

The Tour de Pologne junior for the young talents of tomorrow

Agata Lang: *'For us it is a pleasure to support the next generation of cyclists'*

When Tour de Pologne deputy director, Agata Lang, talks about the Tour de Pologne Junior, her eyes light up. For years, Agata has been successfully running the race, which is also sponsored by the Polish Ministry of Sport. The races for girls and boys aged 11 to 14 have just finished, and before Ackermann's victorious arrival there is time to talk about youth cycling in the beautiful surroundings of the market square in Sanok.

"As Lang Team we have always believed in young people and invested in them. For us it is a duty to the sport and at the same time a pleasure. It is our support for the development of youth cycling in Poland. For the youngsters it is an unforgettable moment. Let's take today's stage. The participants had the chance to race on a closed city circuit, the same one that hosted the Tour de Pologne finale, accompanied by the warmth of the crowd. The winners then stood on the podium. For everyone it is a great memory and also a time for socialising with families and friends. This race over the years has seen riders such as Michal Kwiatkowski, who pinned his first number in an edition of the race in his hometown, and other athletes who are currently racing successfully on the track."

What is the formula of the event?

"The Tour de Pologne Junior this year consists of four stages. We started with Lublin, then Sanok and in the coming days Rzeszow with the grand finale in Krakow. Both boys and girls compete in different races and are divided into categories. There is a lot of organisational work involved, which we also manage to carry out with the support of sponsors. For each stage we have the podiums of the day and in Krakow we will crown the Orlen men's and women's yellow jersey, the Boplan points jersey and the Quest most active athlete jersey."

What is the response of the kids?

"The race is growing year after year. The kids are having fun and are also learning how to run in a group as well as the first rudiments of tactics. This year we also have riders from Italy, the Czech Republic and even Qatar. Step by step the race grows in interest and participation."

The race is also dedicated to a special person, Marian Wieckowski.

"He was a great athlete, winner of three Tour de Pologne from 1954 to 1956, and is someone who has a special place in my heart as he was my maternal grandfather who passed away in 2020. He

dedicated his life to cycling and to the young Polish cyclists he followed for years once his career was over. He was always a discreet presence at the Tour de Pologne. He felt this project was his. It gives me great pleasure to meet young people, who are now adults and who remind me of anecdotes and moments related to my grandfather during previous editions. It means that we are doing the right thing and that his memory remains alive."

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