the kick up in gradient that defines the official start of the climb.

You should be on the edge of your comfort zone. Imagine that the peloton is strung out in a long line like an elastic band, ready to be snapped.

Col du Portillon Everyday, Agnelli & Nelson, 8:13

The first climb should be taken at a slightly uncomfortable pace, Zone 3, as this will be enough to lose half the peloton—the sprinters and the heavier riders will not be able to keep up with the pace and will resign themselves to riding in the *autobus*, a group at the back whose sole purpose

is to make sure they finish within the elimination time. If they don't, the organisers will be unlikely to disqualify a large group of riders, so there's safety in numbers!

You will lose many riders from this lead group just by climbing at a decent tempo. However, there may be several riders who are hanging on by a thread; so, before we get to the summit, we want to cut that thread by making a subtle attack. Nothing explosive, just a 10% rise in pace that will break their spirits and lose yet more riders before we go over the top.

There are two ways of doing this: either keep the same gear (resistance) and apply more pressure to the pedals as you slightly increase cadence, or change it up a gear by increasing resistance while maintaining cadence.

On my version of this track, a good time to make this “power play” is 3:29 to 4:38—but don't forget that there's no recovery afterwards; we merely return to our strong climbing tempo. Having made the first cut, continue climbing without incident to the summit.

Descent / Recovery

Fallin' High (Ambient Remix), Safri Duo, 3:01

The peloton has been whittled down after only the first climb. It might not be as sexy, but this stage is just as crucial to winning the Tour—so much so that key members of the Sky Team were riding this stage for reconnaissance only one day after the conclusion of the Criterium de Dauphine, a tough one-week race that is the precursor to the Tour de France. Much will happen on this stage and it could be decisive in its own right.

Col de Peyresourde

Lawrence of Arabia (Original Mix), Kleopatra, 7:56

This climb is, in real life, actually not that hard; but in bike racing, even the easiest climb can be brutal if raced hard enough! So, let's take this climb at a higher intensity, Zone 4, because the remaining riders in the peloton were able to handle Zone 3 quite easily and were able to stay with you when you made that power play on the first climb. This group will need a stronger effort to put them on the ropes before you can deliver a few knockout blows before the summit.

Your attack should be at or only just above threshold—go too far into the red and you'll burn out before the summit or you won't recover in time. Again, get rid of a few more riders by making an attack before the summit (between 3:04 and 4:01 on my version of this track).

Before we get over the top, it's time to rip the group apart by putting your foot down...hard!

At 5:19, dare them to keep up with you as the pressure increases—you can afford to go hard, as there'll be a “proper” recovery waiting for you at 6:45. I like to end the track at 7:15, before the beat kicks in again, or mix it into the recovery track.

Descent / Recovery**Feel the Sun Rise, Banyan Tree, 2:10**

This, together with the last 30 seconds of the previous track, should give you just under 3 minutes of recovery.

This time, we're on the valley floor and we don't want to take it too easily, lest those riders we left strewn on the mountainside catch us up again before the next climb.

Fast Track Through Loudenvielle**Gone Ridin', Chris Isaak, 2:39**

Fast flat road—a change of pace that may be quite challenging as you've gotten used to using your climbing legs. This should be a Zone 3 effort, to prevent dropped riders latching on to you again. This is also to stop your challengers from recovering too much!

Col de Val Louron-Azet**Subminimal, Sonic Cube, 8:01**

Ring the bell for Round 3; it's time for the heavyweights. The only riders with you are those that managed to keep up with your pace over the Peyresourde, but some will be weaker than others, especially after you kept pushing them on the road through Loudenvielle. So, it's another Zone 4 effort to soften them up before delivering three body blows before the summit. Some of the GC contenders can be dropped on this climb; it's up to you to crush their hopes of a podium finish!

Coordinate your attacks with the rhythm of the music. The better climbers will attack on the steeper parts of a climb, so on this track your first attack is between 3:26 and 4:01. However, we're not going to pause for long before launching another attack between 4:29 and 5:26: a combination punch!

Sometimes, it's not the intensity or speed of an attack that is decisive but the rapidity of successive blows.

(from 6:09 to 7:35) The last attack should have weeded out all but the most competent climbers—but we don't want the rest to recover, so we're going to push hard all the way to the summit

Use the last 30 seconds of this track as the beginning of the descent and recovery.

Descent / Recovery**Arizona, Chicane, 3:01**

The group should now consist only of the best climbers and the main GC contenders. Again, you might not win the Tour on this stage but you will reduce the number of riders that you'll need to watch on the next day's stage to Hautacam.

Saint Lary-Soulan / Pla d'Adet
Suburban Train, Tiesto, 8:24

Here we go, time to make the selection: who's got the legs to get on this fast-moving train? Get your trusty lieutenant to set the highest pace you can sustain for 8 minutes (probably Zone 4) that will prevent attacks from any of the other riders. Everyone is tired, nobody wants to work hard, and this is exactly when champions make their mark.

Make your mid-climb attack between 4:08 and 5:03:

This should shake off everyone except for the Heads of State, the cream of the crop, the ones who will make up the top end of the GC.

After that, build up for the final attack:

We are building for our final attack...there won't be any holding back. Although you may only gain a handful of seconds over your rivals, you want to win the stage.

So, for the final 90 seconds of the track, launch a solo attack:

Launch! Use whatever you have left in the tank, take no prisoners: if you can last longer than those 90 seconds, you lose an opportunity to win the stage and put some time into your rivals because you didn't give it your all.

As the song ends:

This tactic of shock-and-awe should give your rivals food for thought—in other words, they may not attack you the next day if they see how strong you are! Many of the best riders have used this tactic to prevent attacks, convincing the others that it would be a wasted effort even trying to attack, thereby winning without fighting another battle.

Cool-down and Stretch
Antarctic Echoes, Vangelis, 5:58

A job well done! You've won the stage and you've gained some time over your rivals. Not enough to win outright, but now you know on whom you should keep an eye: there will probably be only one rival for the Tour and it'll come down to what happens on the Hautacam and in the final individual time trial to determine the final victor.

Playlist

Song Title	Time	Artist	Album	Source
Deep Space	8:08	John Stanford	Deep Space	iTunes
Shake Ur Body (Radio Edit)	3:20	Shy FX & T Power feat. Di	Shake Ur Body EP	iTunes
Everyday (Lange Vocal Mix)	8:13	Agnelli & Nelson		Beatport
Fallin' High	3:01	Safri Duo	MultiTrax Indoor Cycling 08 – CD 1 – Tribal Revolution	CD only
Lawrence of Arabia (Original Mix)	7:56	Kleopatra	Nile EP	Beatport.com
Feel the Sun Rise	2:10	Banyan Tree	In Search of Sunrise	iTunes
Gone Ridin'	2:39	Chris Isaak	Silvertone	iTunes
Subminimal	8:01	Sonic Cube	Trancers' Guide to the Galaxy, Vol.2	iTunes
Arizona	3:03	Chicane	Somersault	iTunes
Suburban Train	8:24	Tiesto	Suburban Train EP	iTunes has the longer 10:27 version
Antarctic Echoes	5:58	Vangelis	Antarctica	iTunes