

19 July, 2024

## **Cagliari and padel: a love that never ends. Carraro: "It's one of the world capitals of our sport"**

First, the **FIP Platinum Sardegna** - which in its second edition confirms the success of the 2023 edition, and right after, the **FIP European Championships**, the European team padel championships: **Cagliari** and **Sardinia** continue to be central to the global geography of padel. *"We can define Cagliari as one of the world capitals of padel: in 2020, the year of Covid, we held the first major international event here, and it was a success. From that moment on, every year we've returned here with major world-class tournaments. This year, we're hosting two at TC Cagliari: the FIP Platinum Sardegna, a flagship event of the Cupra FIP Tour, and immediately after, a historic European Championship with 51 participating teams compared to 29 in the last edition in Spain,"* said **Luigi Carraro, President of the International Padel Federation**.

Numbers that define the exponential growth of padel, through Cagliari and the major events hosted over these five years, featuring big names and crowded stands. Last year, 35 of the top 50 male players in the world ranking came here, plus 24 top 50 females. This year, the trend was confirmed with an added touch of class – and what class: to the delight of the audience, the greatest player in the history of padel, Argentine **Fernando "the Legend" Belasteguín** – currently ranked no. 9 in the world – played here with **Javi Garrido** (ranked 11), then sensationally eliminated in the quarterfinals. It doesn't end there because from **Momo Gonzales to Lucho Capra and Maxi Sanchez**, from the rising stars **Rubio and Arroyo** to the strongest female players, from former world number one **Marta Marrero** (who will play in the final tomorrow) to the number 14 ranked **Virginia Riera**, to **Aranzu Osoro** (ranked 17) and **Carolina Orsi** (ranked 27), the **Cagliari Platinum** has become a 'Clasico' of world padel amidst a love story with Sardinia that never ends.

It was 2020 when the first major world-class tournament was played in the Sardinian capital. And it was immediately a star-studded event: **Belasteguín-Tapia** won in the men's category, and **Sainz** (winner of the 2023 Platinum) and **Triay** in the women's. Twelve months later, in 2021, another major event – **Ruiz and Stupaczuk** won in the men's and **Triay-Salazar** in the women's – while a **FIP Star** tournament served as a prologue. The choice of venues was revolutionary: besides those set up at the 'home' of padel, **TC Cagliari**, there were ultra-scenic courts set up at the Bastion of Saint-Remy, one of the city's iconic monuments. Meanwhile, padel is spreading in the city and in Sardinia. Between 2021 and 2022, the **FIP** led by **Luigi Carraro** chose Cagliari – at **PalaPirastu** – for two editions of the prestigious **Cupra FIP**

**Finals**, the "Masters" of the International Federation's world circuit, which now counts 180 tournaments across five continents. The first edition of those Finals was won by another legend of the discipline: **Juan Martin Diaz**, whose autographed racket is displayed at TC Cagliari.

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