

April 29, 2024

## Focus on...Sevilla In Andalusia there is the 'padel cantera'

Everything is ready in **Sevilla** for the start of the main draw of the sixth stage of the **Premier Padel 2024** circuit. The **Estadio de la Cartuja** has been transformed from a venue for football competitions or musical events into a 'temple of racket', in a region where padel is a religion. In fact, **Andalucía** is the fourth largest province in Spain in terms of number of clubs after Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia, with 190 facilities (clubs+accommodation) and almost 700 courts, according to estimates by the **FIP Research & Data Analysis Department**.

The Sevillian and Andalusian padel movement in general (more than 3,000 courts throughout the Autonomous Community) is driven by the **Federación Andaluza de Padel** (FAP), in concert with the **Federación Española de Padel** (FEP). The FAP, headquartered in Seville and presided over by **José Perez Garcia**, has a licensed number of 8,452 players, 194 federated clubs, 146 coaches and 40 national referees (Data source: FEP-updated April 2024). For years, Andalucía has been one of Spain's 'canteras', as 17.8% of licensed players are minors (a very high percentage compared to the national data, which stands at 12.1%) and 6.6% are youngsters between the ages of 19 and 23 (again, this data is higher than the national data, which is 5.4%): among the remaining categories, the 24-39 range accounts for 29% and the veterans (over 39) for over 46%. The Andalusian federation is currently the third largest in Spain in terms of the number of members after the **Federació Catalana de Pàdel** and the **Federación Comunidad de Madrid** (in 2021 it reached second place after the Catalan federation).

The **P2** in Sevilla is the second tournament of the **FIP circuits** to be played in this province; the first was a FIP Promotion 'combined' played in the municipality of Ecija in February 2022, which saw the Spanish pairs **Pepe Aliaga-Francisco Guerrero** as winners among the men and **Marta Barrera** paired with home favourite **Lucia Perez Parra** among the women. There are 10 Sevillian players in the Top 100 of the FIP world ranking, including seven among the men and three among the women, and all of them entered in the home tournament (main draw or qualifiers). Among the men, the most famous is **Paquito Navarro** (born in 1989, currently number 7), who returned from Brussels to play with **Juan Lebron** as the number 2 seed (they were the world's number 1 pair in 2019); they are followed by **Gonzalo Rubio** (born in 1991, number 28) who will pair with **Jairo Bautista** in the main draw, **Mario Del Castillo** (born in 1997; number 57) who, with **José Jimenez**, is playing in the qualifiers, from which **Fran Miguel Ramirez** (born in 1991, number 99) paired with Frenchman **Thomas Leygue** was

eliminated. The brothers **Alvaro** (born in 2000; number 67) and **Pedro Melendez** (born in 1997; number 89) finally received a wild card. Among the women, **Victoria Iglesias Segador** (born in 1994, number 21) will play with **Barbara Las Heras**; **Ana Fernandez De Ossó** (born in 1986, number 68) was eliminated in the qualifiers paired with **Nuria Vivancos**.

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