



A world champion in the first round of the Internazionali d'Italia Series

Stefano Viezzi, the new junior cyclocross world champion, Luca Braidot in the elite category and Chiara Teocchi and Martina Berta in the women's category will be among the athletes at the start in San Zeno di Montagna on Saturday 16th March.

The first round of the Internazionali d'Italia series is just around the corner, officially starting on Saturday 16th March in San Zeno di Montagna (VR).

Among the athletes who have already confirmed their participation is Stefano Viezzi, who won the junior category at the cyclocross world championships in Tábor at the beginning of February.

We were lucky enough to catch up with him before his debut in the Internazionali d'Italia series.

Stefano, you compete at the highest level on the road, on the MTB and you are freshly crowned junior world champion in cyclocross, one could say that you are the epitome of multi-discipline. Tell us, what are the advantages of practicing different disciplines?

"I think all disciplines are related. For example, on the road it helps to have a bit of technique on the descent, while for MTB and cyclocross the road is propaedeutic, it's true that they are shorter races, but you need to have a minimum of grounding and road work is very useful for that. On the one hand, multi-discipline is an incredible advantage, but on the other hand it is not always easy to organise, especially in the summer season when there are races for several disciplines. In any case, I think that if I manage them well, it is possible to get some good results and some satisfaction."

Can you tell us what's so special about mountain biking that you can't find in road or cyclocross?

Definitely the trails. I still ride for fun and I really enjoy mountain biking. The places the races are held are also beautiful. So I'm curious to see them and the fact that I'm travelling excites me. Then of course I'll try to achieve the results I haven't yet.

What do you expect from the first round of the Internazionali d'Italia on 16th March at San Zeno di Montagna?

I hope to start quite high up on the grid, although every race is a bit different. It also depends on the track, of course, but I feel like I'm in good shape and my form will improve little by little. At the moment I'm hoping for a podium, we'll see.



Last question. What kind of rider do you see yourself becoming in the future? Will you continue to dedicate yourself to all disciplines or will you concentrate on one in particular?

I always see myself as a multi-disciplined athlete. I like road, cyclocross, MTB, everything, and I will try to do as much as I can for as long as I can. Then we'll see what happens based on the teams and the goals that the future holds for me. But at the moment I just want to have fun, I'm open to what comes.

On the women's side, the presence of two top riders from the Orbea Factory Team has been confirmed: **Chiara Teocchi** (back after two victories in recent races) and Dutch rider **Anne Tauber**.

Martina Berta from the Santa Cruz FSA team, one of the Italians in contention for a place at Paris 2024, will also be competing on the San Zeno di Montagna circuit, along with her teammates **Sara Cortinovis** and **Valentina Corvi**.

Always for the Santa Cruz FSA team among the men's elite will be at the start **Nadir Colledani** and **Luca Braidot**, bronze at the 2022 World Championships and looking for the best form in a particular and fundamental year as the Olympic one.

The Wilier-Vittoria Mtb Factory Team will be represented by the British rider **Cameron Orr**, winner of the last edition of the Internazionali d'Italia series in Alpago, the U23 world champion **Simone Avondetto**, the Danish rider **Sophie Pedersen** and the Swiss rider **Gina Caluori**, vice-world champion in the U23 category.

Some important names are also expected in the women's junior category: **Eva Herzog** and **Elisa Lanfranchi** (KTM Protek Elettrosystem), 2nd and 4th place respectively in the UCI junior rankings, and **Giada Martinoli** (Scott Racing Team), 8th in the UCI rankings.

So, all we have to do now is wait a few more days and enjoy these great athletes competing in the first round of the 2024 Internazionali d'Italia Series.

This is the full programme for the event:

Saturday 16th March

10.00 am Junior Men's race
11.45 Open Women + Junior race
14.00 Open men's race

Sunday 17th March

09:00 Masters race all
11:00 Rookie M1 race
12:00 Rookie m2 race
13:00 Youth race women (13:00 from 13:02 and art. 1.25.123 na 2023)
14:30 Junior race m1
15:45 Junior race M2