

Tour de Pologne 2023: the route of the 80th edition revealed

The 80th edition of the UCI WorldTour Tour de Pologne was presented live on TVP Sport today, unveiling a brand new route full of great new features.

This year the Tour de Pologne celebrates three anniversaries: 95 years since its foundation, the 80th edition of the race and 30 years of the Lang Team. To mark the occasion, the organizers have designed an unprecedented route running through the west of Poland. The now traditional seven stages will be as follows: one time trial stage, two mountain stages, two stages for sprinters and two hilly stages where both classic riders and riders aiming for the general classification will be able to compete.

All the ingredients for a great spectacle that will set Poland's roads ablaze from 29th July to 4th August.

Czesław Lang, Race Director and CEO of the Lang Team, says: *"There will certainly be a lot of sporting emotions. We have prepared a beautiful, challenging route, which is completely different from last year's, as we are moving the race from the east to the west of Poland. We will start in Poznań on 29th July and then there are the following stages: Leszno - Karpacz, Wałbrzych - Duszniki Zdrój, Strzelin - Opole, Pszczyna - Bielsko-Biała, an ITT in Katowice, Zabrze - Kraków. I know this route very well, we have been planning it carefully all year and I am convinced that it will be an arena of fantastic rivalry between riders from the best teams in the world. It is also a great opportunity to celebrate our 3 anniversaries. 95 years ago, riders started for the first time in the "Race Around Poland", which was the first name of the Tour de Pologne. In 2023 we will start the 80th edition of the race, which has become the showcase of our country in the world! "*

Stage 1 POZNAŃ - POZNAŃ - 183.7 km

The jubilee edition of the Tour de Pologne will kick off in Poznań, where the race returns after 16 years. The start is set at St Mark's Square, in the Poznań International Fair headquarters. After covering more than 180 kilometres in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship, the riders will finish the stage at the Automobil Klub in Poznań, where they will race in a 4-kilometre lap. There will be six primes along the route for the points classification, the climbers' classification and the most active rider ranking. Three LOTTO Intermediate Sprints will take place in Suchy Las, Murowana Goślina and Kostrzyn. In Suchy Las the riders will also compete for the only GPM PZU KOM (3rd cat.) of the stage. Two special sprints will be held: Special Sprint Soudal - 95 Years of the Tour de Pologne in Pobiedziska and the Special Sprint in Środa Wielkopolska, Środa District.

Stage 2 LESZNO - KARPACZ - 202.9 km

The second stage is the only one with a distance of over 200 kilometers. The start is in Leszno in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship, which the riders will leave after a few kilometers into the race to fight for the only LOTTO Intermediate Sprint of this stage, set in Góra in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship. After a relatively flat first half of the stage, a demanding climb will kick up, with two 2nd cat PZU KOMs at Przełęcz pod Średnicą and Sosnówka. The grand finale of the stage will take place in Karpacz and the winner will be the rider who first reaches the top of the final 11-kilometre Orlinek climb, known as the 'Wailing Wall'. There are also two other special sprints along the route: the Special Sprint Soudal - 95 Years of the Tour de Pologne in Świerzawa and the Lake Hill Special Sprint.

Stage 3 WAŁBRZYCH - DUSZNIKI-ZDRÓJ, COS - 163.3 km

The third stage starts in Wałbrzych, the second largest town in Lower Silesia. It is a typical mountain stage with a total elevation gain of more than 3,000 metres and a distance of 163 kilometres, finishing in Duszniki-Zdrój. The stage will feature three 2nd category PZU KOMs in Walim, on the Jugowska Pass and in Zieleniec, as well as the Special Sprint SOUDAL - 95 Years of the Tour de Pologne - in Pieszyce.

The spectacular finish will take place in the Biathlon Arena of the Central Sports Centre.

Stage 4 STRZELIN - OPOLE - 198.6 km

This 198 km stage will see the peloton return to slightly flatter terrain, giving the sprinters a chance to test themselves. The riders will start from the Lower Silesian town of Strzelin and head west to Sobótka before turning back to Opole, the capital of this voivodeship. The Tour de Pologne last visited Opole in 2020, when the second stage started here. The stage features one cat. 3rd cat. PZU KOM in Strzegomiany and three LOTTO Intermediate Sprints in Sobótka, Strzelin and Grodków.

Stage 5 PSZCZYNA - BIELSKO-BIAŁA - 198.8 km

The stage - almost 199 kilometres long - is a typical mountain stage, with an elevation gain of over 3,000 metres. The riders will start in Pszczyna and finish in Bielsko-Biała, which has hosted the Tour de Pologne in the past. Before the finish, however, the riders will have to tackle several tough climbs: a 2nd-category PZU KOM at Zameczek (Little Castle) and two 1st-category PZU KOMs at Ochodzita and Salmopol. The latter GPM is named after Joachim Halupczok, Poland's 1988 Olympic medalist. There will also be three LOTTO Intermediate Sprints in Ustroń, Istebna and Wilkowice along the route of stage five.

Stage 6 KATOWICE - KATOWICE - 16.6 km

The second last stage is a 16.6 kilometre individual time trial in Katowice. The route in Katowice traditionally winds through the streets of the city centre, featuring the transformation of the Silesian capital, including the Market Square with its characteristic palm trees and the Cultural Zone, where years ago the Katowice Mine operated. It has been replaced by the Silesian Museum, the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and the International Congress Centre. The riders will also have a chance to race through the unique Nikiszowiec district and the Valley of the Three Ponds, which illustrate how green the city is.

The finish line will be at the Katowice Spodek.

Stage 7 ZABRZE - KRAKÓW - 166.6 km

The peloton will cover almost 167 kilometres from Zabrze to Krakow, where the race traditionally ends.

The finish line will be in Krakow's Błonia after the riders have completed three laps of the circuit on the city's streets. Before arriving in Kraków, there will be the LOTTO Intermediate Finish in Wilamowice, the cat-3 PZU KOMs in Witanowice and Kaszów, and the Special Sprint SOUDAL - 95 Years of the Tour de Pologne in Budzyń. Finally, the podium ceremony for the protagonists of the 80th Tour de Pologne will take place in Krakow's Błonia.

Teams at the start

There will be 24 teams at the start in Poznań. On 29th July, the 18 World Tour teams plus six wildcard teams invited by the organizers.

Here is the full list:

- AG2R Citroën Team
- Alpecin – Deceuninck

- Astana Qazaqstan Team
- Bora – Hansgrohe
- Cofidis
- EF Education – EasyPost
- Groupama – FDJ
- Ineos Grenadiers
- Intermarché-Circus-Wanty
- Jumbo – Visma
- Movistar Team
- Soudal Quick – Step
- Team Arkéa – Samsic
- Team Bahrain Victorious
- Team Jayco AlUla
- Team DSM
- Trek – Segafredo
- UAE Team Emirates
- Poland National Team
- Lotto Dstny
- Team Novo Nordisk
- Q36.5 Pro Cycling Team
- Human Powered Health
- Tudor Pro Cycling Team

Last year it was British rider Ethan Hayter, Ineos Grenadiers, who won the general classification ahead of Dutchman Thymen Arensman and Spaniard Pello Bilbao.

The wait to find out who will be wearing this year's ORLEN jersey as leader of the general classification at the finish in Krakow has already begun, as the Tour de Pologne UCI World Tour confirms its position as the most important stage race in Central Europe.