



## From Internazionali d'Italia to the world podium: the series proves to be an excellent training ground for young Italian talent

*Paccagnella wins the World Cup in Brazil. Corvi and Cortinovis also put in strong performances.*

The second round of the XCO World Cup in Brazil put the spotlight on young Italian talents who confirmed their progress with excellent results. The undisputed star of the weekend was **Elia Paccagnella**, who scored a brilliant victory on the short track and finished third in the under-23 Olympic cross-country race.

This breakthrough didn't happen by chance, but was the result of a journey built on consistency and vision. One of the key steps in his development was the participation in the **Internazionali d'Italia series**, where Paccagnella had already shown good form with a third place in **San Zeno di Montagna**. "I raced in San Zeno to test myself before the first rounds of the World Cup," explained the young South Tyrolean. "I had a good feeling. The calendar is still being finalised, but if the opportunity arises I'd like to race in the series again to prepare myself for the final part of the season."

The trip to Brazil had already shown promise in the first round, with Paccagnella finishing eighth in the short track and sixth in the Olympic cross-country. These results demonstrated his competitiveness on an international level and are a strong starting point for a season as a key player. "The results in the first round of the World Cup were pretty much as expected," he added. "In the second week I never imagined winning the short track, though, especially since it's not really my specialty. The cross-country result came with a bit more confidence and self-assurance, but I still didn't think I'd make it onto the podium." This step forward in Brazil confirms the significant progress made, thanks in part to a training programme that includes events such as the Internazionali d'Italia Series, which is becoming increasingly central to athlete development.

In the U23 women's race, the Italians were also among the leaders, starting with **Valentina Corvi**, who claimed two silver medals - in both the short track and the Olympic cross-country - and finished behind the category's world champion, Isabella Holmgren. The rider from Valtellina had already put in a strong performance the week before, finishing third in the cross-country and fifth in the short track, showing an impressive level of consistency.

**Sara Cortinovis** also delivered a strong performance, finishing fourth in the Olympic cross-country and eleventh in the short track – a testament to the excellent work put in over the winter.

The results in Brazil once again underline the strategic role played by the Internazionali d'Italia series in the development of young Italian riders. Races like the one in San Zeno di Montagna, which attract international fields and are held on technically demanding courses, provide the perfect testing ground for World Cup preparation.

"Results like those achieved in Brazil confirm the value of the series as a training platform for athletes," commented the organisers. "Giving athletes high-level racing experience in a technically demanding, and highly competitive environment makes a tangible contribution to their preparation for international events".