



**FIA World Rally Championship  
Rally d'Italia Sardegna, 16-18 May 2008  
Event Preview**

**Munchi's muster for Mediterranean mission**

The sixth round of the FIA World Rally Championship sees the Munchi's Ford World Rally Team head to Sardinia next week for the fourth round of their 10-event 2008 campaign. Currently, the side hold a strong eight point lead over Suzuki's works outfit in the Manufacturers' Championship race.

Rally d'Italia Sardegna will again see a shift in the Munchi's Ford line-up with Henning Solberg/Cato Menkerud transferring from the Stobart squad to score points for the Argentine team on this event. The Norwegian pair will be joined by Munchi's regulars Federico Villagra/Jorge Pérez Compagnon as the second nominated points scoring crew.

After missing the opening two rounds of the season, Villagra has been in fine form scoring points on all three WRC events he has contested thus far. Driving the new evolution Munchi's Ford Focus RS WRC07 'coyote' Villagra has finished sixth on the last two rounds of the championship.

This will be the second event Solberg enters with the Munchi's team so far this season. In the previous, Rally Mexico, he scored his second best result of the year with a fine fifth. The Expert Norwegian currently lies seventh in the Drivers' Championship after a firm display in Jordan last month which saw him come home fourth overall.

For Villagra, who currently occupies ninth in the Drivers' Championship, it's a busy few weeks as he contests the third round of his native Argentine Rally Championship – Rally de San Luis – this weekend; a championship he currently leads handsomely. Straight after his national championship duties he will depart immediately for the Mediterranean where he finished the Sardinian event 11<sup>th</sup> last year on debut with the Munchi's Ford WRT.

Solberg's history of Sardinia posts mixed fortunes with two retirements and two finishes since his first attack on the Italian round back in 2004. A positive for the 35-year-old came in more recent times when he finished fourth last year with the Stobart team; less than 15 seconds shy of a rostrum step.

Kick-starting in the beautiful Costa Smeralda region in the ultra-exclusive Porto Cervo holiday resort, the fifth running of Rally Sardinia will offer crews 17 demanding stages over 345 kilometres of competitive distance.

Stages are notoriously tricky with a sandy gravel base that is littered with potential rally-ending rocks and boulders. Roads are fast in sections but, in places, close to the narrowest in the championship keeping drivers on their toes at all times. The event will be located in Olbia with Service being stationed at the town's major Shipping Port.



**Munchi's Ford World Rally Team Driver Federico Villagra said:**

"Sardinia is a special place for me because it is where I first drove for the Munchi's Ford team and it was the first time I competed in the Focus WRC. Last year was a big learning experience but we still managed to get around and finish in 11<sup>th</sup> but this year I will be hoping to score some points. It has been a great start to the year scoring points on all three rounds so the plan is to keep this going as long as we can. Sardinia is a tough event and very technical in places so we are going to have to be sharp and make good notes. The goal for this event is to finish in the top-eight and hopefully score some more good points for the Munchi's team."

**Munchi's Ford World Rally Team Driver Henning Solberg said:**

"I am hoping for a good result on this rally and I am feeling confident after Jordan where we had our best result so far this year. On the second half of the rally in Jordan the feeling really started to come and the car was feeling perfect. Last year we came fourth here, so close to the podium also, so we will be aiming for this sort of top-five result again. Last year there were many retirements in Sardinia as it is a very tough rally. So far Pirelli have done a good job keeping the punctures low which will be a factor in Sardinia with so many rocks next to the roads. I am looking forward to the event and hopefully we can get some more good points for the Munchi's team and myself."

**Event information**

Date: 16-18 May 2008  
Round: 6 of 16 FIA World Rally Championship  
Based: Olbia, Sardinia  
Stage surface: Gravel  
Total stage distance: 344.73km  
Number of stages: 17  
Longest stage: 33.96km (SS2 & SS5)  
Central Service Park: Olbia Port  
Ceremonial start: Porto Cervo