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FIP Platinum Sardegna, that special feeling with the number ones...

The **FIP Platinum Sardegna** and that special feeling with the number ones, following an unwritten rule of sports: once you've been number one, you're always number one. It's a well-known story: sometimes it happens to be for a long time, as in the case of **Fernando Belasteguin**, who held the position for almost 16 years. Or it might happen for just 7 days (from July 26 to August 1, 1999) in the ATP tennis rankings, as it happened to the new ambassador of padel in Australia, **Pat Rafter**. For a few months now, he has also been a player in FIP tournaments, battling on courts for the 'Aussie' colors – he played in the **FIP RISE Australian Open**, the tournament that kicked off the **CUPRA FIP Tour 2024**, and he wore the national team jersey for the **Seniors World Padel Championships**. But between the '90s and the new millennium, he was one of the world's best tennis players, with a 'serve and volley' style that was gradually disappearing from the global tennis radar.

Belasteguin is undoubtedly the greatest number one in the history of the sport. He is the most decorated athlete in the world with over 230 career titles. Turning professional at 15, the class of '79 has greatly contributed to the global growth of padel and has a special feeling with **Sardinia**. It's no coincidence that he's here again – paired with **Javi Garrido** and for the last time in Cagliari as a 'pro': he will retire from competitive play at the end of the year – and he has brought his family: his mother, wife, and three children, who were in the stands last night cheering for him along with a few hundred people at the Centrale of **TC Cagliari**. The other number one (as we said: once you become one, you remain one for life) is Maxi **Sanchez**. Another Argentine who topped the rankings for two consecutive years, in 2018 and 2019, and last year in Cagliari, surprisingly eliminated in the semifinals against **Moyano-Gil** with the same partner, **Luciano Capra**, with whom he is also competing this year as the tournament's third seed.

And it doesn't end there because there are also the women. And what women they are. **Lucia Sainz** and **Patty Llaguno** took the spotlight and the title at last year's FIP Platinum Sardegna by playing extraordinary padel. Lucia & Patty – born in '84 and '85 respectively, currently ranked 10 and 13 in the FIP Ranking – not only share the joy of playing padel together, but they have also experienced the thrill of being the best in the world: Llaguno was number one in 2013 with **Elisabet Amatriain**, and Sainz in 2020 with another padel legend, **Gemma Triay**, currently ranked number 3 in the **FIP Ranking**. The same goes for 'Mamma Marta', **Marta Marrero**, one of the discipline's symbolic players along with Patty and Lucia – she was number one in 2016 with **Alejandra Salazar** and in 2019 with **Marta Ortega**, before taking a break in

2022 to fulfill her dream of becoming a mother – who is here in Cagliari paired with **Aranzazu Osoro** after resuming her place in the circuit just a few weeks ago.

The FIP Platinum Sardegna is the tournament of people's idols. Of the number ones, whether they are players or athletes, and the magic of a unique place – Cagliari – where the world's best padel players have a special connection with the throne of padel. An example? In 2020, the **FIP Star** in **Cagliari** was won by an 18-year-old who was said to have great talent and a bright future. Who was he? A certain **Arturo Coello**.

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