

82nd Tour de Pologne[®]

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Brandon McNulty takes it all at the end of the 82nd Tour de Pologne

The final individual time trial brought plenty of excitement as the 82nd Tour de Pologne UCI WorldTour drew to a close. Brandon McNulty of UAE Team Emirates-XRG was the fastest man on the stage. The American also claimed victory in the ORLEN General Classification.

Today, the world's top teams arrived at the Wieliczka Salt Mine for the final stage of the race: an individual time trial. The 12.5-kilometre course was a true test of solo riding skills, set to decide not only the best time trialist, but also the ORLEN General Classification winner.

Riders started the time trial in reverse order of the general classification, meaning that Fernando Gaviria of the Movistar Team, who was last overall, was the first to roll off the ramp. Early in the stage, the 'hot seat' for the current leader changed hands multiple times. Those posting strong times included Manilo Moro (Movistar Team) and Max Walker (EF Education-EasyPost). However, the longest stay in the lead belonged to Lorenzo Milesi of Movistar Team, the young Italian who completed the course in 14' 43", averaging over 50 km/h.

As more riders crossed the finish line, Milesi remained in the lead. Not even time trial specialist Stefan Küng of Groupama-FDJ – a two-time European champion and World Championship medallist – could dethrone him, finishing 8 seconds behind. Meanwhile, the battle for the ORLEN General Classification win was hotting up, with GC favourites also aiming for a strong stage placing.

Of the top ten, Matteo Sobrero (Red Bull-BORA-hansgrohe) and Antonio Tiberi (Bahrain Victorious) both performed well, finishing just behind Milesi. However, the Italian's reign ended when Brandon McNulty – second in the ORLEN General Classification heading into the stage – delivered an impressive time of 14' 31" seconds.

Nobody could match the American today. Former leader Victor Langellotti (INEOS Grenadiers) lost 46 seconds to him and dropped to fifth overall. **McNulty** took the lead in the ORLEN General Classification, with Italians **Antonio Tiberi** and **Matteo Sobrero** joining him on the podium. With this victory, Brandon McNulty became the first American rider ever to win an edition of the Polish race, and the first rider from outside Europe to claim the title. *"I came here focused on the time trial, but later I knew I had just one job: to beat Langellotti and stay ahead of Tiberi. Winning the stage is the icing on the cake. The time trial was short and started with the toughest climb. You had to start strongly and then maintain the pace. Today was my day,"* said a happy **Brandon McNulty, winner of the ORLEN General Classification.**

"It took me a moment to find my rhythm. I struggled a bit, but just before reaching the top, I felt that my legs were strong and I found my pace. Then I gave it my all on the rolling section, as if the finish were at the summit. At the intermediate checkpoint, they told me that I was doing well, which gave me an extra boost to tackle the rest of the stage. I generally prefer longer time trials that allow me to settle into a tempo, and managing yourself well is also important. However, I've noticed that, if I get in the right mindset, I can do well in shorter time trials too. I'm happy with how it went," said **Antonio Tiberi**, who came second in the ORLEN General Classification and fourth in this stage.

The stage podium was completed by two more Italians: **Lorenzo Milesi** and **Matteo Sobrero**. *"I'm happy with how my ride went. McNulty was really strong though – he was the best today, no matter what. Right now, I'm really pleased with my time trial. Even though I wasn't feeling great, I'm happy that I started and managed to finish second today,"* said **Milesi**.

The **best-placed Pole in both the stage and the ORLEN General Classification** was **Rafał Majka**, who finished the time trial in 16th place and was 8th overall. He also claimed the ORLEN VITAY Best Polish Rider Prime. *"It was a beautiful race, and I'm happy that we won it as a team. I've known for the past two years that this season would be my last – I wanted to finish my career at the top of*

82. Tour de Pologne[®]

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my game. Health and family are the most important things to me, and now is the perfect time to call it a day. I'll compete in a few more races before the end of the year, then take a holiday and a break from cycling. I hope that a strong Polish team will be created in the future, because we have the potential and many talented young riders," said **Rafał Majka**.

Another Pole stepped onto the podium: **Patryk Stosz** of the Polish National Team, who won the **LOTTO Most Active Rider Classification** for the third time in his career. "I'm happy to win the LOTTO Most Active Rider Classification for the third time. I came here with the aim of taking the jersey, and I achieved it, so I rate the race positively. It was really tough this year – the course was demanding, and my rivals made it difficult for me, but I managed it, and that's what matters," said **Patryk Stosz**.

There were no changes in the **PZU Best Climber Classification**, which was won by **Timo Kielich** of Alpecin-Deceuninck. "It's always nice to win a jersey. In the general classification, Quinten Hermans was there, so I had the chance to get into breakaways and go for KOM points. It was fun riding at the front, and I'm glad I could win the jersey," admitted Kielich.

Ben Turner (INEOS Grenadiers), winner of the Wałbrzych stage, retained the **Lang Team Points Classification**, taking fifth place in today's stage. "I wanted to perform as well as possible in this race. I aimed to try my luck in the sprints, which worked out. We rode really well as a team, and I never thought we'd achieve so much this week. I knew I was in good shape. After getting injured at the Giro d'Italia, I focused on training, so I knew I was ready. I came second twice, but I also managed to win a stage and the jersey, which is amazing. The atmosphere was incredible too, especially with Kwiato in the team. When you race with someone for whom this is a home race, it's always special," commented **Ben Turner**.

Jan Christen of UAE Team Emirates-XRG won the **Bjorg Lambrecht Best Young Rider Classification**, finishing fourth overall in the ORLEN General Classification. Christen and his **UAE** teammates also dominated the **Decathlon Team Classification**, achieving a decisive victory.

The 82nd Tour de Pologne UCI WorldTour has now come to an end. We've witnessed seven days of beautiful and thrilling competition among the world's best cycling teams. Here's how Czesław Lang, General Director of the Tour de Pologne, summed up the event: 'This year's Tour de Pologne was incredibly exciting, from the beautiful start in Wrocław through the challenging mountain stages to the final time trial in Wieliczka. Thousands of fans lining the routes across the country demonstrated the enormous popularity of cycling in Poland. It was a true sporting celebration that brought people together. Thanks to broadcasts in over 65 countries, we were able to showcase Poland's beauty to the world. I would like to thank all the fans and would like to invite you to the next edition, where we will prepare an exciting and beautiful route.'

The big emotions on Polish roads aren't over yet! **From 12 to 14 August, the third Tour de Pologne Women** will take place in the Lubelskie Voivodeship.