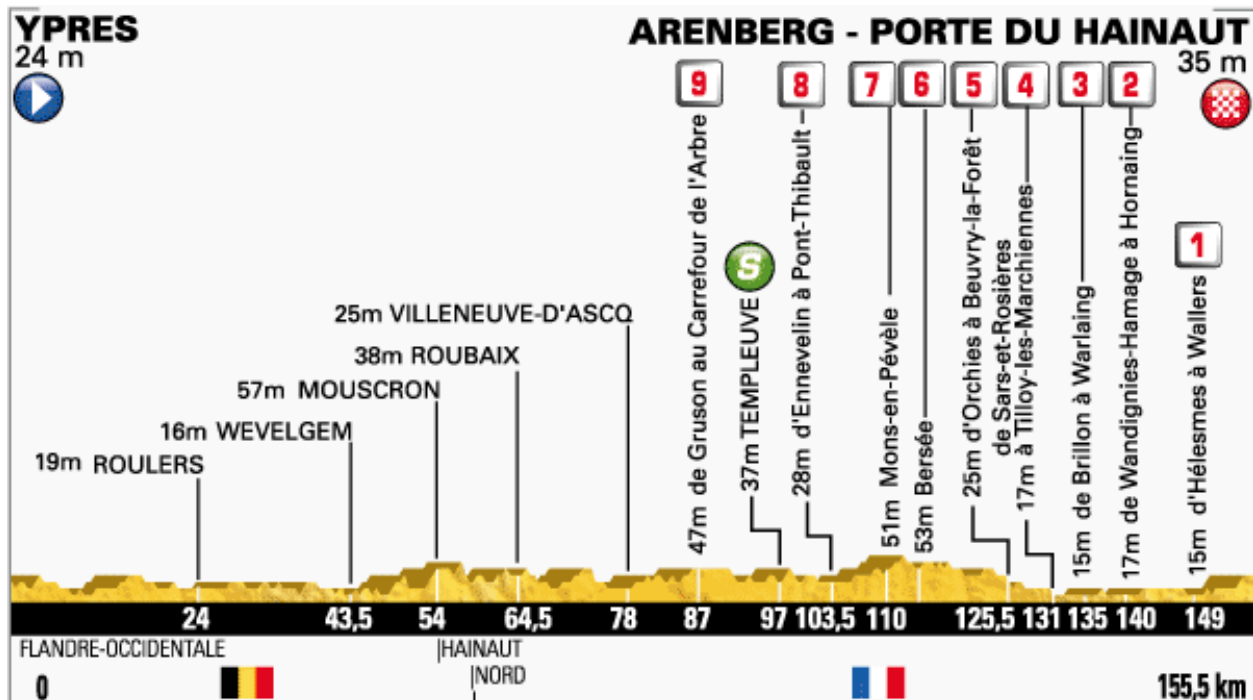


Created by Jennifer Sage
 Training Type: Race Simulation
 Working HR Zones: Zone 3 to 5c
 Total Class Length: 60 minutes

Profile Overview



The start in Ypres is particularly poignant, as it marks the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War.

From the Tour de France website:

“A stage riddled with dangers”

The time has come for the famous stage and its nine cobbled sectors, which promise, dare I say it, a "battlefield". It all starts in Ypres, Belgium, a city notorious for the gas attacks launched in it. It would have been unacceptable for the Tour not to commemorate the Centenary of the start of World War I in its own way... However, we will focus on the race, which promises to be a spectacular showdown. I do not expect Froome to thrive on the cobblestones but, who knows, he may want to prove us wrong... For him and many others, this is a stage riddled with dangers. The cobblestones will be a hinge moment in the race.

A Little World War I History and the Origin of “Wipers”

It is fitting that the Tour de France honors the centennial of the First World War in this pivotal town. Ypres (pronounced “ee-pre”) is a village in northwest Belgium that was instrumental during WWI because it sat on the trade routes to the northern sea. On October 19, 1914, the first of several decisive battles took place, and for the next four years, this area saw some of the war’s most bitter and brutal struggles. In 1915, the Germans first employed chlorine gas at Ypres.



British forces occupied the town from October 1914 until the end of the war in 1918, keeping it out of German hands with the help of the Canadians, the Australians, the French, and the Irish. The town was almost completely destroyed.

