



Media Release
Friday, 11 October 2013

Hushovd bolts to Beijing win

Cycling's 'God of Thunder', **Thor Hushovd** (BMC), sprinted to victory on the opening stage of the 2013 Tour of Beijing.

The Norwegian won the opening in a bunch sprint over **Luka Mezgec** (Argos-Shimano) and **Nikolas Maes** (Omega Pharma-Quick Step) in Huairou Studio City on the outskirts of the Chinese capital.

"It was a good win and I surprised myself," the former world champion said following his victory.

"I've had a hard couple of weeks after the worlds for the motivation but I still did the good training that I had to do, so to win here today couldn't be better," Hushovd said.

Orica GreenEdge hit the front of the peloton in the final few kilometres in a bid to add to **Michael Matthews'** growing victory tally, before **Matt Brammeier** (Champion System) moved ahead with one kilometre to go. There was a second surge from the Australian team on the slight downhill run to the finish, and it was then that a glimpse of Hushovd could be spotted around sixth wheel.

Speedsters **Alessandro Petacchi** (Omega Pharma-Quick-Step) and **Roberto Ferrari** (Lampre-Merida) then dueled at the front, before Mezgec and Matthews looked to be battling for stage honours before Hushovd came around the back of the Argos-Shimano rider for a narrow victory.

"It was a large road and really fast with a slight downhill," Hushovd explained. "I think I just had a perfect run. I was a bit behind and I got some slipstream and in the last couple of metres I was able to pass, I can't remember who, but I got just in front of him."

Hushovd will wear the red leader's jersey in tomorrow's second stage, courtesy of the win and the 35-year-old is hopeful of retaining the lead for at least another day.

"At least we will try to keep it tomorrow then it's two hard stages and we'll see what

happens. I'll do my best.”

The road to Huairou

The 190.5 km stage got underway under clear, sunny skies at the Shunyi Olympic Rowing-Canoeing Park. A brief period of neutral was ended with direct action from the peloton, with attacks from the drop of the flag.

Four riders were able to open a small gap of around 200 metres on the peloton with **Willem Wauters** (Vacansoleil-DCM), **Ryota Nishizono** (Champion System), **Sander Cordeel** (Lotto Belisol) and **Davide Vigano** (Cannondale) moving clear.

It was a fast start to the race, with the pace at 50km/h after 6km, the breakaway out to an advantage of nearly two minutes. A brisk tailwind certainly provided some assistance early in the stage.

Vigano took maximum points on the first sprint of the day at 39.5km, but Wauters succeeded on the remaining two, so it's the Belgian who will wear the green jersey heading into stage two.

Cordeel, who took the lone KOM of the day and therefore the polka dot jersey, said that it was a day for taking chances.

“It's always nice to have a jersey for one day but if you don't believe in it you will stay the entire stage in the peloton and you will see boring races so you have to go for it.”

Teams from Cannondale and FDJ.Fr would do the bulk of the work back in the peloton, however the four escapees would be allowed to move out to an advantage of 8:55 with 40km of racing complete before the gap slowly started coming back.

Shortly before the 120km mark, Vigano's efforts pulling turns in the break ceased. Soon after, the reason was clear, with the Italian pulling off to the side of the road for an extended nature break.

The break's strength again took a hit when Wauters was dropped with around 35km left to race, but Nishizoni too struggled to stick with Cordeel who ploughed on ahead solo. It was an effort that would also earn him the most aggressive prize for the stage.

“The thing is, you can ride as fast as you want but in the end it's the peloton who decides how much time you'll get,” he explained. “We did a good tempo... I said to the guys 'save yourself for the last 40kms' but when I went they didn't follow.”

“For one moment I really thought maybe I had a small chance but at the end you're so tired you're glad the peloton is there so you can stop pedaling,” he continued. “My legs are hurting.”

Cordeel was eventually caught with five kilometres remaining in the stage with BMC taking responsibility at the front of the peloton to get their man over the line.

