

Mark Cavendish

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Mark Cavendish forced to delay getting his teeth into new season

- Dental problem persuades Briton into precautionary approach
- No racing for sprinter until Ruta del Sol on 17 February



▲ Mark Cavendish will not begin racing this season until Ruta del Sol on 17 February. Photograph: B Lennon/Getty Images Photograph: B Lennon/Getty

Mark Cavendish has been forced to delay the start of his 2010 season because of an ongoing dental problem.

The 24-year-old from the Isle of Man has become the world's premier sprinter in the last two seasons, with 10 Tour de France stage wins and a host of further honours, including victory in the 2009 Milan-San Remo Classic.

Cavendish's main goals for 2010 are the Tour de France's *maillot vert* - the sprint classification winner's green jersey - and a stage win at the three Grand Tours, in France, Italy and Spain.

But his hopes may be hampered as Team HTC-Columbia announced that he will not begin racing until Ruta del Sol on 17 February due to the dental problem which has limited his training.

"We want to take all precautions and ensure that Mark has fully recovered and is able to get in some extra base training for the long season ahead of him," said the team manager, Rolf Aldag.

"His season goals remain the same and he is looking forward to performing as planned in major spring races like Milan-San Remo and Flanders before his focus shifts toward the stage racing."

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