

VareseNews

Simone Miele: triumphing “in the name of his father”

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Simone Miele has the right DNA and class, and his car was judged to be one of the best. His previous results had put him among the favourites, and he did not disappoint; for the first time in his career, **Simone has triumphed in the Lakes Rally**, reconnecting the threads of history **with the old “ACI Varese”**, the race that his father **Mauro** (who was among the people at the finish) won in 1986 and 1989.

It was a **clear victory, and one that was well-deserved by the 28-year-old from Olgiate Olona**, who was supported by the sly fox, Roberto **Mometti** (who won the Lakes in 1995, together with Gallio) and propelled by the horsepower of the flagship **Ford Fiesta WRC**, owned by the Miele family. There was a perfect harmony between the team and the vehicle, and we could see it, from the **continuity that Simone showed during the race**. Despite coming in second after Pedersoli during the test runs on Saturday, he proved himself in five special trials in a row, including the three in the Cuvignone Pass. And he broke the **all-time speed record on the fast Monte Settetermini**, during the fourth special trial, with a sensational 6'54"7.

With Miele so strong, **not even Andrea Crugnola, who was on form**, was able to reverse the situation; the talented driver from Calcinate del Pesce had to familiarise himself with the brand-new **Fiesta R5** by Dmax, which suffered a few minor problems on Saturday. However, Crugnola (along with Mara Bariani) **never gave up, getting better and better**, and achieved the satisfaction of winning the last two trials and of standing on the second step of the podium. So, he did better than the eagerly awaited **Luca Pedersoli**, who did moderately well during the trial, but who was not able to catch up to the local

drivers. This confirms the difficulty of these roads, which, for anyone starting out, always hide perils and obstacles. And as the professional he is, Pedersoli did not hide his disappointment. **“I drove badly. I’ve got no excuses.”**

The leading trio emerged on **Sunday morning**, when, on the first Cuvignone trial, **Gianesini made a mistake and got stuck**, blocking the trial; about a dozen teams had set times applied, including Filippo **Pensotti** (DS3 WRC), who from fifth, managed to **climb one place**, passing the first Swiss driver, Ivan **Ballinari**, who came third last year. Behind them, the main surprise was the defending champion **Freguglia**, who, at the very start of the third Cuvignone trial, **raised the white flag**. The mistake on Saturday and the accumulated delay forced him to race from the back, without any chance of a great comeback: after three years, the driver from Besnate had to give up his crown.

So, the Lakes Race found other protagonists, who are first of all, confirmations: the consistent drivers **Roncoroni and Bizzozzero**; behind them, **Gio Dipalma and Vanni Maran**, with clearly inferior cars to those in front. Their top ten is worth a victory, just as the **result of Bosetti**, who, in the R3C, came out on top in the contest with Marchetti. At the end, there were also a lot of people at the Estensi Gardens, for the award ceremonies, although the **crowd of people at the Colacem trial on Saturday is the real scene that symbolises** this year, as in previous years. The Varese rally was appreciated once more, and also this year, came to an end to much applause, and without any major problems. And with a wish for rapid recovery for the **unfortunate steward**, who was struck by a stone “fired” by a competitor’s tyre on the first Valganna trial: the ambulance was immediately put into action, but for an accident that turned out to be minor.

FINAL RANKING for the 25th Lakes Rally

1) Simone MIELE – Roberto MOMETTI (Ford Fiesta WRC), in 1h11’40”6; 2) Andrea Crugnola – Mara Bariani (Ford Fiesta R5), 36”3; 3) Luca Pedersoli – Matteo Romano (Citroen C4 WRC), 1’16”4; 4) Pensotti – Falzone (Citroen DS3 WRC), 3’01”8; 5) Ballinari – Pagani (Ford Fiesta R5), 3’39”1; 6) Roncoroni – Brusadelli, 4’28”5; 7) Bizzozzero – Tosetto, 5’55”4; 8) Dipalma – Zanotti, 6’24”9; 9) Maran – Maran, 6’31”1; 10) Bosetti – Buzzzi, 6’39”4.

di **Damiano Franzetti** Translated by **Mazzucchelli & Pagani** (Reviewed by **Prof. Rolf Cook**)