

Mark Cavendish triples up in Alanya

Already a stage winner in Alanya in 2014 and 2015, Mark Cavendish (Deceuninck-Quick Step) won his second straight stage in the 56th Presidential Tour of Turkey, beating Jasper Philipsen (Alpecin-Fenix) and Stanislas Aniolkowski (Bingoal Pauwels Sauce WB) in another bunch gallop.

“I said I’ll never get tired of winning and it’s a very nice feeling again today”, Cavendish declared at the finish. “We tried to start from the front today. There was a bit of a hump with small cobblestones. The wind was coming from the right. It was a question of staying patient. The guys did an incredible job. Fabio Jakobsen also got involved in a bunch sprint. It was awesome to see that. After yesterday, I had more confidence for winning today as well. It would be nice to get more stage wins for the team, possibly with another guy from this incredible team of sprinters.”

Stage 3 started on a very high tempo from Beyşehir so that no breakaway managed to take shape until Pierre Rolland (B&B Hotels), Antonio Canton (Burgos BH), Carmelo Urbano (Caja Rural-RGA), Mathias Le Turnier (Delko) and Gabriel Reguero (Spor Toto) went clear at km 35. They were reeled in right on the line of the intermediate sprint at km 41 where Garikoitz Bravo (Euskaltel) overhauled Rolland and Le Turnier. Soon after the sprint, four riders rode away from the peloton: Nicola Venchiarutti (Androni), Iker Ballarin (Euskaltel), Umberto Poli (Novo Nordisk) and Ulises Castillo (Wildlife Generation). They reached a maximum advantage of 4’ at km 65. It was down to 3’20” at the second category KOM at km 70.9 where Venchiarutti passed first ahead of Castillo and Poli. The latter was dropped for a while but made it back to the front group in the long downhill towards the Mediterranean Sea. With 60km to go, the time difference was just one minute.

The leading quartet was reeled in 15km before the end. Among the teams who set the high pace in the last ten kilometres, the presence Bingoal Pauwels Sauce WB from Belgium was noticed. It ended up with Polish national champion Aniolkowski upsetting some of the favourites in Alanya.

“Of course I’m satisfied with this top 3”, Aniolkowski commented. “Being on stage with guys like Cavendish and Philipsen is amazing. This finish makes me very happy. The work of my team today also makes me happy. They did a really good job for me. I thank them for believing in me. After 5th, I come 3rd, it’s a progression. Maybe a win is coming soon!”

That’s also the feeling of Philipsen who aims for more. “I think I had the legs to win but I wasn’t first over the line, so I’m not fully satisfied but that’s sprinting”, the young Belgian ace noted. “I had a bit of bad luck.”

Vitaliy Buts retained the lead in the King of the Mountains competition by one point only. “For 50km I’ve tried to break away but the other riders didn’t let me go”, the Ukrainian from Salcano Sakarya BB declared. “It’s gone well anyway because I’ve retained the jersey today and after 50km, I got a rest to recover from my efforts yesterday. Luckily, Ulises Castillo didn’t win the two KOM but finished second twice, otherwise I wouldn’t be here with the red jersey still. He was the only one from the front group I was afraid of. Let’s hope the TUR keeps going like this for us.”