

Renowned starting field promises cycling classic excitement

The cycling classic will take place again in two weeks' time - once again with a renowned starting field. 19 teams, including 14 UCI WorldTour teams for the first time, have nominated their provisional riders for Eschborn-Frankfurt.

Søren Kragh Andersen leads the provisional start list. Winning the cycling classics trophy was the highlight of the past season for the 29-year-old. This year, his team Alpecin - Deceuninck is dominating the big classics and has achieved a hat-trick of monuments. Whether the team will now also claim the cycling classics triple after 2021 (Jasper Philipsen) and 2023 will be revealed in two weeks' time in front of the Alte Oper.

German cycling fans can keep their fingers crossed for more than a dozen local pros. **Nils Politt** (UAE Team Emirates) is riding an outstanding spring, which was crowned with a podium at the Tour of Flanders and 4th place at Paris-Roubaix. **Emanuel Buchmann** (BORA - hansgrohe) will present the champion's jersey on May 1st and wants to fine-tune his skills for the Giro d'Italia, which starts just three days later. For his team-mate **Maximilian Schachmann**, the ride through the Taunus will even be a premiere: The two-time Paris-Nice winner has never before competed in the cycling classic.

Georg Zimmermann (Intermarché-Wanty) was one of the German riders who coped best with the new course last year. The rider from Augsburg will travel to Eschborn with the momentum of the Ardennes classics. In contrast, it will be a race comeback for **Pascal Ackermann** (Israel-Premier Tech). Exactly six weeks after breaking his collarbone, the cycling classic will be one of the first races after his recovery. **Jonas Rutsch** (EF Education - EasyPost) has also taken a break after his crash at Paris-Roubaix, which will end on May 1st. Like local hero **John Degenkolb** (Team dsm-firmenich PostNL), the rider from Hesse wants to use his home race for a top result.

In addition to defending champion Kragh Andersen and the German winners John Degenkolb and Pascal Ackermann, the 2022 winner **Sam Bennett** (Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale Team) and serial winner **Alexander Kristoff** (Uno-X Mobility) have also announced their participation.

But not only previous winners and big German names are in with a chance of winning in front of the Alte Oper. **Marc Hirschi** (UAE Team Emirates) only just missed out on the podium last year and proved in the spring that classics with elevation gain suit him. And this year at the latest, **Maxim van Gils** (Lotto Dstny) has also ridden into the limelight. After 3rd place at Strade Bianche and 7th place at Milan-Sanremo, the 24-year-old is far more than just an outsider's tip for May 1st.

"The provisional start list shows that many teams have adapted to the new course. A year ago, the extra elevation gain, provided an extra plus of excitement. The race was fought out aggressively, we saw many groups with well-known riders, and it wasn't clear until the end whether the breakaway riders would be able to maintain their lead. It was great for the fans and I'm excited to see if we can welcome one of the all-stars



or a new name to the top of the podium in two weeks' time," says **Fabian Wegmann**, Sporting Director of Eschborn-Frankfurt.

Eschborn-Frankfurt will be held over 203.8 kilometers. The focus of the race is the challenging climbing sequence from Feldberg, twice Mammolshainer and directly over the Billtalhöhe to the more difficult Feldberg ascent. The final climb to Mammolshainer was the decider last year.