

Danish victory at Eschborn-Frankfurt: Søren Kragh Andersen wins group sprint

The route change at Eschborn-Frankfurt achieved exactly what it was supposed to: suspense until the absolute finale. Even 5 kilometers before the finish it was not clear whether the peloton would be able to close the small gap to the leading group. But it was enough for the leaders! After a Danish double victory was celebrated earlier today in the U23 race, a Dane also prevailed in the WorldTour classic. Søren Kragh Andersen (Alpecin - Deceuninck) won in the sprint ahead of Patrick Konrad (Bora - hansgrohe) and Alessandro Fedeli (Q36.5 Pro Cycling). Georg Steinhauser (EF Education - EasyPost) and Georg Zimmermann (Intermarché - Circus - Wanty) were the best Germans in sixth and seventh place.

In front of an impressive backdrop, Max Walscheid (Cofidis) opened the race shortly after the start and formed a leading group with five other riders, who were given a maximum lead of eight minutes. In mostly dry conditions fans and spectators along the route between Eschborn, the Taunus cities and Frankfurt created a record-breaking atmosphere for the German Classic.

Although the lead of the group had already shrunk considerably after the first Feldberg crossing, the riders still made it over the first two Mammolshain climbs, only to be dropped on the approach to the second Feldberg. For Walscheid it was still enough to win the overall mountain classification. After the second Feldberg climb, about 30 riders went clear, with only Michael Matthews (Team Jayco Alula) among the fast riders. Accordingly, the group did not run smoothly and was caught 52 kilometers before the finish. At the last Mammolshain climb, a leading group formed again, which included ten riders. Zimmermann and Steinhauser were among them, as were Konrad and the Swiss Marc Hirschi (UAE Team Emirates).

The group reached Frankfurt with a lead of about a minute, but they entered the final lap with only 20 seconds left and a reduced field of about 30 riders chasing them. In the last two kilometers Zimmermann tried again with an attack but could not break away decisively. Then Kragh Andersen brought home the victory with a long sprint from the front. Arnaud De Lie led the peloton to the finish 18 seconds behind.

Søren Kragh Andersen: *"In the end there was more climbing than I had expected. I really suffered on the second Feldberg crossing. But I never gave up and so the race ended perfectly for me in the group. The victory means a lot to me because I haven't won in a long time."*

Patrick Konrad: *"It was a very exciting and a matter of seconds. It was primarily my plan to get through with the group and accordingly I invested a lot. I knew that Søren was the man to beat. At the moment, when I came up to his height in the sprint, it also looked good. But he countered strongly and is the deserved winner."*

Alessandro Fedeli (Q36.5 Pro Cycling): *"This is my best result in the WorldTour. That's why I'm overjoyed, of course. I want to thank the organization for the fantastic race, there were no risky sections anywhere, the roads were good. I'm also happy for the team, because we want to build on this success now."*



Local hero **John Degenkolb** (Team DSM) on his home race: *"I really suffered. As expected, the character of the race was different than usual, even if you didn't see that in the start list. I had to drive in the red zone for a very long time, but I noticed that the others were not doing well either and that the mountains had left their mark. It wasn't completely hopeless, but I was also close to completely blowing up. But that's where the home advantage comes in: I know every bend, always know how steep it is. The support was phenomenal. It's awesome to have a home race like this."*