

June 27, 2023

## European Games the stage for padel's major multi-sport debut

**Padel's first medallists** at a major Games were crowned this weekend in the heart of the historic main square in **Kraków** city centre.

The padel finals have been a much-anticipated highlight of the **European Games 2023** programme and drew capacity crowds to the attractive temporary venue, set against the spectacular backdrop of the **UNESCO-listed Kraków Cloth Hall**.

Spanish Mixed Doubles pair **Noa Canovas** and **Daniel Santigosa** made history yesterday, Sunday, 25 June, by securing padel's first-ever major Games gold medals, overcoming silver medallists **Giulia Sussarello** and Marco **Cassetta** from Italy with **Aracelia Martinez** and **David Gala** (ESP) taking bronze.

Later in the day, a fiercely contested Women's Doubles final saw Italians **Carolina Orsi** and **Giorgia Marchetti** edge out **Marta Barrera** and **Marta Caparros** (ESP) to take gold, while **Daniel Santigosa** and **David Gala** beat their Spanish teammates **Alonso Rodriguez** and **Pablo Garcia** for the Men's Doubles title in a late-night match.

History-maker **Canovas** (age 18), said: *"With Dani (Santigosa), we are super proud because the Spanish federation trusted in us, even though we are so young, and this is an incredible opportunity. Padel is growing so fast, and the Mixed Doubles is a new event for us, but in the end all our effort was worth it."*

Double gold medallist **Santigosa** said: *"The feeling is pure happiness. It was difficult to face our friends and teammates in the (Men's Doubles) final because they know us and we spent the week together, but on the court everything became clearer. I dedicate this medal to my father and my brother."*

The fast-growing sport of padel is one of eight new additions to the European Games Kraków-Malopolska 2023, which also features 18 Olympic sports and is a major continental qualifier for the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

Now in its third edition, the European Games has established a pioneering reputation, providing a launchpad for sports and disciplines including Basketball 3x3, which first featured in Baku 2015 on its way to appearing in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

The five-day padel tournament in Kraków was run in coordination with the International Padel Federation (FIP), which estimates 25 million active padel players around the world. Athletes from 25 countries competed in padel at the European Games.

**European Olympic Committees President Spyros Capralos**, who attended the final day of competition, said: *“Being here and seeing the venue full of people with so much enthusiasm and the mix of music and sport, it is easy to see why padel is developing so fast around Europe. With the European Games, right from the beginning, we have always also tried to find opportunities to include new and developing sports which might become Olympic sports in the future. This is very exciting.”*

**FIP President Luigi Carraro** said: *“We have seen the coming-together of a fantastic stage and a fantastic journey. The Games are a very special and unique opportunity for our best padel players, giving them the experience of competing in a national uniform. We can see the proof in the quality of the field and this beautiful, full stadium. FIP believes strongly in multi-sport Games, because they capture what sport is really all about – building friendships with your teammates and athletes from other countries. Today we saw padel deliver a great technical and competitive show, under the banner of fair play and healthy competition. As President Capralos told us, the exam has been passed.”*

Other new sports on the programme of the European Games Kraków-Malopolska 2023 include beach handball, breaking, kickboxing, muaythai, rugby sevens, (summer) ski jumping and teqball. For the first time, the European Esports Championships will also be held as an official side event of the European Games, opening on 30 June in Katowice.

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**About the International Padel Federation (FIP)**

About the International Padel Federation (FIP) The International Padel Federation (FIP) is the world governing body of padel, whose goal is to promote all forms of padel worldwide with: 90 Countries, 64 National Federations, + 25 million active players and 500,000 Federated Players. The sport was created in Acapulco, Mexico, by Enrique Corcuera in 1969. It was 32 years later that the FIP was established in Madrid by the legal representatives of the Argentine Padel Association, the Spanish Padel Association and the Uruguayan Padel Association, by means of Public deeds signed before the Notary Mr. Javier Gaspar Alfaro, with the protocol number 2486. We want to bring the worldwide Padel family together into one community, and make Padel a sport that is recognised and played in all the countries of the World. [www.padelfip.com](http://www.padelfip.com)

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