



The state of play in the Internazionali d'Italia series after the World Cup

Many of the athletes who took part in the first two rounds of the most important Italian cross-country series have been competing in South America in recent days, an important stop on the road to the Paris Olympics.

Simon Andreassen made the most of his experience in the **Internazionali d'Italia series** in Esanatoglia, when he lost out to Cameron Orr in a heart-stopping sprint after a race in which he was all on the attack. In the second stage of the World Cup in Brazil, on the Araxa circuit, the Cannondale Factory Racing rider did not repeat the mistake: he sprinted off perfectly to win ahead of Frenchman Victor Koretzky.

The Internazionali d'Italia series also went well for **Simone Avondetto**, who finished second in the San Zeno di Montagna stage. In the World Cup he was the protagonist of two great performances that saw him finish 6th and 10th, the latter despite a mechanical problem. Will these performances earn him an Olympic ticket?

Less fortunate was the Brazilian campaign of Italian champion **Luca Braidot**, who finished first in San Zeno di Montagna, just ahead of Avondetto. Braidot - the leading contender for one of the two spots available in Paris - finished 15th and retired.

Finally, among the Italians, **Juri Zanotti's** 11th place in the Araxa race should be highlighted.

As to the women, the excellent performance of **Chiara Teocchi**, who finished 4th in the first round of the World Cup in Mairiporã, confirms the great form she showed at the International Championships, where she was 2nd behind **Martina Berta** in San Zeno. The latter did not fare so well in Brazil, finishing 23rd, but it must be remembered that the Italian champion had declared in San Zeno that she wanted to take a more relaxed approach to the start of the season with a view to Paris.

Finally, **Giada Specia**, third in the first stage of the Internazionali d'Italia series and 26th in Brazil.

The two World Cup races were attended by head coach **Mirko Celestino**, who said that everything is still open and that he will decide after the race in Nové Město na Moravě, Czech Republic.

Even more important will be the next two dates of the Internazionali d'Italia series, where the Italian athletes will have to do their best to convince their coach to take them to Paris.

Finally, the tracks in Brazil deserve a final mention.

The riders were faced with modern, relatively short and very technical tracks, similar to those found in the first two rounds of the **Internazionali d'Italia San Zeno di Montagna and Esanatoglia**.

Those that will be found in **Nervesa della Battaglia and Chies d'Alpago**, on the other hand, will be more similar to the next stages of the World Cup in terms of design and altitude, thus offering the protagonists the ideal terrain to prepare themselves in the best possible way for the final sprint to the Olympic Games.