



Jolanda Neff dominates opening round of Internazionali d'Italia

Olympic champion secures dominant victory for Cannondale Factory Racing Team

San Zeno di Montagna (VR), 15th March 2025 - **Jolanda Neff** (Cannondale Factory Racing) won the first round of the Internazionali d'Italia series, completing the five laps of the **Pineta Sperane** course in 1:44:40. The Swiss rider finished ahead of compatriot **Ginia Caluori** (Nexetis), who was second at 1'02", and **Sofie Heby Pedersen** (Wilier-Vittoria Factory Team), who was third at 1'34".

*"The race went well, even though it got really cold towards the end," said Olympic champion and today's winner **Jolanda Neff**. "There were a lot of climbs, which made the race even harder, but luckily the descents were fun and manageable. It was definitely a tough race. It was also my first race in Italy this year and I had never been to San Zeno before. I always enjoy racing in Italy - the events are interesting and well organised. We still have two weeks before we fly to Brazil, so I can concentrate on training. I've got another race next weekend and then I'm off to the World Cup. I'm looking forward to it, although you never feel 100% ready."*

Immediately after crossing the finish line, **Ginia Caluori** commented: *"At the beginning the mud was really sticky, but then it started to rain and things improved. I can say that I really enjoyed it. I decided to take part in this race at the last minute and I'm glad I did"*.

The second race of the day saw the women's categories - Junior, U23 and Elite - take off at 11:45 under threatening skies and soon heavy rain throughout the race. Jolanda Neff set the pace right from the start, leaving her rivals in her wake. Meanwhile the Nexetis riders tried to close the gap. Lap after lap the Olympic champion extended her lead, while Sofie Heby Pedersen made a steady comeback to secure the third step of the podium behind Caluori.

U23 category

Swiss rider Lea Huber (Nexetis) won the U23 category, completing the five laps in 1h 47'36". **Lucia Bramati** (Trinx Factory Team) was second, 3'30" behind, followed by **Beatrice Fontana** (Lee Cougan Banca Prealpi), who finished in 1h 53'13", 5'37" behind the winner.

Winner Lea Huber commented: *"The conditions were insane - super muddy, which made the race incredibly tough. I don't think I've ever raced in so much mud before! My goal today was to make a strong start, find my rhythm, ride as smoothly as possible and push my limits lap after lap. My main focus this year is the World Championships in Switzerland"*.

Junior category

In the Junior race, **Giorgia Pellizotti** (Trinx Factory Team) crossed the line first after three laps, ahead of **Nicole Azzetti** (Team Guerrini) in second and **Sabrina Rizzi** (Team Sogno Veneto) in third.

*"The season has started in the best possible way, with several victories already," said **Giorgia Pellizotti**, a talented young rider who competes in both cyclocross and mountain biking. "Today's course was perfect for those coming from cyclocross, although the descents were more challenging - it was important to let the bike flow and ride decisively. I'm really happy with the way it went; it confirmed that I'm good in wet and technical descents. My next race will be in Grosseto, after which I'll take a short break to train. My dad always supports me, even from afar. The most important thing for him is that I have fun and race safely."*

The next round of the Internazionali d'Italia is scheduled for Saturday 22 March at the Argentario.