

July 3, 2024

## Nave Garibaldi embraces the great padel: a historic event to officially inaugurate the Genova Premier Padel P2

A major event such as the **Genova Premier Padel P2** deserved an opening ceremony in an exceptional location. It found it aboard **Nave Garibaldi**, the historic aircraft carrier moored on the **Ponte dei Mille** (eastern) quay of the City of Genova, where on Wednesday afternoon saw the official opening of the main draws of the competition. Present at the ceremony were Captain **Marco Guerriero**, Genova Mayor **Marco Bucci**, the President of the International Padel Federation **Luigi Carraro**, the CEO of Premier Padel **David Sugden**, Admiral **Aurelio De Carolis**, Commander in Chief of the Naval Squadron, and the President of Italian Tennis and Padel Federation Liguria **Andrea Fossati**.

All the institutions joined in the celebration of a historic moment: for padel, for the City of Genova, and for the Italian Navy, which put one of its most famous means at the service of sport, offering an exceptional showcase to a marvellous discipline thanks to the creation - by Sport e Salute – of a splendid padel court on the deck of the ship. Together with the institutions and the press, the event was attended by some of the greatest international padel champions, who will be playing until Sunday 7 July on the courts of **Valletta Cambiaso**: the two world number one pairs made up of **Arturo Coello** and **Agustin Tapia** in the men's team, and **Ariana Sanchez** and **Paula Josemaria** in the women's team; but also **Gemma Triay** and **Claudia Fernandez**, **Federico Chingotto** and **Alex Arroyo**. At the end of the institutional speeches, the padel stars performed in mixed pairs mini-challenges, entertaining the many guests present. It was also a unique opportunity for the champions who, although used to attending the world's most important tournaments, had never had the chance to play on a court set up in such a breathtaking location as that offered by Nave Garibaldi.

### STATEMENTS

**Marco Guerriero, Captain of Vascello:** *"It's a privilege for me to welcome you for this special event, on behalf of my crew in particular. In her almost forty years of intense life and operational life, the Garibaldi has taken part in major international missions, sailed oceans distant and near seas, crossing the Equator several times and just a few months ago the Arctic Circle. We thought our ship had seen it all, but we were wrong. For decades our deck has been the playground, if you will allow me the metaphor, of the planes and helicopters of our Naval Aviation. But for a few days now, turbines and blades have given way to a padel court, so that the Garibaldi can also take part in the prestigious sporting event being hosted by the*

*city of Genova, the historical Maritime Republic where every sailor feels at home”.*

**Marco Bucci, Mayor of Genova:** *“We have worked hard to make Genova the European Capital of Sport for 2024 and we continue to engage in many events, with results even exceeding expectations. Today’s event is one of the most important in our programme, because it brings padel to the Nave Garibaldi. Sport is something very important, with all its values. Those who sport learns that things are not achieved easily, but require sweat and effort. He learns to work together with others and accept defeat. To play sport requires a special spirit, so much so that those who have played sport are generally good citizens, which is why the administrations continue to invest in sport. The feelings of those who go to sea are the same: sweat, effort, teamwork and determination to achieve certain goals, doing a service to the community. Today, for the first time in the world, we are able to unite sport with a ship that represents the best of the Navy. Events like this represent a great opportunity for global visibility for our city. It is something we need, so I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in organising this event. We are all working with the same goal, for the good of Genova, the whole of Italy and the generations of the future”.*

**Luigi Carraro, President of the International Padel Federation:** *“Today’s event represents a great emotion for me and for the entire padel world. For this I must thank the Navy, which gives us the opportunity to do something that will remain in the history of our sport. Having a padel court on the Nave Garibaldi is for us a source of great pride and satisfaction. I also take this opportunity to bring greetings from Angelo Binaghi, President of FITP, who is unfortunately not with us today, but who has supported us since the beginning of this project, and continues to do this. We are building something unique, and to tell the story we could not have a better testimony than that of some of the best players in the world, who in their side have done something incredible. They played a mixed game, a novelty for our sport, offering an extraordinary show. Since, together with our partner Qatar Sports Investments and the players’ associations, we launched the Premier Padel project, the goal was to make padel a global discipline. Today we have written another historic page for our sport, and I think the image of the champions playing on the Nave Garibaldi will go around the world. So, thank you to all the institutions involved: we have shown that, when we have shown that when we all work together, we can build something that goes down in history”.*

**David Sudgen, CEO of Premier Padel:** *“It is a great honour for me to be here today, and I must thank all the partners who made this event possible. It once again demonstrates the art of the possible, because it is incredible to have a padel court on a military ship, in the port of Genova, European Capital of Sport. This represents a message to the world, from the city, from our sport and from Premier Padel. The art of the possible is the essence of padel: a sport that until a few years ago many people did not know, while today it is the fastest growing and*

