



SANREMO, 16-17-18/10/2026



73rd Sanremo Rally: a seat for two in the Italian Championship, a whole table for victory

There are two competitors (Roberto Daprà and Boštjan Avbelj) who could clinch the Sparco Italian Rally Championship in Sanremo. Many more are aiming for a victory that could define their season. Starting with Andrea Crugnola, last year's winner who is now out of the running, who could return the Lancia to the top step of the podium – a feat it has not achieved since 1992 (Andrea Aghini). The rally will begin on the afternoon of Saturday 17 October with the show stage at Porto Sole, before heading inland and concluding on Sunday at 4.30 pm in Pian di Nave.

SANREMO, 30 September – Rallye Sanremo, the final judge. The 2026 edition, the 73rd in its history, will once again be the event that delivers the final verdict on the Italian championship. As the seventh and final round of the **Sparco Italian Rally Championship (CIAR)**, it is once again up to the City of Flowers to crown the overall national champion. And what makes this year's event special is that the winner will be a driver claiming their first national title – something that hasn't happened since 2020, when **Andrea Crugnola**, then a newcomer to the national rally scene, emerged victorious, breaking the decade-long dominance of Paolo Andreucci and his rivals, particularly **Giandomenico Basso**. Competing for the 2026 title will be two drivers at the wheel of the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2: 25-year-old **Roberto Daprà** from Trentino, who leads the standings, and 36-year-old **Boštjan Avbelj** from Slovenia, now a naturalised Italian citizen. Both have a chance of claiming the national title, although the odds – and the maths – suggest the driver from Trentino holds a slight advantage.

This season, Daprà has two overall victories to his name (Targa Florio and Roma Capitale) and is making his third appearance at the Sanremo, a race in which he finished fourth overall last year. For his part, Avbelj triumphed at the recent Rally del Lazio-Cassino, and Sanremo features twice in his honours list, with a surprising (at the time) second place overall in 2023, when he topped the Promotion class. But they won't be the only ones aiming for the top step of the podium at Pian di Nave. Also in search of a victory – one that would redeem his rather unlucky season – is Andrea Crugnola, who this year has switched to driving the Lancia Ypsilon Rally2 HF Integrale, with which he has won two of the six Italian championship rounds this season (Ciocco and Regione Piemonte), though he recorded a modest result at the Roma Capitale and retired from the Rally del Lazio.

Crugnola is the winner of last year's Sanremo Rally. Andrea Crugnola also has the task of leading an Italian car back to victory – a triumph that has eluded the Sanremo roads since 2008, when Giandomenico Basso took the honours in the Grande Punto Abarth – whilst fans have been waiting for a Lancia victory since 1992, when Andrea Aghini triumphed in the Delta HF Integrale Evoluzione.

But it won't just be these three drivers aiming for a prestigious result at Sanremo. Others to watch out for will certainly include Andrea Nucita (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2), fourth in the CIAR standings and second overall at the Lazio-Cassino rally, making his tenth appearance at Sanremo – a race in which he finished second in 2014 – and who is ahead of Simone Campedelli (Toyota GR Yaris) in

RALLYE SANREMO
UFFICIO STAMPA
 Sergio Zaffiro +39 334.9260810
 Nicolò Malga +39 340.5369699
 ufficiostampa@rallyesansremo.it

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the Italian championship standings, who has competed at Sanremo eleven times, finishing on the podium three times (second in 2019 and third in 2016 and 2024), followed by **Fabio Andolfi** from Savona, sixth in the Italian standings, who won the Sanremo with a fantastic run in 2022, pipping Andrea Crugnola by 9/10, thanks to a masterful performance on the Teglia stage on the second day, as well as having secured third place last year.

