

81. Tour de Pologne[®]

12-18.08.2024

UCI  WORLD TOUR

Olav Kooij's second win on the final stage in Krakow

Team Visma - Lease a Bike takes it all in Krakow with Jonas Vingegaard signing the 81st edition of the Tour de Pologne.

Krakow's Błonia Park was the traditional finish of the seven stage race. The sprinters battled for victory, with Olav Kooij of Team Visma - Lease a Bike the fastest. The Dutch team took the two most prestigious prizes today, with Jonas Vingegaard triumphing in the general classification. *"Everything went according to plan. After the Tour de France I felt I had fully recovered from my injury. This season I have learned to enjoy the moment and not make long-term plans. Now I need some rest and then I will think about the future,"* said a satisfied **Jonas Vingegaard**.

Today the riders tackled a 142 kilometre route from the Wieliczka Salt Mine to Krakow, where a sprint finish was planned. Given the experience of previous years, the riders set a fast pace in the hope of creating a significant breakaway. Four riders got away from the peloton: Marcin Budziński of the Polish national team, Remi Cavagna (Movistar Team), Archie Ryan and Jack Rootkin-Gray of EF Education-EasyPost. The peloton did not ignore the escapees, but the sprint teams tried to keep them under control and create a bunch finish.

The sprint teams chased from behind, with ORLEN's general classification leader Jonas Vingegaard setting the pace at one point. The chase was successful with a few kilometres to go and Olav Kooij of Team Visma | Lease a Bike took the win, his second in this edition of the race. Tim Merlier (Soudal - Quick Step) and Gerben Thijssen (Intermarché - Wanty) finished second and third respectively.

"We knew we were in a good position in the GC after yesterday, so we wanted to finish the race with a strong sprint and keep our lead in the GC. That gave me extra motivation and Jonas' commitment and support was crucial. He was very strong today, hats off to him," commented **Olav Kooij**.

Marcin Budziński dominated the intermediate sprints, winning the LOTTO sprint in Myślenice, the Soudal special sprint in Czernichów and the Decathlon special sprint in Kaszów. The Pole was in excellent form today, as he showed in the final stages of the race, when he shared the lead with Archie Ryan for a long time. The highest placed Pole was Stanislaw Aniokowski of the French Cofidis team, who finished 13th today. My lead-out man, Alexis Renard, perhaps a little too early, told me to 'sit' behind Alberto Dainese of Tudor. He went off and I wanted to wait a little longer before making my move, but we were covered from behind. I couldn't do anything at that point, I didn't even get off the bike. I think I waited too long. I finished the race without a podium, which was my goal. It's hard to digest at the moment, but I have to keep going," said the Polish sprinter.

Jonas Vingegaard maintained his lead in the ORLEN general classification, adding a victory in the Tour de Pologne to his two Tour de France triumphs. Also on the podium at the Błonia in Krakow was Diego Ulissi (UAE Team Emirates), who won the classification of the best Energa sprinters, Grupa ORLEN, together with Wilco Kelderman, who completed the podium.

81. Tour de Pologne[®]

12-18.08.2024

UCI  WORLD TOUR

*"I managed to keep second place in the general classification and I am satisfied," said **Ulissi**. In an ideal scenario we would have won the stage, but Thibau Nys was very strong in this type of finish. When I arrived here I didn't expect to finish the Tour de Pologne on the podium, so I'm very happy with this result."*

The winner of the PZU climber's classification was Michał Paluta (Polish national team), who fought bravely in the breakaways all week. *"Today I just had to finish, so there was less pressure," said **Paluta**. "But when we started today, the pace of the breakaway was very high right from the start. As a result, the peloton also went very fast. On the first short climbs I saw that the sprinters were struggling to stay with the main group. I worked hard to win the climbing classification. I've been trying to win this jersey for many years, but luck hasn't always been on my side and I haven't always been in the right shape. This year, together with my coach Sylwester Szmyd, we wanted to arrive at the Tour de Pologne in top form. I am very grateful to him because he is the only one who knows how to prepare me and how my body reacts to the strain. He is not just a coach, I consider him my mentor."*

The blue polka dot jersey is not the only one won by the Polish national team at this year's Tour de Pologne. Polish champion Norbert Banaszek also made it onto the podium in Krakow, winning the LOTTO Most Active Rider classification thanks to his aggressive riding. *"I knew that the blue jersey of the most active rider was within my reach this year and I did my best to achieve this goal," said Polish champion **Norbert Banaszek** at the finish line. "Last year was my first time at the Tour de Pologne and I saw how Patryk Stosz fought for this award and what it takes to get it. I think I did my job 100% and I am very happy. Running in front of so many fans on the course of the most important race in Poland, with them shouting my name, gives you goose bumps and is incredibly pleasant."*

This brings to a close the 81st edition of the Tour de Pologne, which once again saw the world's best riders battle it out on the country's roads and provide the public with seven stages of excitement.