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FIP Platinum Sardinia, Papu Gomez at TC Cagliari: “Here to follow Tolito, Maxi Sanchez and Lamperti, but I resemble Chingotto!”

For once, the world of **Alejandro 'Papu' Gomez** was turned upside down: he was in the stands cheering while the players battled it out on the court. Naturally, padel players on the sea-blue carpet of **TC Cagliari**, the 'home' of **FIP Platinum Sardegna**, one of the key tournaments of the prestigious **Cupra FIP Tour**, the global circuit that boasts 180 tournaments across five continents. Papu is a five-star padel fan, much like many Argentinians. He braved the sun and heat to follow the feats of his close friends: **Tolito Aguirre**, **Miguel Lamperti**, who beat the Italian pair **Perino-Dominguez** 6-3, 6-1, and the former world number one **Maxi Sanchez**, who partnered with **Luciano Capra** to win with a double 6-4 against **Medina-Garcia**. These players have made and are making history in the sport, enriching the **FIP Platinum Sardegna** draw, from the 'Gen Z' idol **Tolito Aguirre** to the two who have literally written pages of history in the global scene.

"Yes, I'm here in Cagliari to follow Tolito, Miguel, and Maxi. They are dear friends, and I cheer for them, while also picking up a few tips." Padel, a passion that started at a very young age: "Like many Argentinians, I've been playing padel since I was a kid. Then football came along, and for a long time, I only played padel during vacations or occasionally when I had the chance."

But then came the two-year doping ban—while playing for Sevilla, he took a cough syrup containing a banned substance, resulting in a punishment in Spain for not adhering to the precautions usually required of a professional athlete—against which he continues to fight, and now that he has some free time, *"padel is a game that fits perfectly with our footballer characteristics. I play padel every day, take lessons to improve, and have a lot of fun. I have many footballer friends who play; the latest one I've seen grow a lot in padel is my great friend Diego Perotti."*

Then, football. Ok, padel, but the desire to officially kick the ball again devours him: *"I'm fighting for my situation (the ban, ed.), and I can't wait to play again. Monza is a great club with important and competent people like 'Mr.' Galliani. They had a great season with Palladino, and now Mr. Nesta has arrived to do well and have a satisfying season."* Then Papu, formerly of Sevilla, talks about Spain, which dominates the world in football and padel: *"I believe it depends on the sports culture, the ability to organize well-equipped schools for kids. But I also*

see talents here in Italy; maybe they need more support to grow."

Back to padel, we asked who Papu resembles: "*Physically, **Chingotto!** - jokes the former Atalanta star - everyone tells me I look like him, but not technically, let's be clear. I play a different sport. My best shot? Lately, I've improved my 'vibora' and 'bandeja' a lot - explains Gomez - I'm a right-handed player, still fast, tactically good, so I build the game.*" Surely with some genius strokes, just as he does on that green field with two goals, a bit larger than the padel court.

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