

## Kooij wins in Hamburg's sprinter's paradise

Olav Kooij (Visma | Lease a Bike) has won the BEMER Cyclassics 2024. The Dutchman won the expected bunch sprint on Mönckebergstraße ahead of Jonathan Milan (Lidl-Trek) and Biniam Girmay (Intermarché-Wanty). Behind them were Jordi Meeus (Red Bull-BORAHansgrohe) and Alexander Kristoff (Uno-X Mobility).

*"We went into the corner two kilometers before the finish in a good position. We knew that was very important. After that I followed the guys from Bora. Kristoff overtook me and kept the speed up, then let me find a good rear wheel. Then I opened up my sprint and was able to pull it off,"* said Cyclassics winner Kooij, describing his race. *"I didn't know where I stood today after I had to recover from a crash recently. I told the other guys in the team that I wasn't feeling so good that they could attack. But they then motivated me to give it a go. And so there was a nice surprise at the end."* The 23-year-old's 36th career victory was his first on the WorldTour in a one-day race.

A six-man breakaway group broke away shortly after the start of the race, which started a little late and was therefore shortened by 20 to 178 kilometers, and dominated the majority of the day. Michael Mørkøv (Astana Qazaqstan), Taco van der Hoorn (Intermarché-Wanty), Stefan de Bod (EF Education EasyPost), Andrea Vendrame (Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale), Remi Cavagna (Soudal Quick-Step) and Cyrus Monk (Q36.5 Pro Cycling) had a lead of more than seven minutes at one point.

At the first crossing of the Waseberg 63 kilometers before the finish, there were still around three minutes left, before the second the breakaway was caught. There, the new leading duo of Alex Aranburu (Movistar) and Fabio Christen (Q36.5 Pro Cycling Team) formed up, gaining a lead of around half a minute. The third and final time over the Waseberg, only the Spanish champion made it alone in front of the peloton, but twelve kilometers before the end, he was also done for. Everything was now ready for the bunch sprint.

**Matthias Pietsch**, Managing Director of the Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Radsports mbH, which organized the BEMER Cyclassics for the first time this year, drew a satisfied conclusion. *"Every race has its own history and structures. For a new organizer, it is important to take everything into account. The event has great potential, which we want to exploit even more in the coming years. We saw an exciting race with a strong winner among the professionals. We have a good number of 11,000 participants in the mass sports segment. But the event*



*deserves more. We want to see if we can perhaps integrate more Hamburg highlights such as the harbor into the route again. The feedback from the field was also that the participants would be happy to see a third distance again."*