Time bonuses give Hushovd a three-second lead in the general classification over Wauters, with another second back to Mezgec. Two-time defending champion **Tony Martin** (Omega Pharma-Quick-Step) finished in the main bunch but had a 10 second deficit to Hushovd overall.

Stage Two – Huairou Studio City - Yanqing

Stage two, the longest day of the race at 201.5km, sees the beginnings of the softening process for the peloton with four climbs to be negotiated. The first comes just 16km into the stage and is the shortest of the stage at 3.7km, the longest at the 150.5km mark and 5km in length. Whether the climbs are long enough for a breakaway to form and stay away remains to be seen, with the stage there for the taking for any opportunists in the field. However, it's more likely that any escape is reeled back in and a bunch sprint will decide the finish.

RESULTS

For full results, including all classifications, [click here](#).

Stage 1: 190.5km – Shunyi to Huairou Studio City

Pos	Nom Prénom	Team	Nat	Split
1.	HUSHOVD Thor	BMC	NOR	00"
2.	MEZGEC Luka	ARG	SLO	
3.	MAES Nikolas	OPQ	BEL	
4.	PETACCHI Alessandro	OPQ	ITA	
5.	MATTHEWS Michael	OGE	AUS	
6.	SANZ UNZUE Enrique	MOV	ESP	
7.	SELIG Rudiger	KAT	GER	
8.	BOUHANNI Nacer	FDJ	FRA	
9.	VANGENECHTEN Jonas	LTB	BEL	
10.	FERRARI Roberto	LAM	ITA	

General Classification

Pos	Nom Prénom	Team	Nat	Time	Split
1.	HUSHOVD Thor	BMC	NOR	4h20'24"	00"
2.	MEZGEC Luka	ARG	SLO	4h20'27"	03"
3.	MAES Nikolas	OPQ	BEL	4h20'28"	04"
4.	PETACCHI Alessandro	OPQ	ITA	4h20'30"	06"
5.	MATTHEWS Michael	OGE	AUS	4h20'34"	09"
6.	SANZ UNZUE Enrique	MOV	ESP	4h20'35"	10"
7.	SELIG Rudiger	KAT	GER		

8.	BOUHANNI Nacer	FDJ	FRA
9.	VANGENECHTEN Jonas	LTB	BEL
10.	FERRARI Roberto	LAM	ITA

Points Classification

Pos	Nom Prénom	Eq.	Nat	Points
1.	HUSHOVD Thor	BMC	NOR	15pts
2.	MEZGEC Luka	ARG	SLO	14pts
3.	MAES Nikolas	OPQ	BEL	13pts
4.	WAUTERS Willem	VCD	BEL	12pts
5.	PETACCHI Alessandro	OPQ	ITA	12pts

Mountain Classification

Pos	Nom Prénom	Eq.	Nat	Points
1.	CORDEEL Sander	LTB	BEL	5pts
2.	WAUTERS Willem	VCD	BEL	3pts
3.	VIGANO Davide	LAM	ITA	2pts
4.	NISHIZONO Ryota	CSS	JPN	1pts

Young Rider Classification

Pos	Nom Prénom	Eq.	Nat	Time	Split
1.	WAUTERS Willem	VCD	BEL	4h20'27"	00"
2.	MEZGEC Luka	ARG	SLO	4h20'28"	01"
3.	MATTHEWS Matthew	OGE	AUS	4h20'34"	07"
4.	SANZ UNZUE Enrique	MOV	ESP		
5.	SELIG Rudiger	KAT	GER		

2013 Tour of Beijing Stages:

Stage One – Friday, 11th October
190.5km – Shunyi to Huairou Studio City

Stage Two – Saturday 12th October
201.5km – Huairou Studio City to Yanqing

Stage Three – Sunday 13th October
176km – Yanqing to Qiandajian

Stage Four – Monday, 14th October
150.5km – Yanqing to Mentougou Miafeng Mountain

Stage Five – Tuesday, 15th October

117km – Tian an men Square to Bird's Nest Piazza