The 73rd Sanremo Rallye will not settle the outcome of the **CIAR-Junior campionissimo** as, following the Ligurian round, the six Under-28 drivers – all at the wheel of a Lancia Ypsilon Rally4 – will face off once more at the final round in Tuscany. Sanremo, however, could shake up the standings, which currently see the top three (Lorenzo Varesco, Geronimo Nerobutto and Alberto Siccardi) separated by just ten points, whilst the maths still leaves a theoretical chance of overall victory for Matteo Scalet and Giacomo Marchioro too. So, whilst not decisive, Sanremo will be a turning point in the season. Although the Italian title has already been decided, Sanremo will be a key stage in the Italian Two-Wheel-Drive Rally Championship, which has been convincingly won by 25-year-old Gabriel Di Pietro, who will be looking to reaffirm his superiority over Nicolo Ardizzone, Moreno Cambiaghi and Edoardo De Antoni, his main challengers. Similarly, in the Italian Rally Promotion Championship, Andrea Nucita will be aiming for a clean sweep of victories (five wins and one retirement from six races), whilst his main rivals – Antonio Rusce, the Frenchman Benjamin Boulenc and the Finn Heikki Kovalainen – are chasing the win that could define their season. Although the Women's Championship title is already secured by Sara Carra, it will once again be a head-to-head battle with Asia Vidori, the two 'princesses' of the category who have been locked in a close contest throughout the season.

The 73rd Sanremo Rally will count towards the Sparco Italian Rally Championship (CIAR), the Italian Junior Rally Championship, and the European Rally Trophy (ERT) for drivers (overall, Master and Junior) and co-drivers. It will also count towards the Lancia single-make trophies featuring the Ypsilon HF Rally4 and Rally6, the Toyota GR Yaris Rally Cup, the Suzuki Rally Cup with the Swift Sport Hybrid, and the Pirelli Star Academy 2026. The next deadline for the 73rd Sanremo Rally is Friday 9 October, when entries close. On Wednesday 14 October in Santa Tecla, from 7.00 pm to 10.00 pm, the first round of technical scrutineering will take place, followed the next day, Thursday 15 October, from 7.30 am to 9.30 am, by the second and final session. Technical scrutineering will take place in Via Adolfo Rava on Friday 16 October from 4.00 pm to 10.00 pm.

On Saturday 17 October, engines will start up for the Shakedown in San Romolo from 7.30 am to 10.30 am, allowing the 73rd Sanremo Rallye to get underway at 2.47 pm from Pian di Nave, proceeding immediately to Porto Sole for the 2.06 km show stage starting at 3.00 pm, followed by the Carpasio-Ville San Pietro stage (Colle d'Oggia, 14.70 km, at 6.04 pm) and the Caravonica-Rezzo stage (24.83 km, at 7.07 pm), followed by a service park in Sanremo at 8.47 pm and the overnight regrouping in Piazza Colombo from 9.39 pm.

On Sunday 18 October, the race sets off at 7.00 am from Piazza Colombo for the second leg, tackling the San Romolo–Ghimbegna stages twice (Bignone, 10.28 km at 7.49 and 12.37), Ghimbegna-Badalucco (Vignai, 19.14 km at 8.10 am and 12.58 pm), followed by Semoigo-Bajardo

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RALLYE SANREMO
UFFICIO STAMPA
Sergio Zaffiro +39 334.9260810
Micol Maiga +39 340.636969
ufficiostampa@rallyesansremo.it



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(7.39 km at 10.03 am and 2.51 pm), which is also the race's Power Stage. Spectators will be able to watch the mechanics at work in the service parks on Via Adolfo Rava at 7.07 and 11.40, and the crews at the regrouping point in Piazza Colombo at 10.58. Pian di Nave will host the finish podium at 16.30, after the competitors have covered 410.80 km, 153.43 of which are spread across eleven special stages. Once again, the City of Sanremo, thanks to its collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Events and Sport, is at the heart of the event: the Santa Tecla complex will host the race control centre and the press room; Via Adolfo Rava will be the service park; Piazza Colombo will be the regrouping point; and, finally, Pian di Nave will be where all the winners will be celebrated.

Last year's results were as follows: 1) Andrea Crugnola and Pietro Elia Ometto (Citroën C3 Rally2), in 1:19:01.0; 2) Giandomenico Basso and Lorenzo Granai (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) at 9.9 seconds; 3. Fabio Andolfi and Marco Menchini (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) at 16.6 seconds.

Full details are available on the events' official websites:

www.rallyesanmarco.it e www.rallydellepalme.it

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UFFICIO STAMPA
Sergio Zaffiro +39 334.9260810
Micol Maiga +39 340.536969
ufficiostampa@rallyesanmarco.it