

# Richie Porte, homegrown Tasmanian cycling champion, captured in crop maze tribute

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*Photo: Richie Porte is depicted leading the pack during the Tour de France. (Supplied: Rupertswood Farm)*

Pro cyclist Richie Porte's Tasmanian roots are being celebrated in his home territory in northern Tasmania — with a crop maze.

Farmer Rowan Clark decided to pay tribute to the homegrown cycling favourite.



Mr Clark said he was a "huge fan" and had contemplated a maze tribute for several years. "Richie is a great role model, always presents himself with spirit, courage and dignity even under enormous pressure," Mr Clark said.

"Richie is a hugely popular guy and all of Tasmania can identify with him as of the great cyclists of the world at the moment."

The four-hectare maze took eight hours to mow using a tractor and a GPS to navigate the route. He said cutting the maze had been exhausting work and was not without its challenges.

"I just had a week or so harvesting, so after a few hours' break I decided to have a crack at Richie," he said.

"A lot of things worked against me that night — I blew a tyre, ran out of petrol, lost a fan belt.

"However, I thought of Richie's grit and dug deep and eventually finished around 2:00am.

"It's been a long irrigation year and busy on the farm but I really enjoyed it. I hope people will really enjoy it."

The design depicts Porte leading the peloton during a mountain stage of the Tour de France.





*Photo: Richie Porte was based in northern Tasmania before his European career took off. (AP: Lionel Bonaventure)*

Porte was race favourite last year before crashing and breaking his collarbone during the ninth stage.

The maze is the fifth cut into a field of sorghum at the Hagley farm which is just up the road from Porte's hometown of Hadspen.

Previous maze projects have included a Tasmanian tiger and a map of Tasmania.

The Porte maze will be open to the public from February 24 for five weekends.