



Friday, April 19th 2019

PRESIDENTIAL CYCLING TOUR OF TURKEY **STAGE 4: CALEB EWAN RAISES THE BAR**

Australian pocket sprinter Caleb Ewan of Lotto Soudal claimed his first ever stage win at the Presidential Tour of Turkey with an impressive effort in the uphill finale in Bursa where he outclassed Spain's Juanjo Lobato of Nippo-Vini Fantini and Bora-Hansgrohe's Sam Bennett who retained the lead in the overall classification.

Willems and Samli up the road to defend their distinctive jersey

116 riders started stage 4 in Balıkesir, the longest stage of the 55th Presidential Tour of Turkey with 194.3km to cover before reaching Bursa. One non-starter: Aleksandr Riabushenko (UAE Team Emirates). Five riders went clear off the peloton right after flag off: Mauricio Moreira (Caja Rural-Seguros RGA), Lucas De Rossi (Delko-Marseille), Ander Barrenetxea (Euskadi-Murias), Thimo Willems (Sport Vlaanderen-Baloise) and Feritcan Samli (Turkish national team). There was absolutely no reaction from the peloton, so their advantage was already up to 2'30" after 5km of racing. It went quickly over eight minutes. Red jersey holder Willems sat up after passing first at the only KOM of the day at km 17.9, so did white jersey holder Samli after the Beauties of Turkey sprint at km 69.5 in the Manyas Bird Paradise National Park.

Braves De Rossi and Barrenetxea

After 85km of racing, the riders took a right hand turn that enabled them to exchange the headwind for a side wind and the time gap of the remaining three leaders went down slowly but surely as the bunch was mainly led by Austrian champion Lukas Pöstlberger from the Bora-Hansgrohe team of race leader Sam Bennett. Several teams swap turns at the helm of the peloton, including Dimension Data and Lotto Soudal who were inspired by the uphill finish in Bursa. The time difference was down to 1'50" with 42km to go when Moreira gave up, leaving De Rossi and Barrenetxea in the lead. The Frenchman dropped the Spaniard 25km before the end but they were reunited four kilometres further, with an advantage of 1'35" over the chasing peloton at the 20km to go mark.

Second win of the year for Ewan

It was all together again with 12km to go. Mauro Finetto (Delko-Marseille) tried to anticipate the bunch sprint in the hill leading up to the finishing line with 1.5km to go but it was a compact bunch rushing to the top. Almost two months after taking his first WorldTour victory of the season at the UAE Tour, also on stage 4 and also in an uphill finale, Ewan proved to have an excellent ratio power/weight/speed in the climbs. He had to dig deep to edge out Lobato and didn't leave a chance to Bennett to come across. This is the victory the Australian was looking for to build his confidence ahead of the Giro d'Italia and the Tour de France.

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