British troops could not pronounce Ypres, so they called it “Wipers.” An interesting story arose out of the brutality of those years. British soldiers came across a printing press, and a sergeant who had been a printer before the war, along with his mates, began printing a “trench magazine” during the course of the war that they called *The Wipers Times*. The paper, written in a humorously ironic style, consisted of poems, reflections, wry jokes, and lampoons of the military situation they found themselves in. It even had mock advertisements. It proved a huge success with the troops on the Western Front. A 2013 made-for-TV movie called *The Wipers Times* portrays the events. (Google it to find out more about the movie.)

Profile Objective and Intensity

Starting in Ypres, the race heads back across the border into France and takes the riders over the dreaded cobblestones that make the Paris–Roubaix Classic so special. Your riders will treat the flat cobblestone sectors more like climbs. Typically riders shift to a higher gear and slow the legs down (70–85 rpm) so they have more control on these rough segments of road. The *pavé* sectors should be done at about threshold intensity. There are 11.5 minutes of *pavé* in this profile.

There is also an intermediate sprint in between the first and second *pavé* sectors. These intermediate sprints are not usually contested as hard as the final sprint, but you can still push your class to a brief explosive effort. In the real world, how hard they sprint depends on if the leading riders at that point actually care about green jersey points or not!

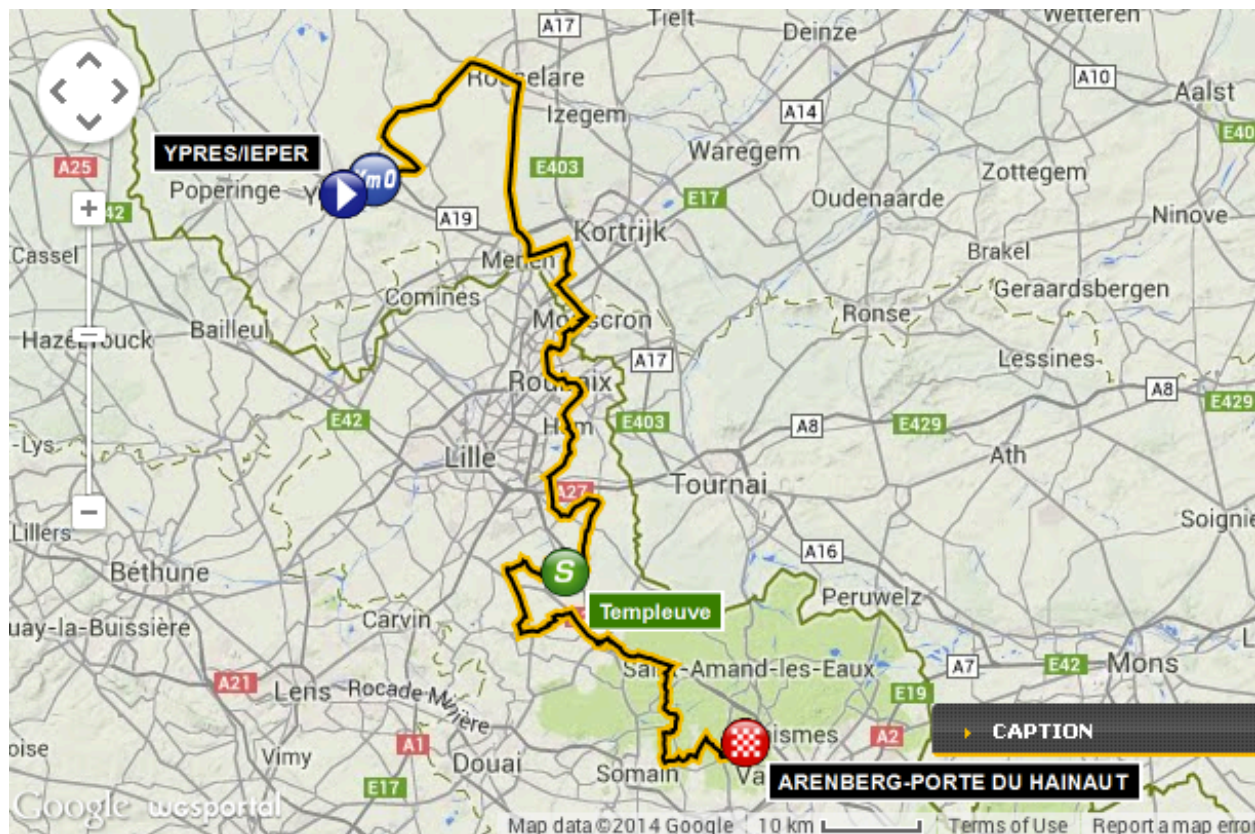
You can coach this profile as hard as you want, but if you have less fit students, make sure to provide alternatives. There isn’t a lot of recovery in between the cobbled segments (the second half of the profile), so as you push your riders, make sure to look around and see how everyone is doing. Encourage them to ease up in between the *pavé* sectors if needed. If everyone is up for it, you can hover just below and up to threshold for almost the entire second half, with the brief explosive intermediate sprint and the final anaerobic push to the finish. Whenever you have a chance to recover, it’s probably wise to take it, even if only briefly, or only down to Zone 3.

