

## **Today's majestic sprint marks Fernando Gaviria return in style.**

*The Colombian rider sprints to his first win of the season and the third of his career in Poland*

Fernando Gaviria took his first victory of the 2021 season today in Rzeszow, ahead of Olav Kooij (Team Jumbo - Visma) 2nd, and Phil Bauhaus (Bahrain - Victorious) 3rd. It's not an unfamiliar stage finish for the Colombian rider, Rzeszow in fact had already awarded him in 2016 where, just like today, he raised his arms in the air by crossing the line first.

The UAE Team Emirates sprinter added his 47th win to his personal victories' loot, the 3rd in Poland, on a fast day which saw his team controlling the race and setting the pace alongside Deceuninck - Quick-Step and Bahrain Victorious.

Today's stage was the longest of the 78th edition of the Tour de Pologne, covering a distance of 226.4 km between Sanok and Rzeszów and featuring 2625 metres total elevation gain in the first part making it a perfect sprint stage.

The race was characterised by a 10-man breakaway formed by Tom Bohli (COF), Taco Van Der Hoorn (IWG), Norman Vahtra (ISN), Alexander Konychev (BEX), Lionel Taminiaux (AFC), Łukasz Owsian (PRT), Daniel Arroyave (EFN), Filippo Conca (LTS), Niklas Märkl (DSM), Simon Clarke (TQA). The group maintained a fairly constant gap of 3' throughout the entire stage reaching a maximum of 3'15" that forced the peloton to work relentlessly.

Among the ten riders there was the 2021 Giro d'Italia stage 3 winner - Taco Van Der Hoorn, the young promise Fabio Conca, the Australian Simon Clarke, winner of several Grand Tour stages, and home rider Łukasz Owsian, 3rd at this year's National Road race championships.

With around 30km to go the peloton reeled in part of the breakaway, while Lionel Taminiaux, Simon Clarke and Taco Van Der Hoorn continued to cooperate and ride towards the finish. The three entered the circuit with still 20" on the peloton and got into the sights of the trains that were preparing for the sprinters. The trio got resumed at the -2km mark. Fernando Gaviria won the sprint just a few centimeters ahead of young talent Olav Kooij and stage 1 winner Phil Bauhaus.

*"It was a really nice stage and a motivating victory. I tried winning many times this year and I finally made it today. In the morning we thought of a strategy and we did our best to stick to the plan."* confirmed Fernando Gaviria. *"The team was super and positioned me in the best place so that I could finish their efforts in the best possible way. Poland and Rzeszow apparently bring me luck. I hope this victory starts a good second part of the season "*

*"Today a rather large breakaway was created just a few kilometres from Sanok. The group got very close with about 50km to go but then the gap grew again. In the last hour we really went fast to catch them. I want to congratulate Gaviria, he did a great sprint and he deserves it. Tomorrow it's going to be the queen stage in Bukovina, usually it's the decisive stage but in this Tour de Pologne edition there are many stages to look*

*out for and be careful. I am not expecting big gaps between the GC contenders but we'll try to do our best as a team.” says Michal Kwiatkowski, still holding the Best Polish rider title.*

*“It was a long day in the saddle with a very fast finish. Tomorrow it’s another important stage with an uphill finish where I’ll definitely try to defend this jersey. I don’t know the course very well as it’s my first Tour de Pologne but I’ll play all my chances.” declared João Almeida, GC leader.*

*“I usually go on the attack in stages. I don't really like being in the bunch, I prefer to attack like I did. In fact I actually go into a breakaway with a clear objective in mind, winning the stage.” confessed Taco Van Der Hoorn, current most active rider. “Today it wasn't easy as it was a sprinters’ stage. We knew we didn't have much of a chance but we gave it our all anyway. Tomorrow I'll have a quiet day. Now the Most Active rider's jersey also became a goal and I'll do everything I can to defend it and arrive in Krakow wearing it.”*

Tomorrow the Tour of Pologne will finish in the beautiful scenario of Bukovina, a stage promising some excitement for both enthusiasts and riders.