

Team Novo Nordisk and Tour de Pologne, plenty of inspiring stories

The first wild card for the 79th edition goes to a team which characterizes the World Tour panorama because of its special mission.

One such story features 28-year-old Frenchman Charles Planet.

He has been living with type 1 diabetes since the age of 10 and in 2019, he proved himself at the Tour de Pologne. On the opening stage in Krakow, he won the Best Climber jersey, which he kept until stage five and the day after, he got the Most Active Rider jersey, which he wore until the end of the Tour.

"It's no secret that I achieved my greatest success right at the Tour de Pologne in 2019," explains Charles. "I have good memories of winning the Most Active Rider jersey. This result represents exactly who I am, what I've always tried to be and also how I want to race: on the front foot every day, on the attack and trying to get in the breakaway.. Winning a jersey in a World Tour race is very special," he concludes. "I can't wait to race in Poland again and show what is possible with diabetes."

While Charles Planet celebrated success in southern Poland, Mateusz Rudyk - a member of the Novo Nordisk team since 2021 - won a bronze medal at the World Track Cycling Championships. Already as a child he was a promising cyclist, in fact he won the Tour de Pologne Junior, valid as a national championship. When he achieved his first career victories, he already knew he had diabetes, but at that time the level of treatments in Poland were very different from what it is today. The main question the young Rudy had was whether it would be possible to continue playing the sport he loved. Despite these doubts, he managed to become a successful athlete, joining the Novo Nordisk team in 2021.

"In 2019, they invited me to one of the stages of the Tour de Pologne in Rzeszów to meet the team," he explains. "That's how it started. Then there was an exchange of emails, zoom talks and a few months later I joined this big family."

Team Novo Nordisk's mission is now known all over the world. It's the first professional cycling team in which all athletes compete with type 1 diabetes. These riders race to inspire, educate and empower all those affected by diabetes and to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

The American team will be returning to the Tour de Pologne this year and the General Manager, Vassili Davidenko says the team is excited to be competing on Polish roads again, surrounded by breathtaking scenery and fighting against the best riders in the world: "It's always been a successful race for us and we're honored to be invited back by our friends. 2020 was our last time racing in Poland and it was a beautiful week of mixed terrain. Our past success and the prestige of the Tour de Pologne make this race one of our main goals of the 2022 season. This summer we'll have lots of miles in our legs and our strongest team will be ready to perform. We can't wait to be back!"

The Lang Team is very proud to give Team Novo Nordisk another chance to show how it can be possible to compete at high levels and at the same time live with diabetes.

“It is inspiring that people with diabetes do not give up and that movement and sport helps them to get through. For years we have been inviting the Novo Nordisk Team to our race and we are happy about their participation because they prove that you have to fight, but the condition is not a sentence. They fully deserve the wild card and to show up at a race of the World Tour rank.”

By choosing the Team Novo Nordisk, the Lang Team confirms the will to combine sport with stories that can inspire people to give their best in every life situation.