*most exciting sport in the world. So much so that every week, 50 new clubs are born around the world dedicated to our sport”.*

**Ammiraglio Aurelio De Carolis, captain commander of the Navy Team:** *“All sailors generally have two things in common: the ability to socialise and a great openness to innovation. Two aspects that I recognise in padel, an innovative sport that helps a lot with socialising. I would like to thank all those who supported this initiative, because an incredible job was done. We are always open to new experiences, so it is great for us to do something different from the usual, related to sport. Sport that gives so much to our lives, allowing us to improve our abilities”.*

**Andrea Fossati, FITP Liguria president:** *‘We are very happy, it was what we had imagined when we conceived this event months ago thanks to the synergy with the municipality, the Marina, the International Padel Federation and the Italian Tennis and Padel Federation. It is an event unique, which will go down in history. I’m happy that the most important players in the world have come and I think this will lead our federation and padel towards even greater success. The padel movement has already done so much, managing to create a unique path. I think this is the beginning of a path that will give great satisfaction, it will be a movement that will grow more and more in terms of sponsors and attractiveness. You have also seen it here: Genova has not only moved from a sporting point of view, but all the institutions have moved because this is a great discipline on a social level, relational level. I think this is the main road to follow”.*

**Message of Francesco Lollobrigida, Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forests:** *“I greet all those present and thank the Mayor of Genova, Marco Bucci for the invitation to the Special Event on board the Nave Garibaldi moored at Stazione Marittima-Ponte dei Mille. An event that, thanks also to the valuable cooperation with the Italian Navy, gives prestige to the city of Genova, contributing to the enhancement of a sport that has become a social as well as sporting phenomenon. Today’s event is an important occasion that underlines how Italy System is significant in the development of sport associated with quality food. The work that we are carrying out synergistically between Ministries, since the inauguration of the Meloni government, is also aimed at fostering the information needed to distinguish between foods that are healthy and harmful foods, even in the youngest children. It is necessary to reaffirm our commitment to food sovereignty, a concept that sees the defence of Italian values and traditions as a key element for the well-being and culture of our nation. For anyone engaged in motor activity, a diet based on the principles of the Mediterranean diet is an important necessity, whether a professional or amateur athlete. Sport represents a fundamental element for personal growth education and it is events like this that remind us of this in the best possible way”.*

**Message of Daniela Santanché, Minister of Tourism:** *“Dear Sirs, I’m sorry not to be there with you. I would have liked to be there, but unforeseeable institutional commitments prevent me from being there. But I will be there with my mind and this video message. I thank you for your commitment and seriousness in organising these sporting events as part of the Genova European Capital of Sport programme. I’m happy that our Venus is a testimonial for this event, which helps to systemise new phenomena of interest, such as padel, within the winning sports-tourism binomial. Events such as this enable us to further consolidate tourism as a powerful attractor of tourist flows, including high-spending tourists, and as a vector of healthy and constructive values. And then, let’s face it, no country in the world can give you at the same time the thrill of sport, in this case padel, and leave you speechless while you enjoy a heritage of culture, landscape, food and wine. Today’s event, Genova European Capital of Sport, the Internazionali d’Italia, the European Athletics Championships, the Youth World Championships in sailing and the World Table Tennis Championships, as well as the Winter Olympics in Milan-Cortina, are evidence of how our beloved Italy is returning to the limelight on the international stage as the venue for the biggest sporting events”.*

## **PLAYERS’ WORDS**

**GEMMA TRIAY:** *“Being able to play on a ship is a unique, special, fun and exciting. It is proof that padel has no limits: it is growing so much globally, and the whole world hopes that it will make it to the Olympic Games. I think in a few years’ time succeed”.*

**FEDERICO CHINGOTTO:** *“I never thought in my life that I would play padel on a military ship. It shows us where our sport is going. Premier Padel is doing a great job in terms of internationalisation, together with FIP and us players. We will all work together to grow further, and make sure that people continue to enjoy this sport that we love so much”.*

**ARTURO COELLO:** *“Mixed padel in the future? I think it is possible, and it would certainly be very fun for the spectators. Paula and I are both left-handed, so we could hardly play together as we did today. But we have similar characteristics: she has great power, and strength is also one of my main qualities”.*

**PAULA JOSEMARIA:** *“Me too, that the fans can enjoy the mixed doubles, for a competition or even for an event or initiative like today. Putting two lefties like us is difficult, but to have had the chance to play alongside Arturo is a luxury for for me”.*

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