

There is a podcast I listen to, from the Classical Radio Service of Radio Nacional de Espana. The podcast is of a daily radio broadcast of a show called *Grandes Ciclos* (great cycles). *Grandes Ciclos* attempts to play most or at least many works of a particular composer. Over the ten years I have lived here, I have listened to composers, known and unknown, and heard their music, known and unknown. Piano has never been my favorite instrument, so it was with a bit of trepidation, several Summers ago, that I tuned into the Liszt podcasts. The Liszt cycle ran from sometime in June until sometime in September, a daily hour and a half for the entirety of the Summer months. By the end, I had come to understand and appreciate a bit more, old Franz, and his music and pianos. I have to admit that the vocal pieces of Robert Schumann, last year, almost did me in, but I survived. Occasionally the show features a conductor, Herbert Von Karajan last month, or an instrumentalist, Fritz Kreisler (a great violinist, friend and convert of Fulton J. Sheen) last Winter, and these are nice breaks, palate cleansers if you will, with a variety of music.

When I was on vacation a few weeks ago, I noticed that madrigals had started their cycle, in this case, the *8 Books of Madrigals* from Claudio Monteverdi. Remembering the Schumann adventure, but fortified by the fact, which I normally lament, that the show is now only an hour long, I decided not to mark these shows as “played” on my iPod, essentially deleting them without a hearing, but instead to plow through them. I have been doing that this last week, letting them play through in the background, not pausing them when I am leaving the office for a bit, but letting them continue. Of the 17 hours of programming, I had when I returned, I am now down to 5 pending hours... I do have to listen to other things too, don't you know? I am sure I will finish the experience with a new appreciation for Monteverdi, although I will always have a strong preference to motets over madrigals.

I think of this type of thing, sometimes, when I am planning an essay for the Tour de France, or the Giro, or the Vuelta. I am reading about a lot of

insignificant places, so that I may digest that information into an interesting format for those who read. Do I really care, though, about the palaces of Troyes, or whatever or wherever the heck is “Sur le Gyps” (from today's stage). On the other hand, do I really care about many of the riders, or the equipment?

Just like in other pursuits in life, in some ways I do, in others, it is more the long game, getting the complete picture, preparing for life. Over the years I have learned a lot about individual riders, even the non stars, about teams, about equipment. While I might lament the loss of great teams or riders, it is part of cycling. While I see the success of many of those I read about or watch on television, I can get inspired by their efforts, and be led to do something good myself.

As our brave cyclists head into the Alps, there's still a lot to learn, a lot to inspire our daily lives. The last ascent into the mountains today does not include the finish line, but instead, apparently, a very highly elevated plain, with beautiful lakes and greenery. Sometimes you have to pass through all of the insignificance to reach the beautiful, sylvan, mountain plain.

Enjoy the Tour folks. Enjoy the Day.








# Étape 8 : Dole · Station des Rousses

## Classement étape provisoire

1	Lilian Calmejane	 DEN	4h30'29"
2	Robert Gesink	 TLJ	+ 37"
3	Guillaume Martin	 WGG	+ 50"
4	Nicolas Roche	 BMC	+ 50"
5	Roman Kreuziger	 ORS	+ 50"
6	Fabio Aru	 AST	+ 50"
7	Michael Valgren	 AST	+ 50"
8	Rafal Majka	 BOH	+ 50"
9	Nathan Brown	 CDT	+ 50"
10	Romain Hardy	 TFO	+ 50"

## Étape 8 : Dole · Station des Rousses

### Classement général provisoire

1	Christopher Froome		SKY	33h19'10"	
2	Geraint Thomas		SKY	+ 12"	
3	Fabio Aru		AST	+ 14"	
4	Daniel Martin		QST	+ 25"	
5	Richie Porte		BMC	+ 39"	
6	Simon Yates		ORS	+ 43"	
7	Romain Bardet		ALM	+ 47"	
8	Alberto Contador		TFS	+ 52"	
9	Nairo Quintana		MOV	+ 54"	
10	Rafal Majka		BOH	+ 1'01"	



**KEEP  
CALMEJANE  
AND  
WIN STAGE 8**

