

Star-studded line-up at Eschborn-Frankfurt: World Champion, Defending Champion, and German Hopes at the start

Two weeks ahead of May 1st, the teams have announced their preliminary rider selections. A total of 14 UCI WorldTour teams and four of the top ProTeams are expected to line up for the cycling classic. In addition to the German stars, the start list features some of the biggest international names in the sport.

Leading the peloton is last year's winner Maxim Van Gils. After a team transfer, the 25-year-old Belgian now rides for the only German team in the WorldTour, Red Bull – BORA – hansgrohe. Wearing race number 1, the team is aiming to secure a home victory in front of Frankfurt's Alte Oper.

A German victory after six years?

This year's Eschborn-Frankfurt carries the motto "Home Victory" for the German riders. The last German to win was **Pascal Ackermann** (Israel - Premier Tech), who took the title in 2019. He has been selected again, along with **Nils Politt** (UAE Team Emirates – XRG) and **Maximilian Schachmann** (Soudal Quick-Step). While John Degenkolb is sidelined with injury, **Jonas Rutsch** will be flying the flag for Hesse. He starts with his new team, Intermarché – Wanty, alongside **Georg Zimmermann**, who benefitted two years ago from the debut of the double Feldberg ascent.

This revised course profile presents a real challenge for pure sprinters. In addition to Ackermann, only a few classic sprinters are on the provisional list, including **Tim Torn Teutenberg** (Lidl-Trek) and **Max Kanter** (XDS Astana Team). Among them are also young talents like **Paul Magnier** (Soudal Quick-Step), **Tobias Lund Andresen** (Team Picnic PostNL), and **Michael Matthews** (Team Jayco AlUla), all of whom prefer a tougher lead-up to the finish – making Eschborn-Frankfurt an ideal race for them. Riders known for their finishing speed from smaller groups include **Marius Mayrhofer** (Tudor Pro Cycling Team), **Magnus Cort** (Uno-X Mobility), and **Alex Aranburu** (Cofidis), who already demonstrated his affinity for Frankfurt by finishing second last year.

*"We're seeing from the start list that, in the second year of the double Feldberg ascent, teams are adjusting and bringing fewer pure sprinters," says **Fabian Wegmann**, Eschborn-Frankfurt's Race Director. "I expect we'll see a smaller group contesting the finish. The strength of this line-up points more toward an Ardennes Classic style of race."*

International Climbing Champions Take on the Taunus Hills

The Ardennes Classics will have just wrapped up by May 1st, and many riders will bring top form from the Belgian hills into the Taunus. **Julian Alaphilippe** (Tudor Pro Cycling Team), a former world champion, brings his star power to the start line – it will be the Frenchman's debut at Eschborn-Frankfurt. Other big names like **Tim Wellens** (UAE Team Emirates – XRG), **Ben Healy** (EF Education – EasyPost), **Lenny**



Martinez (Bahrain Victorious), and **Thibau Nys** (Lidl-Trek) – who recently opened his season with a win – promise an aggressive and animated edition of the race.

Nys' team also has another ace up its sleeve with **Sören Kragh Andersen**, the 2023 winner. UAE's line-up includes **Antonio Morgado**, while Uno-X brings **Andreas Leknessund** and **Tobias Halland Johannessen** – all potential contenders on race day.

Eschborn-Frankfurt will be contested over 198.7 kilometers. At the heart of the race is a challenging climbing section that features two ascents of the Großer Feldberg and three passes over the steep Mammolshainer Stich – a key battleground for the top classics specialists to make their move toward victory.