That would be an extremely hard, but very satisfying ride! Make sure to encourage recovery the next day.

What are the challenges for the Tour de France riders?

This is a relatively short stage and there are no serious climbs on the route (though there are short rolling hills), but it could have more effect on the overall picture than the toughest mountain stages. The riders will be nervous and it is sadly inevitable that the Tour will lose one or more of its favorites from contention, if not from the race altogether, today. There are nine sections of cobbled roads in the final 69 km. The first section is the Gruson part of the famous Carrefour de l'Arbre, which is so often decisive during Paris–Roubaix. The longest section is the 3.7 km Wandignies-Hamage à Hornaing, the penultimate stretch. There are just 5 km to race after the final section at Hélesmes à Wallers. In total, the *pavé* roads add up to more than 15 km.

In the route map below, the nine *pavé* sectors start just before the green “S” (the intermediary sprint) and are sprinkled through until the finish.



Warm-Up / Start of the Race

La Jument de Michao, Breizh, Tour de France en Muzique, 110 bpm, 3:40

The Return to the Dark Ages, Lugburz, 105 bpm, 4:45

Introduce the profile. The first song is peppier, and has a traditional, almost military air to it. You may choose to use this song as a pre-class song. The second song is dark and depressing to accompany your description of the local history of WWI, the nickname of Paris–Roubaix as the “Hell of the North,” and the battle that will take place on these feared cobbled roads. It’s almost as if the song is foreshadowing events ahead of the peloton. You can embellish your introduction with as much or as little of the World War I history that I’ve outlined in the preview for this ride.

We start in the town of Ypres, which was instrumental during World War I. The British troops had a hard time pronouncing Ypres, so they just called it “Wipers.” They were stationed there for the full four years of the war, keeping the Germans away from the highly coveted access to the English Channel via this important trade route. Many hundreds of thousands died in numerous battles that took place near “Wipers.”

There is a battle about to play out on this route. This Stage 5 will likely see intense competition. It may look relatively flat, but looks can be deceiving. There are many short rolling hills, but the worst part about this stage is that there are more than 15 km of cobblestones—known as pavé—which will test the riders during the final two hours of racing (for us, that’s the final 30 minutes). The route primarily uses sections of Paris–Roubaix, the bicycle race during the Spring Classics known as the “Hell of the North.” These nine cobbled sectors will favor powerful Classics riders like Fabian Cancellara and Thor Hushovd. Thor was the last rider to win a Tour stage featuring pavé.

This could be the most unpredictable and dangerous stage of the whole Tour. The climbers, such as Chris Froome, Alberto Contador, and Vincenzo Nibali, will have checked out the cobblestone segments in training, but come race day they will realize how little that has prepared them for the experience. They will have to rely on more experienced teammates to keep them out of trouble and steer a clear path for them over the pavé. There are bound to be crashes and punctures and the bunch will split up under pressure. It will be a case of surviving and limiting any time losses.

Why did they call the Paris–Roubaix the “Hell of the North”? Not because it’s a hellish racecourse (which it is), but because after World War I, organizers wanted to bring the race back, so a team was sent out on the race route to Roubaix to see how it fared during the war. As they got farther north of France and into Belgium, the landscape was devastated, and there was the smell of death and sewage in the air. The only way they could describe it was “hell,” and the next day in the papers the story broke that that little team had seen the “hell of the north.”

We are doing a segment of the Paris–Roubaix in reverse. Expect this to be the most nervous day of the race for the Tour’s overall contenders, especially those on teams without hardened veterans of the cobbles.

Rolling Hills

Tandem, Vanessa Paradis, 86 bpm, 3:28

There will be a couple of rollers ahead of us; try to keep your cadence in the mid-80s and your intensity up to Zone 3.

