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BAJA DI PRIMAVERA 2026: ARTUGNA RACE, THE NEW DAWN OF THE CI2C

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The wait is officially over. Entries open today for the **Artugna Race**, the 16th Italian Spring Baja, scheduled for March 13–14. It is the first of five rounds of the CI2C, the acronym for the 2026 Italian Cross Country Championship. The event is organised by Fuoristrada Club 4x4 Pordenone with the support of ACI Sport, the Federation that is about to appoint the new National Commissions and announce a series of significant innovations for the upcoming season.

For the sixth consecutive year, the Italian Spring Baja will take place on the bed of the “non-existent creek,” at the foothills between the towns of Aviano, Budoia and Polcenigo. The **Artugna** course is a network of dirt sections, generally on compact terrain, although there are at least a couple of stretches with muddy pools that can expand in the event of heavy rain. After all, off-road racing is about endurance and daring as much as speed: natural traps and hazards are part of the game.



Il gioco per PC più realistico del 2026

The **Artugna** features track grip characteristics that also make the challenge attractive to rally cars, with the aim of broadening the field of competitors. Four passes over the single selective sector of approximately 30 kilometres, from Aviano to San Giovanni di Polcenigo, do not create extreme ruts, and at the start of the season even teams with the most robust machinery prefer to avoid excessive mechanical stress.

The **race** headquarters has once again been confirmed at the evocative Villa Policreti in Castello d'Aviano, with the start and finish ceremony taking place in Piazza Duomo. The last three editions have been won by Manuele Mengozzi from the Marche region in a Toyota Hilux Overdrive, partnered last year by Elisa Tassile from Friuli.

BORDONARO READY TO LEAD A SICILIAN CONTINGENT AT THE ARTUGNA RACE

As many as six drivers from the "Trinacria" region are set to line up at the Italian Spring Baja. They will join forces with UFO Samsa within the Trieste-based Big Inn team.



Nuovi occhiali intelligenti: autofocus e zoom per veder bene da vicino e lontano

Pordenone, February 27, 2026. It is something Italian cross-country insiders cannot recall ever happening before. No fewer than six Sicilian drivers will travel the length of the peninsula to compete in Friuli at the Italian Spring Baja – **Artugna Race**, the opening round of the new Italian Cross Country Championship, scheduled for Friday, March 13 and Saturday, March 14, on the dirt roads at the foothills between Aviano, Budoia and Polcenigo.

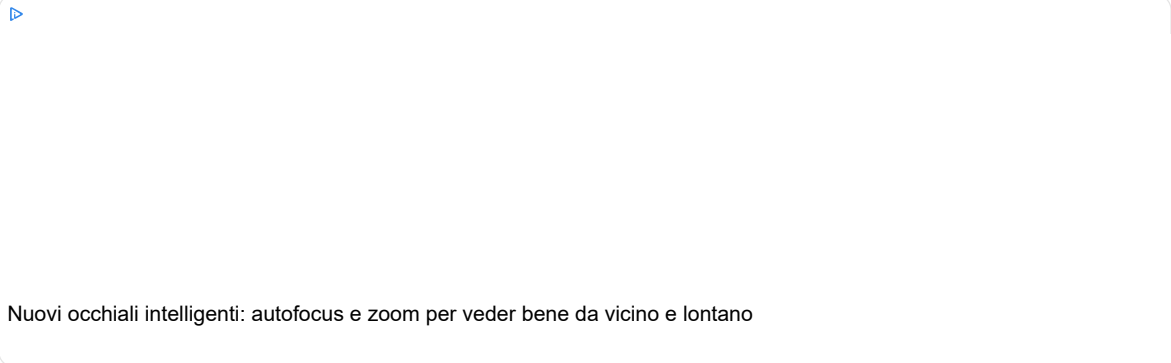
The "reverse landing" operation is being coordinated by Alfio Bordonaro, overall champion of the discipline in 2022 and 2023, and winner of nine editions of the Challenge Suzuki—almost consecutively—from 2016 to 2025. A loyal supporter of the Hamamatsu brand, Bordonaro continues with Suzuki machinery, even though the manufacturer will not organise its one-make trophy this season.

The Catania driver will start with a different Grand Vitara T1 from the one he campaigned over the past three seasons. His son Mario, aged twenty and with experience in enduro, will make his four-wheel debut in a Group T2 Grand Vitara (production-based category), aiming to follow in his father's footsteps.

Also emerging from Bordonaro's "garage" are the Vitara entrusted to Chinti Marino Gambazza, marking a return to cross-country competition, and another supplied to Angelo Tomarchio, who is seeking new challenges after extensive Porsche Cup circuit experience. Completing the Sicilian line-up are Mirko Emanuele and Carmelo Ciancio, competing respectively in their Vitara and a Mitsubishi Pajero 3.5 V6.

This sixth Sicilian entry is already attracting attention, not least because the group will be supported by the Bologna-based Ito Motor Sport team from Monghidoro—hometown of Gianni Morandi—renowned for its ability to make engines truly "sing." They will also align with the Trieste-based Big Inn team, alongside Fabio Samsa, who is expected to start in a Toyota Hilux Overdrive T1 Plus, already described as something of a "UFO" in Italian cross-country, with the potential to disrupt the established hierarchy of recent seasons.

Entries for the **Artugna Race** close on Monday, March 9.



Nuovi occhiali intelligenti: autofocus e zoom per veder bene da vicino e lontano

The secretariat of the Fuoristrada Club 4x4 Pordenone reminds competitors that, in order to score championship points, they must also complete registration for the Italian Championship via the ACI Sport website.

Italian Baja Press Office
Photo: Acisport

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