



Presidential Tour of Turkey, stage 1

Sam Bennett, déjà vu but well done

Ireland's Sam Bennett of Bora-Hansgrohe scored his eighth stage victory in three consecutive participations to the Presidential Tour of Turkey as he claimed stage 1 of the 55th edition in Tekirdağ in a bunch sprint finish. Fabio Jakobsen (Deceuninck-Quick Step) and Caleb Ewan (Lotto-Soudal) rounded out the podium.

Six riders in the lead

118 riders took the start of stage 1 on Sultanahmet Square in Istanbul. Carl Frederik Hagen (Lotto-Soudal) was a non-starter due to sickness. Soon after flag off, five riders went clear off the peloton: Alvaro Robredo (Burgos-BH), Lorenzo Fortunato (Neri-KTM), Emerson Oronte (Rally), Lindsay De Vylder (Sport Vlaanderen) and Feritcan Samli (Turkish National Team). Lucas De Rossi (Delko-Marseille) bridged the gap by himself to make a six-man front group that already had an advantage of 3'15" over the peloton after 10km of racing. They reached a maximum lead of 5'50" at km 17, after which the pack stabilized the gap around 3'30".

Three teams on the hunt

Lotto-Soudal, Bora-Hansgrohe and Deceuninck-Quick Step joined forces at the helm of the peloton to maintain the time difference around 2' as they set their sights on a bunch sprint finish for Caleb Ewan, Sam Bennett and Alvaro Hodeg or Fabio Jakobsen respectively. Samli, the Turkish rider at the front, had his moment of glory as he took the lead of the Turkish beauties competition by winning the sprint at km 116. The effort awarded him the white jersey for stage 2. The front group split in two as the peloton was only one minute adrift. Samli and De Vylder were the last two escapees to be reined in with 22km to go.

Bennett on... Deceuninck-Quick Step's train

Valerio Conti (UAE Team Emirates) sped up to cross the line of the second KOM in first position. However, Lindsay De Vylder (Sport Vlaanderen-Baloise) who had won the first KOM was to receive the red jersey. Dimension Data geared up for the bunch gallop but Deceuninck-Quick Step set the train for Jakobsen while Bennett didn't ask his teammates to lead him up. The Irishman opted for following the move of the Belgian outfit and produced his effort at the right time to overtake the Dutchman before the line. This is Bennett's fifth win this year. He got at least one in each stage race he took part in so far: Vuelta a San Juan, UAE Tour, Paris-Nice (2) and Presidential Tour of Turkey. He was confident to come back on shape quickly after his post-Milan-Sanremo break and proved to being right already on stage 1. He's now only three stage wins down on Andre Greipel's record of eleven in the Turkish WorldTour event.