We are heading into a section of rolling hills, though fortunately they are not very steep. We are aiming for the town of “Roulers,” pronounced “roo-lay,” but we’re going to call it “Rollers”! Let’s try to maintain a strong cadence in the mid-80s.

Later, when we hit the pavé, we’ll need to ride in a bigger gear. On those narrow, cobbled roads, it’s going to be important to be up near the front of the peloton, because if you get caught behind a crash, it could cost you anywhere from 3 to 10 minutes or more...and that’s IF you do not crash yourself. So, over the next half of this race, keep the effort up at the top of Zone 3, into Zone 4 here and there. Use your intensity wisely, as there will be times when you will be pushing at or above your threshold and you’ll need to preserve some of your “matches.”

Just know, you won’t be the only one wanting to get to the front...there are 198 riders with the same idea! Ah, but it’s not possible for everyone to be at the front, is it? It’s going to take some tactical skill.

Push your riders out of the saddle at :45 for a short climb, and again at 1:52.

The weather in Belgium can be dark and dreary in April during the Paris–Roubaix, but even today, in July, the sun has decided not to hang around much and the sky is a steely gray. Maybe the sun doesn’t want to see the mayhem on these cobbled sections of road in Belgium and Northern France!

One thing we do know is that if the journal The Wipers Times was still in production, they would be out here covering the race for sure!

Fast Flat

Je Suis, Zebda, 94 bpm, 4:44

This is a fast flat segment.

You’ve brought your team to the front of the peloton along with a few other teams. There is one breakaway out ahead, but they are not riders that anyone is worried about, so the collective mind of the peloton has decided not to chase them down. Instead, we’re going to let the beast of the cobbles chew them up and spit them out.

On this section of road, it’s a good time to flush the legs out, not becoming complacent, of course, but spinning the legs at 94 rpm. We will do a bit of a paceline here.

Coach your riders through a paceline, dividing the class into 3 groups and rotating every 20–30 seconds to keep them moving. When they are at the “front” they can stand for a quick 5 seconds, but then sit down and push for the rest of the 15–25 seconds. This should go quickly. Remind

them that with this effort, they are guaranteeing their position near the front, so they will reach the cobbles before the masses.

More Rollers

Unknown Civilizations, Chronos & C.J. Catalizer, 85 bpm, 6:19

This song has very subtle energy changes; you'll have to see how you interpret it to define your short rolling hills. You can simply stand up every 45–60 seconds for about 30–45 seconds, then sit back down and "recover" downhill through the whole song, or do something similar to what I have written below, based on the song's subtle rhythm.

At the start of the song, add some resistance for a gradual uphill.

:45 Add more resistance

1:11 Stand up and increase effort slightly (don't attack). After 15–20 seconds sit back down for another 30 seconds to the top

1:59 Downhill, let the legs spin

2:10 Reach the bottom, start engaging a little more

2:21 Back uphill; grab the beat and engage; the final 5–8 seconds, stand and summit

3:00 Back downhill, ease up

3:27 Back at the bottom, add more resistance. Gradually add more and stand for final 15 seconds to top

4:35 Back downhill, ease up

5:10 Back at the bottom, engage a little more

5:22 Back uphill

5:44 Add a gear and stand up (song backs off here) to the top

There is a slight drizzle as you roll up and down these hills. It keeps you from going as fast as you might otherwise on the descents.

Every roller, every pedal stroke brings us closer to those cobblestones. The mind of every single rider in this peloton is preoccupied with those thoughts, especially with visions of mud splashing on the faces of the riders, and tires slipping out from underneath the bikes.

The Impending Pavé

Lose Yourself, Eminem, 171 bpm, 5:21

This song has a lot of meaning at this point in the race. As soon as the song starts, tell them:

Look, I know you are afraid of the cobbles ahead, especially if they are muddy. They have taken up too much space in your head. But you know what? You've got only one shot, one opportunity to seize everything you've ever wanted. Listen up here!

Then let Eminem speak for a while (he starts speaking at 30 seconds into the song). Have them drive their legs at the rhythm of the song, 85 rpm, at an intensity of high Zone 3, with a few surges to Zone 4.

This is reality! This race is about to get real, really fast. The first cobbles are a few miles ahead. You practiced all spring on these roads, or similar cobbles. But unlike this song, we won't give up to gravity! We plan to keep the rubber down over those pavé!

