



Rome, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011

**WITH THE RALLY D'ITALIA SARDEGNA  
THE WRC RETURNS TO OUR COUNTRY**  
**From May 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> the Italian round organized by the ACI**

**GELPI:** "We are pleased to have managed to reintroduce the Sardinian event in this year's WRC calendar, the only Italian round of the World Rally Championship. The event generates a turnover of over 11 million Euros for the tourism sector and all the economy of the island".

**STICCHI DAMIANI:** "I am proud to welcome in Sardinia the stars of the World Rally Championship, the FIA staff, manufacturers, drivers, teams and all the insiders, with big thanks to the Sardinia Region and to all those who allowed the event to run again this year".

Four weeks to go before the start of the Rally d'Italia Sardegna, fifth round of the FIA WRC World Rally Championship scheduled from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. The entries to the race organized by the Automobile Club d'Italia are open until April 19<sup>th</sup> but there are already 50 entries of various nationalities, with 21 WRC 1600 Turbo, 10 SWRC and 20 cars of the WRC Academy. The event will start from the province of Olbia Tempio, pass through the Oristano one and will finish in Olbia. The programme includes 18 timed special stages for 343 kilometres. The event also counts for the WRC Academy and for the S2000 World Championship. In the same days and on a reduced itinerary the event will be followed by the Rally della Costa Smeralda, valid for the Italian Rally Championship.

The event was presented today in Rome by Enrico Gelpi, President of the ACI, and Angelo Sticchi Damiani, president of the CSAI - Italian Automobile Sport Commission. The press conference was also attended by Andrea Crugnola and Matteo Brunello, two young promises of Italian motorsport, remarkable protagonists of the World Rally Championship in the WRC Academy category. The constant increase of the Italian drivers entered in the Sardinian round of the World Rally Championship demonstrates the success of the efforts made by the Automobile Club of Italy in the approach of young people to motor sports and training of new generations of drivers.

"We are satisfied - said Enrico Gelpi, President of the Automobile Club of Italy - to have managed, also in cooperation with the CSAI President, to re-establish in this year's WRC calendar the event in Sardinia, the only Italian round of the World Rally Championship. Compared to the previous years, many innovations have been introduced to enhance the technical characteristics of the route and the spectacle of the race, while still providing the same safety features that have been recognized among the best in the series. Beyond the sports event, the event is a strategic opportunity for the island's tourism, with a turnover of more than 11 million €. Over the years we find more and more attention and cooperation by the Region and its president".

"As Chairman of the Organising Committee - said Angelo Sticchi Damiani, CSAI President



- I am proud to welcome the stars of the World Rally Championship, the FIA staff, manufacturers, drivers, teams and all the insiders. The organization and more generally the whole of Sardinia are ready with the same professionalism and enthusiasm as ever. I want to express my thanks to those who allowed the event to run again this year. In particular, the Automobile Club of Italy and Sardinia, who has been supporting us by contributing significantly to the construction of the event, not forgetting the local authorities, provinces and municipalities that welcome our race on their roads, the Police Forces, the health care services, the men of the fire service and the communications staff. Acknowledgements also go to the men of the organization and the CSAI officials, all necessary for the smooth running of the event".

Over 300 accredited journalists, representing more than 250 Italian and international media. Over 50 million viewers worldwide have followed the latest editions of the race. The last special stage will be broadcast live on Rai Sport Sat and from various English, German, French and Finnish channels.

The event, now in its eighth year, will have its operational headquarters in Olbia with race control and the press room hosted in the Archaeological Museum, while the service area will be set up in the new location of the Isola Bianca, home of the commercial port of the town.

### THE FORMAT

The 2011 Rally d'Italia Sardegna schedules the first leg in the Oristano area, the second leg on the Monte Acuto with the classic special stages, the final leg with two special stages still on Monte Acuto and the TV stage, called "Power Stage", in the Gallura area.

The shakedown will take place on the morning of May 5<sup>th</sup> in the Monte Pinu setting, near Olbia. The start ceremony will open in the renovated Olbia waterfront on the evening of Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> the race will kick off from 7 am with the competitors on the road section from Olbia to the Oristano area, where the first four stages are set.

### THE SPECIAL STAGES

The opening stage will be Lago Omodeo, 10 km long, followed by the Monte Grighini Nord (22 km), Alta Marmilla (14 km) and Monte Grighini Sud (22 km) stages. Between the first and second pass the competitors will stop in the remote service area in the sports field of Siamanna, near Oristano, and in the evening they will return to the Olbia service park. On the second day, the crews will face three stages to be run twice on the famous gravel roads of Monte Acuto: the classic stages of Coiluna (29.50 km), Monte Lerno (29.30 km) and Su Filigosu (13 km). Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup> will be the grand finale, with the first run on the Gallura "Power Stage" drawn inside the San Giacomo stage, 7.80 km long. The drivers will then tackle the Monte Olia (19.30 km) and Terranova (19,50 km) stages and - after the Olbia service area - the last special stage, the Gallura "Power Stage" which will be broadcast live from 12.00 on Rai Sport Sat. The first leg will have 131 km of stages, the second 146 km and the third 64 km.

### THE EXPERTS' OPINION

"The news for the drivers - said the route manager Carlo Cassina – will be the special stages in the Oristano area on the first day: they all have higher average speeds than the traditional ones of Gallura and Monte Acuto, also characterized by a surface that only deteriorates a little. The opening stage of Lago Omodeo takes place on a road which has



several accesses, and many places for photography, with a nice Nuraghe near the road. The other stages of Monte Grighini Nord and Monte Grighini Sud – in between which is the Alta Marmilla stage - are close, to facilitate the participation of the spectators. In the second and third legs the route returns to the classic stages in the Monte Acuto forest area, and on the gravel roads of Gallura with the "Power Stage". There will also be the return of the spectacular long Coiluna jump and of the legendary Micky's Jump".

## THE HISTORY

The Rally d'Italia Sardegna is one of the jewels of the Italian and international motor sport tradition. The "Sanremo-Sestriere – Rally d'Italia" was born in 1970, from the merger of two major races, a Rally which for two years was part of a series reserved for international manufacturers which was the first version of what eventually became the World Rally Championship. For over 30 years, from 1972 to 2003, with the exception of 1995, when the race was only valid for the FIA 2-liter World Championship, the Rally d'Italia had its headquarters in San Remo, with the route stretching into other regions such as Tuscany, Umbria and Marche. Since 2004, the Rally d'Italia has moved on the gravel roads of Sardinia, where it has found a new strength and a natural habitat that has allowed it to continue to live and grow.