



Internazionali d'Italia series after the European Championships

The Mtb 2024 European Championships were held last weekend in Cheile Grădiștei (Romania), which was a success for the Italian athletes, many of whom were already protagonists in the first three rounds of the **Internazionali d'Italia Series**.

Simone Avondetto (Wilier-Vittoria Factory Team) truly shone brightly, snatching the gold medal in the men's XCO Elite, the pinnacle category of the event. This victory marks his definitive ascent into the elite ranks of the sport. Avondetto's earlier triumphs in the European and World titles as an under-23 rider in 2022 set the stage for this crowning achievement. His recent win in the Italian short track championship, coupled with a commendable fifth-place finish in the cross-country race at Nervesa della Battaglia, showcased his versatility and readiness for elite competition. The challenging conditions at the Montello races, reminiscent of those at the European Championships, likely contributed to his preparation for the upcoming challenge in Romania.

Avondetto won ahead of **Simon Andreassen** (Cannondale Factory Racing), who finished second in a last-gasp sprint at the Internazionali d'Italia in Esanatoglia. The Dane won the short track in Romania, while Italy took its first bronze medal with **Luca Braidot** (Santa Cruz Rockshox Pro Team). The Italian XCO champion, who won his first race at the Internazionali in San Zeno di Montagna, was also present at Nervesa della Battaglia, where he finished 4th in the cross-country race.

The women

In the women's elite, the best Italian was **Greta Seiwald** (Decathlon Ford Racing Team), who showed character and unusual form with an excellent 5th place, despite a crash and a mechanical problem. A form that, in Nervesa della Battaglia, had allowed her to secure the 2nd step of the podium behind **Martina Berta** (Santa Cruz Rockshox Pro Team), who instead chose not to be present in Romania to prepare for the upcoming appointments. 12th place for **Giada Specia** (Wilier-Vittoria Factory Team), who was crowned Italian short track champion in Nervesa, while **Chiara Teocchi** (Orbea Factory Team) finished 18th in a race made even more difficult by the extreme conditions of rain, cold and mud.

Junior

Italy also won the 2024 European title in the team relay, ahead of France and Switzerland, with a team made up of Simone Avondetto, Matteo Siffredi, Chiara Teocchi, Giada Martinoli, Valentina Corvi and Mattia Stenico. **Mattia Stenico** (Team Giorgi A.S.) - winner of the last Internazionali stage in Nervesa della Battaglia - who did excellent in the final stage, in which he held his own against the French elite Titouan Carod to guarantee the first gold medal for the Italian representative team. The individual race was less fortunate for the Trentino rider, who suffered a mechanical problem and was penalised when he could have been fighting for a place on the podium. The first of the Italians in the junior category was **Tommaso Bosio**, who finished 8th and 2nd in Nervesa della Battaglia, just behind Stenico.

Now all that remains is to stay updated on the athletes as they prepare for the upcoming cup races. With any luck, they'll be back in action at this season's final race, the Internazionali d'Italia in Chies d'Alpago, if the schedule permits.