



Wellens goes up against Bettiol and Van der Poel at De Brabantse Pijl

The cobblestone classics are now behind us and the time has therefore come to take on the longer climbs. Tim Wellens demonstrated his ability over this terrain last year by winning De Brabantse Pijl. Next Wednesday he will take his position on the star line in Leuven to defend his title going up against Tour of Flanders winner Bettiol, Belgian champion Lampaert and Dutch champion Van der Poel.

With a successful solo attack, Belgian Tim Wellens (Lotto Soudal) demonstrated his prowess in Overijse last year. To duplicate this performance, he will be supported by his fellow countryman Maxime Monfort. Nevertheless, he will be up against a strong list of competitors. He will be competing against Alberto Bettiol, the 25-year-old Italian who won the recent Tour of Flanders. Bettiol will be supported at the starting line by Simon Clarke for EF Education First.

First-timer Mathieu van der Poel (Corendon-Circus) has already tasted success in the classics with his Dwars door Vlaanderen victory. Who knows, perhaps he will be able to notch up another win in Overijse. The Dutch champion will be aided in this by his road captain Stijn Devolder.

With Yves Lampaert (Deceuninck - Quick-Step), Daryl Impey (Mitchelton Scott) and Matej Mohoric (Bahrain Merida) the Belgian, South African and Slovenian champions, respectively, will also be present at the start.

Mohoric will be joining forces with former champion Sonny Colbrelli and the Belgian Dylan Teuns, while Lampaert will have former winner Petr Vakoc at his side. This will be the first time following a year of serious rehabilitation that Vakoc will take up his position at the starting line of a Belgian race - the last time was in 2017.

Strong in the climbs and fast in the sprint: this goes for Australian rider Michael Matthews (Team Sunweb) as well as Italians Enrico Gasparotto (Team Dimension Data) and Giovanni Visconti (Neri Sottoli - Selle Italia - KTM). Gasparotto will be joining forces with Danish rider Michael Valgren, winner of the 2018 Omloop Het Nieuwsblad.

Ben Hermans (Israel Cycling Academy), in addition to Wellens, Colbrelli and Vakoc, makes it four on the start line who know how to win. Pieter Weening (Roompot-Charles) and Bryan Coquard (Vital Concept - B&B Hotels) also join those in pursuit of victory on Wednesday 17 April, racing to be crowned winner of De Brabantse Pijl, the first in a series of climbing classics.