

Stage 2 – 82km

Backing up Saturday afternoon was a true test of will. The temperature had remained around 35 and the northerly had stiffened. Riders were searching for somewhere to hide from the debilitating conditions prior to the start, knowing that stage two was the 'King Stage' of the tour. Two ascents of Zig Zag and a trip up Douglas Road for good measure, this stage would surely test even the contenders.

An early break was given a fair degree of latitude from the peleton, the conditions and difficulty of the parcours suggested that a two man escape was unlikely to succeed even though one of the escapees was Patrick Shaw.

The rest of the peleton decided to take a steady approach to the first climb of Zig Zag. The 2.5km climb was relatively gradual except for a couple of sharp sections which almost demanded riders jump out of their saddles to keep the pedals turning. The break had worked bravely over the climb and had a 50 second gap at the bottom of the fast descent, yet the peleton continued to work in a cautious manner.

Second time up Zig Zag was a slightly different scenario. Pollock was the first to test the waters with a measured burst half way up the climb. All of the GC riders managed to tack on but a number of other riders said their last goodbyes to the peleton due to the change of pace.

Over the top of the second K.O.M. the peleton had dwindled to around 20 riders but the intensity had lifted as the breakaway duo, Shaw and John Mackenzie (Lloyd Morgan) continued to defy the odds. As was the case in stage 1, a smaller group separated off the front of the main pack. Pollock, O'Brien, Bradford and Mitchell Docker (Drapac) set out to reel in Mackenzie and Shaw. They managed to capture the break and scale the final climb up Douglas Road. At 1.5 kilometres the climb was short but looked like a wall as the riders turn left and started pedalling skyward!

The finish of stage 2 was similar to the first stage in that the placings were decided by strength rather than a bunch kick. Bradford proved too strong to take the stage win by 7 seconds from Shaw in second and Docker took third around 16 seconds behind Bradford. 17 DNF's indicated the gruesome nature of the days racing. That number would grow to 23 by the start of the following days stage. This now represented nearly 50% of the field abandoning.