



PRESEMITTEILUNG

Vernon clears all jerseys at the start of the 2023 Deutschland Tour

Briton Ethan Vernon (Soudal Quick-Step) has won the opening race of the Deutschland Tour in St. Wendel. The 22-year-old completed the prologue over 2.3 kilometers with a winning time of 2:23.57 minutes - an average of 57.9 km/h. Second was Mads Pedersen (Lidl-Trek), one and a half seconds behind, with third place going to Dutchman Maikel Zijlaard (Tudor), just under three seconds behind the winner.

Vernon collected with his victory all three jerseys of the day to be awarded. The all-rounder is first in the overall standings and will therefore wear the red jersey tomorrow. As the best young professional, white also belongs to him, which will initially be taken by the 24-year-old Zijlaard deputy. Green for the best in points goes to Pedersen by proxy. The mountain jersey has not yet been awarded. As the best German, Nils Politt (Bora - hansgrohe) rode to 5th place, one place ahead of Jannik Steimle (Soudal Quick-Step). Both were separated by only tenths of a second from the podium. 43 riders finished less than ten seconds behind.

For Vernon, on the other hand, it was his fifth win of the season. *"In the last corner, my sports director said I had a good time,"* the day's winner recalled at the press conference, recalling the final seconds of the race. *"But Mads was just a minute after me, so I didn't want to get too excited too soon. He has been very strong in the last couple of weeks - at the World Championships, in Denmark and also in Hamburg. But I've trained a lot on the track over this distance, so it was pretty clear to me what I'm capable of."*

Multiple track world champion Theo Reinhardt (Rad-Net Osswald) opened the Deutschland Tour 2023 in bright sunshine as the first rider on the start ramp. With 2:34,16 minutes he set a first mark, but this was soon to be topped. Among others by Marco Haller (Bora - hansgrohe), who stayed in the hot seat for a long time with about five seconds less. He was replaced by his teammate Sam Bennett, who was just two tenths faster. When Danny van Poppel pushed the best time by another two seconds, the interim Bora triple was perfect.

The last 15 riders were already on the road when Zijlaard surprisingly took over the new fastest time. But he could no longer make himself comfortable in the hot seat because Vernon quickly ousted him again.

The 1st stage of the 2023 Deutschland tour will initially remain in Saarland tomorrow. It starts again in St. Wendel and leads over 179 hilly kilometers to Merzig. 12:20 p.m. is the start. The favored puncheurs could use the final lap in Merzig in particular, on which the 1.7-kilometer-long and six percent steep Ellerberg has to be mastered twice, to put a few seconds between themselves and the competition.