



Madison-Genesis races its final season

Title sponsors to pull the plug after 2019, reports *James Shrubsall*

Madison-Genesis has announced it will fold at the end of the year after seven seasons as a UCI-registered outfit.

Currently leading the National Road Series with Matt Holmes, and hot on the heels of Canyon-dhb in the Tour of Britain qualifying race, the team had looked in rude health. But in an open letter, published on its website last Friday, founder Dominic Langan said that it was

time for Madison to invest elsewhere.

"I am immensely proud of what we have achieved and the team is very personal to me," he said. "However, the market is constantly evolving... I feel that now is the right time to bring the team to an end so we can invest in other market segments which are now showing much more significant growth potential."

Holmes, 25, who has been with the team since 2014, said the announcement took the riders by surprise.

"We didn't know," he said. "But it's good they've told us early. We've got plenty of time to think about what we're doing."

The team was racing at the two-day Tour of the Reservoir only the next day, where, despite the bad news, Holmes took second overall behind James Shaw (SwiftCarbon).

"We'd just got the news the day before, so Saturday was a struggle," admitted Holmes. "But then everyone had a day to think about it and we all pretty much unanimously thought, well, we

better pay back Madison for all they've done for us."

The Wigan-born rider was quick to defend the team, saying: "They've been such a good team to all the riders. Lots of teams you hear stories of people not being paid, but they've looked after us."

DS Roger Hammond, who helped found Madison-Genesis in 2012 and after a stint at Dimension Data came back to Madison for 2019, added: "For me it wasn't a job, it was a passion. So yeah, of course, personally it's sad. But it's sadder for a lot of people. Riders, staff, the industry as a whole..."

With the team continuing to cite the Tour of Britain as a major goal, Hammond insisted the drive to succeed remained: "Of course. We're professional sportspeople... I think the guys showed on Saturday and Sunday how committed they were to continuing to perform professionally."

Madison-Genesis greatest hits

8th RideLondon Classic 2016 (Tobyn Horton)

When the podium is occupied by Tom Boonen, Mark Renshaw and Michael Matthews, you know it's been a meaningful day out — especially if you finish just a few places back in eighth. That was the experience of Madison-Genesis stalwart Tobyn Horton. The Guernsey boy joined the team in 2014 and is still there.

1st Lincoln Grand Prix 2016 (Tom Stewart)

The 2016 edition of this famous race witnessed a changing of the guard, with Tom Stewart edging out 37-year-old four-time winner Russell Downing for the victory. It was made all the sweeter for Madison by the fact that Stewart's French team-mate Alex Blain finished just a few places back in sixth.

1st National Championships 2018 (Connor Swift)

Winning the coveted national champion's jersey on the tough Beaumont Trophy course, aged just 23 and up against the usual WorldTour hitters, highlighted a real talent in Swift. Sure enough, he has since moved up the ranks, now riding for Pro-Continental Arkea-Samsic. But this remains arguably Madison's best result.

5th overall Tour de Yorkshire 2017 (Matt Holmes)

Matt Holmes joined Madison-Genesis as a teenager six seasons ago, and has since brought them some of their best results. Many have come in gritty arenas like the Irish Rás and Tour de Yorkshire, and it is his 2017 finish at the latter, as first non-WorldTour rider, which is perhaps his best ever result. His sixth there this year also deserves an honourable mention.

1st Tour of the Reservoir 2014 (Alex Peters)

The 20-year-old Londoner led in a Madison-Genesis one-two with his first-cat team-mate Peter Hawkins. Not only did they occupy the first two places overall, they did the same on the first stage in a two-up sprint. Erick Rowsell also won overall in 2015, but this was surely the most memorable for the team.

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