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Players and mothers: from Marrero to Sussarello, the second life of padel champions

The **FIP Platinum Sardegna** final just over a month since her return to the court: **Marta Marrero** shines again in the major padel tournaments after an absence since late 2022, initially met with surprise before the reason became clear. The Spaniard had chosen to stop after deciding to become a mother, a significant step for a professional athlete who has dedicated her life to competition. A new awareness, enriched by the arrival of little Flavia last November, has given Marta new vitality. *"I am eager to compete again, but I'm also a bit nervous, I want to do my best"*, she recently told the Spanish journalists, shortly before returning to competition. An emotion that has paid off on the court: since June, the 41-year-old former world number one has reached two quarter-finals in the **Premier Padel** circuit (in **Bordeaux** and **Malaga**) before arriving at the **Cagliari** tournament with **Zazu Osoro**, the partner chosen for the new chapter of her career. *"My thought was to return to play, but I was also realistic, a baby was coming, and I had to see how I felt, if I would be motivated to return. Then everything came together, and with my husband's support, we decided to move forward"*. Not forgetting what is now the most important part of her life: *"I organized everything so I could bring my daughter with me because it was a priority"*. A great effort, but also great joy and energy that accompanies her, as she confirmed after yesterday's semi-final win against **Guinart-Iglesias**: *"I am very happy because coming back after such a long time is never easy, and there are no guarantees of regaining your level"*.

The intertwining of sports and private life, with unique yet different emotions, is a theme that also accompanies other top padel athletes: for example, **Lea Godallier**, number 60 in the FIP ranking, who is also competing in Cagliari (where she was eliminated in the second round) and is still in the Sardinian capital for the **FIP European Padel Championships** next week with France. After becoming a mother at the beginning of the year, Lea brought her son to Sardinia, dividing her time between the **Tennis Club** courts and family moments in the city and hotel, where between lunch and a lullaby for the baby, she attracted the looks and smiles of those present. *"I have the opportunity to realize my greatest life project"*, she said at the end of 2023 when she was already expecting her baby and had suspended her activity. Among the "career mothers" in padel, there could not be a lack of the Italian **Giulia Sussarello**, who won two medals at the **European Games in Krakow**. Less than a year later, she also became a mother and returned to play two months after giving birth. The Italian - who will also participate in next week's European Championships - broke the ice at the **Italy Major Premier Padel** in Rome, then won her first trophy immediately after, at the **FIP Rise** in **Biella** at the end of June. *"Winning with my family and my son Andrea nearby is even more exciting"*, she said. A new

side of women's padel that is evolving not only in competitiveness but also on a personal level, bringing the athletes who live it even higher.

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