

## The teams for the 81st edition of the Tour de Pologne UCI WorldTour were officially presented today

*Here are the comments of some of the main protagonists of the race that starts tomorrow in Wroclaw.*

There are just a few hours to go before the start of the 81st edition of the Tour de Pologne UCI World Tour, which starts tomorrow at 12.25pm in Wroclaw and covers a total of 1049 kilometres along some of Poland's most fascinating routes.

Among the favourites for the general classification are **Jonas Vingegaard**, **Romain Bardet** and **Pello Bilbao**. The fast stages will be a challenge between **Tim Merlier**, **Alberto Dainese**, **Pascal Ackermann**, **Mads Pedersen**, **Sam Bennett** and **Caleb Ewan**. On the climbs we can expect to see **Rafal Majka** and **Davide Formolo**. The most hilly stages will be best suited to riders like **Matej Mohorič**. As far as young promising riders are concerned, **Paul Magnier** is worth mentioning.

### **Pascal Ackermann**

This is my fourth Tour de Pologne. It's my first race after the Tour de France and I don't know exactly how my legs will be. Sometimes I feel very good, sometimes very tired, but I think I'm in good shape. The first three stages are for the GC riders. From the fourth stage I can try to make a statement and we will try to win a stage.

### **Alberto Dainese**

We are here with a strong team both for the GC and for the sprints. I hope to have a chance and do my best. I am coming back to the Tour de Pologne after four years, the route is very similar, the stages are always very hard, always up and down. The stages that suit me best should be two, plus one more difficult where the breakaway might arrive.

### **Romain Bardet**

I am very happy to be here. I've only raced the Tour de Pologne once, twelve years ago, and I'm happy to be back. I'm pretty tired from the Tour de France, but we have a good team and a good squad for Casper (Van Uden), then we'll see if I can do something in the mountains, the course is pretty tough to be honest. For sure the time trial will make the difference. Other than that, the stages seem very balanced and tomorrow will undoubtedly be decisive for the general classification.

### **Pello Bilbao**

The feelings are strange, this is not the best way to start a WorldTour race, but when you are in the race you try to do your best. It's hard for me to go to a race and treat it as training, so it will be a surprise to see my name in the general classification in the final days. I'm definitely motivated to try and win a stage. I have only raced the Tour de Pologne once before, but I think this year's race is a bit harder than previous editions. I think it's a good opportunity because we have a lot of options in the team. We have Phil (Bauhaus) for the sprints and Matej (Mohorič) for the general classification. He has recovered well and last year he showed that this course suits him. So we will do everything to make it happen again.

### **Tim Merlier**

This is my second time at the Tour de Pologne. Last year it went well. I won two stages here and I hope to do even better this year, but I don't know exactly how many chances we'll have this week. Later we will talk to the directors and see what the targets are for these seven stages, but for sure the sprints are our main target.

### **Sam Bennett**

I think the second half of the race suits me better. Because in the first part we will have to see how I am after the Tour de France. There could be three opportunities for me, and winning a stage here would be very nice for me to start the second part of the season. As a team we also have some ambitions in the general classification.

### **Mads Pedersen**

It's going to be a good week of racing. I feel that we can get some good results with the team. I can see some good opportunities for myself in the coming days. It's going to be challenging because there are several good competitors, but we're strong enough to have our say.

### **Jonas Vingegaard**

I have good memories here. This is a very special place because I got my first WT stage wins here. There's not much to say. I'm very happy to be back at the Tour de Pologne, it's a really nice race and the crowd is always very intense.

The 81st edition of the race will start on Monday at 12.30pm and can be followed live on TVP Sport as well as on social media and the official Tour de Pologne website.