You're going to move toward a new world order...or at least, a new order of the peloton! I want you to keep yourself focused here.

You better lose yourself in the music, in the moment, you want it, you better never let it go! You've only got one shot, don't miss your chance!

Use the powerful words of this song to get their minds ready for the challenge ahead. Remind them that their fellow riders will be nervous on the cobbles, so their focused mind will help them get through it.

Go ahead and stand up for short periods during the first 3 minutes of this song. Two minutes before the end of the song, remind them how to ride the approaching pavé.

These pavé sectors will put mind, body, and bike to the test. When you are on the pavé sectors, remember, it's important to stay seated. Use the power of your mind to visualize yourself on the dangerous road. Imagine the jostling amongst the riders, picture the people on the sidelines, feel the mud and dirt splashing on your face. Turn up your resistance to simulate a bigger gear, and stay seated; drive from your heart and soul. It's not a sprint, it's not above threshold, but it's a concerted effort, slightly higher than the paved road in between. We can stand up in between the cobbles if needed.

There are 9 sections of pavé, and each will be anywhere from 1 to just over 2 minutes. It will be like intervals with minimum recovery in between. Are you ready?

Your coach told you to try to hit the pavé near the front of the peloton to avoid the potential for crashes. Imagine that you are close to the front, but there are still riders ahead of you.

Today the weather does not disappoint. At least, it does not disappoint the fans who come from all over the world, and their day is made even more exciting when there are crashes. The riders? They are not happy that the gray clouds have continued to build and build and the wind has started to blow.

First Cobbles, 2:00 of Pavé

Lacrimosa Dominae, Trailerhead, 148 rpm, 2:29

We have arrived at the first stretch of cobbles, which start at :27 into the song. You can be very dramatic here, because the music is extremely dramatic! Let the song start without saying anything (during the powerful symphonic intro), then at :24 into the song, when there is a very brief pause, look out at your students and say loudly, "Guess what?"

Then at :27, when the music hits with a bang, give it a few seconds and say even louder, "We're there!"

Grab that beat. Imagine you are in a small group of riders near the front, the peloton stretching out behind you like a long piece of Silly Putty being pulled from both ends.

The road is only 4 bike lengths wide, with people lining most of this stretch. There will be no standing up here; it’s full-on focus time! The cobbles are slick and muddy, so don’t try anything silly like an attack—we need to keep the rubber down.

Hold it through the end of the short song.

Intermediate Sprint to Cobbles #2, 1:00 of *Pavé* Sundial, Wolfmother, 87 bpm, 3:48

Can you believe there is an intermediate sprint thrown in this mix? It’s coming up in a minute and a half, so start preparing yourself mentally for it. Immediately after the sprint we will enter the second stretch of cobbles, although it will be a short one. It’s totally optional of course to contest the sprint, but since you are near the front, why not grab a few green jersey points for yourself?

At first, ease up the intensity to low to mid-Zone 3, and get them ready to sprint at 1:30. It’s only going to be a 10-second explosive push. There is no need to sprint at maximum effort; save that for the finish line. From the beginning, have them gradually add little bits of resistance, then at 1:29 explode out of the saddle for that short explosive effort (you’ll go with the guitars and his trailing voice). Sit back down and recover slightly at 1:40.

Can you ease up and reduce your heart rate quickly? We’ve got a section of cobbles just ahead now. Wrap your minds around that necessary focus you’re going to need. There isn’t much time for recovery here and there’s certainly no time for distractions.

At 2:24 the cobbles begin, with the electric guitar. Turn up the resistance, and hold cadence in the saddle for 1 minute (until 3:22), then ease up until the end of the song.

It’s Getting Dangerous—Cobbles #3, 1:00 of *Pavé* Dangerous, DecembeRadio, 86 bpm, 4:08

There is barely time to recover before the next challenge. The name of this song is “Dangerous”...let it serve as a warning to you...it’s telling you the road ahead is dangerous. To make matters worse, the clouds have opened up and rain is falling steadily—your face is already covered with mud. You’ve got about 2 minutes before the pavé starts, then it’s going to last about a minute.

First, we’ve got a short climb.

Stand up at :50 (when he sings “I’m going over the edge now”) and climb until 1:27, then sit down, reduce the resistance, and get ready for the next challenge. (Let your riders determine their own climbing cadence, since the song is a bit faster than a typical climb.)

