

25 teams, main contenders

Australia

Mitchelton-Scott: A.Yates (Uk), Albasini (Swi), Impey (Saf)

Bahrein

Bahrain-McLaren: Landa (Esp), Caruso (Ita), Poels (Ned), Teuns (Bel)

Belgium

Deceuninck-Quick Step: Alaphilippe, Cavagna (Fra), Jungels (Lux)

Lotto-Soudal: Wellens (Bel)

Circus-Wanty Gobert: Bakelants (Bel)

Sport Vlaanderen-Baloise: E.Planckaert (Bel)

Bingoal WB: Vanendert (Bel)

Alpecin-Fenix: Vakoc (Cze), Vervaeke (Bel)

France

AG2R La Mondiale: Cosnefroy, Vuillermoz (Fra)

Groupama-FDJ: Madouas, Molard (Fra)

Cofidis: G.Martin (Fra), Jes.Herrada (Esp)

Total Direct Energie: Simon, Hivert (Fra)

Team Arkea-Samsic: Barguil (Fra)

Germany

Bora-Hansgrohe: Kämna, Schachmann (Ger)

Team Sunweb : Hirschi (Swi), Benoot (Bel)

Kazakhstan

Astana Pro Team: Fraile, G.Izagirre (Esp)

Netherlands

Jumbo-Visma: Dumoulin (Ned) Roglic (Slo)

Poland

CCC Team: Van Avermaet (Bel), Geschke (Ger), De Marchi (Ita)

South Africa

NTT Pro Cycling Team: Gasparotto (Ita), Kreuziger (Cze)

Spain

Spain

Movistar Team: Valverde, Soler (Esp)

United Arab Emirates

UAE Team Emirates: Pogacar (Slo), Costa (Por), Henao (Col)

United Kingdom

Ineos Grenadiers: Kwiatkowski (Pol), Froome (UK)

United States of America

Trek-Segafredo: Porte (Aus), Skujins (Lat)

EF Pro Cycling: Woods (Can), Martinez, Uran (Col)

By raising his arms last Sunday in Imola, **Julian Alaphilippe** made history. ‘Loulou’ was the first Frenchman to pull on the rainbow jersey since Laurent Brochard did back in 1997. The **Deceuninck-Quick Step** cyclist is now poised to set another landmark victory for his country this weekend in Liège-Bastogne-Liège. The last Frenchman who managed to write his name in the ‘palmarès’ of La Doyenne was Bernard Hinault in 1980, only months before claiming the rainbow stripes himself in Sallanches.

But history doesn’t come easy. Alaphilippe will contend against a man who knows how to win this race, and has rightfully done so four times already. Former rainbow jersey himself, **Alejandro Valverde** comes to Liège after narrowly missing top10 in the Tour de France (12th) and delivering at 8th place in the 2020 Imola UCI Road World Championships.

Both Valverde and Alaphilippe were absent at Flèche Wallonne, leaving the path clear for new faces such as **Marc Hirschi**. His runner-up last Wednesday at the Mur de Huy, **Benoît Cosnefroy**, defined the Swiss cyclist as “one of strongest riders in the world at this moment.” His stage win at the Tour de France, on which he was awarded the most aggressive rider prize, combines with his bronze medal in Imola and his outstanding triumph this week to tout him as a potential contender at La Doyenne. Cosnefroy himself will be present in Liège too, as will the other man standing in the podium of Flèche Wallonne, **Michael Woods**, who has already come close to victory in this race (2nd in 2018).

As far as star riders are concerned, is hard to look past the podium of the Champs-Élysées. All the top3 riders of the Tour de France will

race Liège-Bastogne-Liège: the Slovenians **Tadej Pogacar** and **Primoz Roglic**, and the Australian **Richie Porte**. Between those who shone in Huy, it's pertinent to highlight **Dan Martin** (winner of La Doyenne in 2013, as well as 2nd in 2017), **Warren Barguil** (6th in 2018) and **Michal Kwiatkowski** (3rd both in 2014 and 2017).