



From Italy to Brazil: Zanotti and Bramati shine in the World Cup after a strong start in the Internazionali d'Italia Series

The Italian series confirms its key role in preparing athletes for major events: the two Italians stand out in the World Cup opener in Brazil.

The first two rounds of the **Internazionali d'Italia Series** lit up the national MTB cross-country scene and once again proved to be an important stepping stone in the preparation of riders for the **World Cup**. This was clearly reflected in the performances of **Juri Zanotti** and **Lucia Bramati**, who after an impressive start on the Italian circuit, made their mark in the first major international event of the season.

At the opening round of the **XCO World Cup in Brazil**, **Juri Zanotti** confirmed his excellent form by finishing a promising **16th** in the Elite race, the highest placed Italian on the day. **Lucia Bramati** also had a strong debut in the World Cup, finishing **12th** in the U23 category and showing her improved form.

*"I feel good and I'm excited to race in Brazil and test myself against the best in the world," said **Zanotti** before the race. "I had a great winter and the first races of the season gave me some really positive feedback. The San Zeno race was perfect for my preparation for the World Cup – the track was challenging and even more technical because of the mud. It gave me a great boost of confidence for the upcoming races".*

Lucia Bramati, current leader of both the Elite and U23 Internazionali d'Italia rankings, also shared her satisfaction: *"I feel great and confident for my World Cup debut, especially on a course I really love. The first two Internazionali d'Italia helped me break the ice and feel more confident with the technical aspects, as they're some of the most challenging and fun tracks on our calendar."*

The **San Zeno di Montagna** and **Argentario** races have once again proved to be not only spectacular and technically challenging events, but also a real training ground for the World Cup. Top riders such as **Jolanda Neff**, **Charlie Aldridge**, **Andri Frischknecht**, **Emilly Johnston** and **Anne Terpstra** have chosen the Italian series to fine-tune their form ahead of the Brazilian round. The high quality of the courses, combined with the strong level of competition, makes the Internazionali d'Italia series the ideal testing ground for those who want to compete at the highest level of international cross-country MTB.

Internazionali d'Italia Series: current leaders after the first two rounds.

The first two rounds of the Internazionali d'Italia Series provided exciting racing and challenging weather conditions. In the elite men's category, **Filippo Fontana** stood out with a win in San Zeno and second place in Argentario, and now leads the overall standings ahead of **Frischknecht**. **Martin** and **Huez** are tied for third. **Tommaso Ferri** is currently leading the U23 classification.

In the elite women's field, **Neff** and **Johnston** won, but it's **Lucia Bramati**, third in Argentario, who now leads both the elite and U23 overall standings.

In the junior categories, **Elia Rial** leads the men's field, while **Giorgia Pellizzotti** dominates the women's - both riders hold solid leads in the rankings.

The Internazionali d'Italia Series returns to Nervesa della Battaglia on 31 May for one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the season.