At 2:02, the *pavé* starts (when he sings “I want to be dangerous”); have them add a gear so it feels like a moderate hill, and drive the legs at 86 rpm. Hold for just over a minute. This will feel really challenging. You can use the lyrics to guide your cueing during this minute-long effort:

*“My mind is made up and I’m ready
I’m going over the edge!
I’m stepping out on the wire!”*

Then for the final minute, ease up—they’re going to need the recovery. You can stand up for a saddle break if needed, but don’t attack.

Climb to Cobbles #4 and #5, 1:00 and 1:20 of *Pavé*

Fearless, VNV Nation, 70 bpm, 6:16

Start out of the saddle on a climb right away. Sit down after 30 seconds and get ready.

At :55 the *pavé* starts, and it ends at 1:50. Ease up just a little when it’s over.

The next *pavé* sector starts at 4:40, so you’ve got a little time (almost 3 minutes) to roll up and down a few short hills.

This song has more great lyrics to help guide your cueing:

*“I am not alone. I am not afraid. I am not unhappy.
These are words I say to myself every day.”*

See? Riders repeat mantras like these to help them get through challenging moments like this. Keep saying to yourself, “I’m not afraid”!

At 4:40, the lyrics scream “*I’m not afraid!*” That’s when you shift up, sit deep in the saddle, set your intention, and drive through the *pavé* until 6:04 as the song trails off.

You can’t be afraid here! There’s no time for that.

Cobbles #6, 1:20 of *Pavé*

Carmen, Stromae, 150 bpm, 3:09

You’ve got almost 2 minutes until the *pavé*, so go ahead and roll over a few short hills out of the saddle, but keep some energy in reserve.

There have been a few crashes behind you on the pavé, but so far you have fared pretty well. You are covered from head to toe with mud; it’s caked to the skin on your face and arms. You had to switch out your sunglasses for another pair in your pocket, but soon those are covered in mud as well. Riding without them is dangerous—if you got mud in your eye it could take you out of the race for good. So you have to resort to constantly wiping, and usually smearing, your glasses. Taking your hands off your handlebars while on the pavé is scary, though, so be careful.

The *pavé* starts at 1:50 and lasts until the end of the song. The song is based on the music of *Carmen*, so you can have some fun with the melody.

Let's hope this is not your last tango in France!

Cobbles #7, 1:10 of *Pavé*
Hell, Foo Fighters, 151 bpm, 1:57
Short recovery here.

The skies have opened up even more than before. Umbrellas of every color line the road; this deluge is not enough to drive away the European fanatics of bicycle racing. But for you, it's nothing more than hell, as the Foo Fighters remind us.

*Who is left at the front of the peloton? A small, hardened group of riders. We've dropped many of the big names who will figure in the other stages of the Tour but who cannot hang with us on these *pavé*. You 'n me? While we may end up in the autobus on the big climbs of the Alps later in the week, here on these bumpy cobblestone roads of Northern France, we have forged our names in the cycling history books! This is where we shine because we have the guts and the legs of steel the others don't.*

Cobbles start at :50 after he says “See you in hell.” Then at 1:29, say loudly:

In front of you a rider goes down, and he takes down the two riders next to him and just behind him. You take evasive action. Stand up and picture yourself weaving carefully through wheels...phew! That was a close one! You stayed upright. Looks like the dream is over for that rider.

Cobbles #8, 2:45 of *Pavé*
Fatum Plebis, Trailerhead, 144 bpm, 3:13
Very, very little recovery here.

Ease up and grab some water quickly. We are approaching the next one very soon.

Pavé starts at :30. Go ahead and ease into it as the song builds, raising intensity to threshold by the end of the song.

This segment is the longest section of cobbles. Put your head down (metaphorically) and drive. Still thankful to have avoided that accident. But the danger is not over yet so stay vigilant.

Cobbles #9 and Sprint Finish, 1:00 of *Pavé*
Darkness on the Edge of Power, Trailerhead, 158 bpm, 3:01

*Take a very brief break, grab water, and get ready for the finale. The *pavé* will start in 30 seconds. Once we get through this final sector of *pavé*, the finish line is just around the corner, so you'll start increasing your intensity little by little if you have any desire to win*

this race. You’ve kept yourself near the front the whole time, carried there by your teammates.

