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Lara Arruabarrena, winning return at Foro Italico. Former tennis player: "With padel I feel like a 15-year-old again"

Foro Italico is not new for her, as she had already known it as a tennis player and even played double there with Italian **Sara Errani**. But **Spain's Lara Arruabarrena**, a former tennis player and winner of ten Wta titles between singles and doubles, is nonetheless a picture of satisfaction after her victorious debut with compatriot **Sara Pujals** at the **BNL Italy Major Premier Padel**. In the **Rome** tournament, which marks the women's "baptism" on the world's most prestigious circuit, the two **Spanish** players got the best in three sets of **Caterina Baldi** and **Valentina Tommasi** from **Italy**.

Arruabarrena has no problem admitting padel has given her back the motivations she thought she had lost. *"I had the feeling that my experience with tennis was somehow over, I could no longer find motivation and goals in this sport"*, says the **Spaniard**, who reached number 52 as a career best ranking (8 in doubles), after the winning debut, *"That's why more or less a year and a half ago I quit. But then I started with padel and I started having so much fun again. I told myself that I would give everything to reach the highest level, in October last year I started with competitive activity. I usually play indoor, so the ball doesn't move that way and the conditions are different. But I really enjoy it, I feel like a child again...I've found goals and motivations, it's a new thing and I feel like a 15-year-old again!"*.

Baldi and **Tommasi**, to whom the organizers granted a wild-card, proved to be a tough nut to crack, but now the bar is going to be raised with the Round of 32 match against **Alix Collombon** and **Victoria Iglesias**, seeded number 10 in the draw. *"I usually train with Collombon, so we know each other very well"*, **Arruabarrena** stresses, *"We want to have fun, the pressure will be on them because they are seeded and we will play free mentally. But we will give everything to try to have fun and win"*.

With **Rome**, the **Spaniard** has not lost the bond she created when she was still playing tennis. *"When we knew we were going to play at Foro Italico, I was aware of how a special place it was because I had been here before"*, she admits, *"I know the location, I know everything here. Especially the 'Nicola Pietrangeli' is a court that I like very much, so when I saw the order of play on Monday I was happy to play here because I have wonderful memories. It was difficult to face two Italians, they play at home and the crowd was obviously on their side. But somehow we managed to win, they played very well and it was tough. But we are happy to go through"*.

About the International Padel Federation (FIP)

About the International Padel Federation (FIP) The International Padel Federation (FIP) is the world governing body of padel, whose goal is to promote all forms of padel worldwide with: 90 Countries, 64 National Federations, + 25 million active players and 500,000 Federated Players. The sport was created in Acapulco, Mexico, by Enrique Corcuera in 1969. It was 32 years later that the FIP was established in Madrid by the legal representatives of the Argentine Padel Association, the Spanish Padel Association and the Uruguayan Padel Association, by means of Public deeds signed before the Notary Mr. Javier Gaspar Alfaro, with the protocol number 2486. We want to bring the worldwide Padel family together into one community, and make Padel a sport that is recognised and played in all the countries of the World. www.padelfip.com

Press contacts:

International Padel Federation
Email: press@padelfip.com