

Gerben Thijssen displays his powerful sprint in Zamość

Jonas Abrahamsen takes the lead of the General Classification and wears the ENERGA yellow jersey.

Lublin, 31 July 2022 - It was another great day for sprinters at the Tour de Pologne. The stage from Chelm to Zamość featured several breakaway attempts and ended with a powerful sprint by Gerben Thijssen (Intermarché - Wanty - Gobert) raising his arms in the air ahead of Pascal Ackermann (UAE Team Emirates) and Jonathan Milan (Bahrain Victorious).

"It's incredible to beat all the great riders here. I'm also really happy because it's my first World Tour win. I came second in a stage of the Vuelta a Espana in 2020, so I really wanted to win today. It's a collective victory by the whole team." said an incredulous Gerben Thijssen afterwards. "Mark Cavendish was here too. When I was younger I was looking up to him and I admired him and today I beat him, it's a dream. I really like the Tour of Poland. Yesterday I didn't have the best legs because I came back from a training camp a few days ago, but today I was confident in the sprint and I could count on a great team. I have two guys with me for the whole season, so it's also good that the team has this degree of trust in me. My goal was to win a race after the Dunkirk stage I took a few weeks ago and I did that here, so this race couldn't have gone better".

An early breakaway attempt, which included Alessandro De Marchi (IPT), Thomas De Gendt (LTS) and Jakub Murias (POL), was thwarted, while Umberto Poli (TNN) and Patryk Stosz (POL) attempted a second attack but were also caught. Shortly afterwards a breakaway for the day finally stuck, with Jasper De Buyst (LTS), Patryk Stosz (POL), Jonas Abrahamsen (UXT) and Piotr Brozyna (POL) establishing a maximum gap of 6' 5".

De Buyst (Lotto - Soudal) was the only rider in the decisive breakaway to survive for some 20km alone in a solo effort before being swallowed up by a strung-out peloton as they prepared to tackle the final 8.6km circuit. It was only at just under two kilometres to go that the Belgian rider was caught as the sprinters teams prepared to launch their fast men.

The finale saw the expected bunch sprint unfold. The young Belgian track specialist took the victory while a combative Jonas Abrahamsen not only managed to keep the PZU mountain jersey, but also removed the yellow ENERGA jersey from the shoulders of Olav Kooij, winner of the first stage, thanks to another long day in the breakaway. This was certainly an important finish for the Uno-X team, given the loss of their leader Tobias Johannessen, who was forced to withdraw from the race.

"This morning we started with two fewer riders so the plan was to try and get into the breakaway to gain a few seconds in the intermediate sprints" declared Jonas. "The plan worked out perfectly and now I am very happy for myself and the team. Today was another tough day but once again I found breakaway companions with whom I could work very well. This Tour de Pologne is already succeeding beyond my expectations. Tomorrow will be tough for me on such a difficult finish but we also have other riders in the team who can do well. We will see tomorrow in the finale what will happen."

Real surprise of the day was Jonathan Milan in third, which the Olympic Champion in the Team Pursuit in Tokyo was absolutely thrilled about. "Today the plan was to work for Bauhaus (Phil), who is our designated sprinter, but in the final we got a bit lost. So I tried to sprint and honestly I am happy with the result. It's my first race in three months, so it's an important moment for me."

Patryk Stosz, LOTTO Most Active Rider, was again part of today's breakaway and said, "Yesterday after the stage I was feeling tired, but today I felt I had the power and fluidity to try to go in the breakaway again. It worked and it turned out to be another good day at the front. That's kind of my attitude to racing, and if there's another opportunity I'll try to get it again. I'd like to wear this jersey as far as possible."

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