Your choice: you can be the sprinter or you can decide to be the leadout rider. If it’s the latter, start pulling hard now (at 2:15). If you prefer to be a sprinter, you can start building up, but hold some in reserve so you can explode when I say “go.” Imagine yourself propelling like a slingshot past your leadout rider, head to head with a handful of your closest rivals.

(30 seconds before sprint) All cylinders should be firing at full capacity right now; you’re going to need it for that final push. Put yourself into the skin of a winner, and ride the tidal wave to the finish!

(Aaaaaand...sprint!) It’s time to throw the hammer down! Let’s Gooooooooo!

Even though the *pavé* ends after about a minute, there is no time to recover. At 1:37 start describing the buildup to the sprint, with leadout riders pushing above threshold, and sprinters tucked in behind them getting ready to explode. The sprint starts at 2:27 until almost the end—there is a slight reprieve at the end of the song. Have your sprinters stand up and explode (you will have already practiced your sprints in previous classes) and your leadout riders ease up while the sprinters do their thing. They will be just fine with that!

Cool-Down

Dans Mon Café, Vanessa Paradis, 90 bpm, 4:30

Non, Je ne Regrette Rien, Edith Piaf, 2:22

Who won? Shall we vote on the most energetic sprint?

Wow, you’ve made it through the scariest stage of this year’s Tour de France! Now, nothing you encounter will scare you. Carry that memory with you as you face the rest of the stages.

It’s time to recover and celebrate.

Stage 5 Playlist

Section	Music	BPM	Time
Warm-Up / Start of the Race	La Jument de Michao Breizh	110	3:40
	The Return to the Dark Ages, Lugburz	105	4:45
Rolling Hills	Tandem Vanessa Paradis	86	3:28
Fast Flat	Je Suis Zebda	94	4:44
More Rollers	Unknown Civilizations Chronos & C.J. Catalizer	85	6:19
The Impending <i>Pavé</i>	Lose Yourself Eminem	171	5:21
First Cobbles, 2:00 of <i>Pavé</i>	Lacrimosa Dominae The Immediate	148	2:29
Intermediate Sprint to Cobbles #2, 1:00 of <i>Pavé</i>	Sundial Wolfmother	87	3:48
It's Getting Dangerous—Cobbles #3, 1:00 of <i>Pavé</i>	Dangerous DecembeRadio	86	4:08
Climb to Cobbles #4 and #5, 1:00 and 1:20 of <i>Pavé</i>	Fearless VNV Nation	70	6:16
Cobbles #6, 1:10 of <i>Pavé</i>	Carmen Stromae	70	6:16
Cobbles #7, 1:10 of <i>Pavé</i>	Hell Foo Fighters	151	3:09
Cobbles #8, 2:45 of <i>Pavé</i>	Fatum Plebis The Immediate	144	3:13
Cobbles #9 and Sprint Finish, 1:00 of <i>Pavé</i>	Darkness on the Edge of Power The The Immediate	158	3:01
Cool-Down / Stretch	Dans Mon Café Vanessa Paradis	90	4:30
	Non, Je ne Regrette Rien Edith Piaf		2:22

Song Sources (Title, Artist, Album)**La Jument de Michao, Breizh, Tour de France en Muzique**

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

The Return to the Dark Ages, Lugburz, Songs From Forgotten Lands

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Tandem, Vanessa Paradis, Best Of

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Je Suis, Zebda, Essence Ordinaire

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Unknown Civilizations, Chronos & C.J. Catalizer, Quid Est Veritas?Purchase directly from Ajana Records. 1€ digital download (and you can get a wonderful Chronos song Spiral Clouds for free). <http://chronoscjatalizer.bandcamp.com/>**Lose Yourself, Eminem, Curtain Call (Edited Version)**

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Lacrimosa Dominae, The Immediate, Trailerhead

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Sundial, Wolfmother, Cosmic Egg

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Dangerous, DecembeRadio, DecembeRadio,

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Fearless, VNV Nation, Futureperfect

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Carmen, Stromae, Racine Carrée

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Hell, Foo Fighters, In Your Honor

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Fatum Plebis, The Immediate, Trailerhead: SAGA

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Darkness on the Edge of Power, The Immediate, Trailerhead: SAGA

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Dans Mon Café, Vanessa Paradis, Best Of

Amazon, eMusic, iTunes

Non, Je ne Regrette Rien, Edith Piaf, Radio Tour de France

Amazon, eMusic