



## **Internazionali d'Italia Series: Argentario ready to host the second round of the circuit** *A weekend of mountain biking excitement, adrenaline, international talent and spectacular racing*

Tomorrow, Saturday 22nd March, **Argentario** (GR) will host the second round of the **Internazionali d'Italia Series**, Italy's premier cross-country MTB circuit. After an electrifying debut in San Zeno di Montagna, the event moved to a brand new location, promising intense battles between some of the world's best mountain bike talent. As **Marco Aurelio Fontana**, Italian champion and London Olympic bronze medallist, explains: *"This course is a premiere for the Internazionali d'Italia and is characterized by its fast rhythm. Although it has fewer climbs than other courses, it is still very demanding, with many short but steep uphill sections that require explosive acceleration to tackle at the right speed. The climbs are steep and technical, while the course itself is made even more challenging by rock gardens, jumps and log crossings that require precise line choices. This makes it not only a technical challenge but also an exciting and dynamic race for all categories. While the Elite race is expected to be fiercely contested, the Junior race will be an even greater test of endurance: lower average speeds and steep climbs will push young riders to their limits. A spectacular course, ready to provide thrilling moments for all participants"*.

After his dominant performance last week, **Filippo Fontana** (CS Carabinieri Cicli Olympia) returns to the battlefield ready to defend his lead against top international competition. He will be challenged by US national champion **Bjorn Riley** (Scott-Sram MTB Racing Team) and Czech riders **Jan Saska** (Subterra Santa Cruz) and **Marek Rauchfuss** (Ceska Sportelna Accolade). Fontana's teammate **Emanuele Huez** is also in the mix, adding even more depth to the competition.

The women's race will feature an exciting lineup of young talent, led by Canadian **Emilly Johnston** (Scott-Sram MTB Racing Team). She will face intense competition from Czech rider **Adela Holubova** (Rouvy), as well as a strong group of Italian contenders who showed great form in San Zeno. They include **Lucia Bramati** (Trinx Factory Team) and **Beatrice Fontana** (Lee Cougan Banca Prealpi SanBiagio), both of whom finished on the U23 podium last week, as well as Valle d'Aosta rider **Nicole Pesse** (CS Carabinieri Cicli Olympia).

In the junior women's category, **Giorgia Pellizzotti** (Trinx Factory Team) will be fighting to defend her blue jersey as overall leader of the series. She will be challenged by **Nicole Azzetti** (Team Guerrini) and **Sabrina Rizzi** (Team Sogno Veneto), with **Elisa Ferri** (Team Guerrini) and the Czech rider **Lucie Borankova** (Rouvy) also posing a threat.

In the junior men's category, **Elia Rial** (Scott Racing Team) is a strong favourite, especially in the absence of the KTM Protek Elettrosystem duo that dominated the San Zeno race. However, he will face stiff competition from an ambitious field that includes **Pietro Cao** (Trinx Factory Team), **Jacopo Putaggio** (FOL MTB Racing Team) and **Filippo Cavezzan** and; **Giovanni Zago** (Team Sogno Veneto).

### **Official Event Schedule**

As per tradition, the UCI categories will race on Saturday, while the Masters and Youth categories will race on Sunday:

Saturday, March 22

- 10:00 AM – Junior Men's Race
- 11:45 AM – Open Women's Race + Junior Women's Race
- 2:00 PM – Open Men's Race

Sunday, March 23 (Provisional Schedule)



- 9:00 AM – Master Race
- 11:00 AM – Esordienti M1
- 12:00 PM – Esordienti M2
- 1:00 PM – Youth Women’s Race
- 2:30 PM – Allievi M1
- 3:45 PM – Allievi M2

The Argentario will be the ultimate stage for an action-packed weekend of mountain biking, thrilling battles and an electrifying atmosphere. Fans and enthusiasts are expected to turn out in force to witness one of the most exciting events on the Italian off-road calendar.