

March 7, 2024

## Press conference in Doha for FIP President, Luigi Carraro

The **Ooredoo Qatar Major** in Doha was an opportunity for International Padel Federation President **Luigi Carraro** to take a first balance of the 2024 season, which is propelling padel into a new era: one circuit, one calendar, one ranking. Many topics were touched upon in the press conference - wanted by the Fip number one to respond to the many interview requests - on the day of the semifinals of the first of the four majors of the year. Here is an excerpt of Luigi Carraro's words\*.

**FROM RIYADH TO DOHA** *"I think the summary of the first tournament of the year is very positive. In Riyadh we had a sell-out in the last two days of competition, very high technical level, players happy. Today we are here in Doha, with the Qatar Federation (QTF) confirming itself as the best in organising this type of tournament. We are living a fantastic combined event with the same prize money, in a venue we know well. The players are happy. We have started with this worldwide project in three: FIP, Premier Padel and the players' associations (PPA and IPPA) and we will continue like this for a long time, with the contribution of a serious partner like Qatar Sports Investments (QSI) and without forgetting a fourth, essential element of our circuit: the tournament organisers who contribute with their work to the global growth of padel. With all these realities, with the quality of a television product that fully captured the spectacular essence of our sport, the FIP team works as a team taking care of every detail and pursuing the common goal of improving every day".*

**CALENDAR AND SPAIN** *"We decided to give a limit to the number of tournaments that make up the calendar. We did this because respect and care for the athletes remains a primary element. The players have experienced two very long seasons, 2022 and 2023, and in agreement with them we agreed to limit the number of tournaments. We decided to cap the number of tournaments for all the countries precisely in the name of the consideration we have for the players and players. Spain? Having many tournaments, this cap has affected it proportionally, but it remains a fundamental country for padel, and you can understand this when you consider that there will be four Premiers including the Finals and four FIP Platinum, which we can liken to a '250' in tennis, so a very important tournament. In the interest of its protagonists, it is necessary to 'internationalise' this sport so that it becomes bigger and more widespread everywhere, respecting its tradition but following its evolution. Padel is a fantastic sport, I am the first to be in love with it, but there are few nations in the top positions of the ranking. Our goal is to make sure that instead there are many, from many countries. If we increase the number of these flags, padel will become one of the most important sports in the*

world, and not only from a technical aspect”.

**REFEREES AND THE FUTURE** *“We have had a project with FIP for a few years now. When I with my team, my Board, were elected there was basically one employee, I remember that when I was appointed the first question I asked was whether we had a bank account: basically there was no money, on the contrary.... Yesterday we had a meeting here at the tournament venue where most of the FIP team was present and we were 25 people. This is to underline its growth: today we have an important and well-structured FIP that is becoming more so every day. The referees? When we go to the countries we always try to use local ones or ones from neighbouring countries because it is important and we also like to develop this aspect, working on the overall growth and development of the refereeing team. Surely there have been mistakes, but the important thing is to accept them and turn them into opportunities to improve things. We are doing this, there are paths that serve this and, as the movement has grown, we will also see the referees grow”.*

**LEBRON** On the moment of tension during the match in the round of 16 between Galan-Lebron and Yanguas-Garrido, Carraro reflected: *“Every professional competition has its own end-of-match procedures: certainly the referee will have drawn up the referee’s report and at the end of the tournament the supervisor will draw up his own. From there on there will be the normal path that we find in a tournament of a federal circuit, through the examination of the competent bodies. But let me also answer you from the point of view of those who love this sport and those who play it. I was born as a player in this discipline, I had the ambition to become a champion but I didn’t make it, although I managed to achieve other goals. But I know that when they play, athletes want to win. Also because this is a Major that awards you 2,000 points. So there is a lot of tension, adrenaline, desire to win, elements that can emerge during a match. By the way, the coach of Yanguas and Garrido was a player until a few months ago and I think he experienced that challenge very much ‘as a player’ and I say that a moment of tension between those who recognise each other in the court can be a child of tension. Rather, I want to emphasise that Lebron’s public apology is the strongest message that could have come about the episode”.*

**WORLD CUP, EUROPEAN AND SENIORS** *“By March we will announce the venue for the next FIP World Padel Championships. We are happy with the interest of so many nations to host it. I can guarantee that it will be a fantastic event, as special as any, in a season in which we will hold the FIP European Padel Championships in Cagliari, Sardinia, which will have the same organisation of World Padel Championships. The competitions for nations are very important for the FIP and this is demonstrated by the fact that for the FIP Seniors World Padel Championship we have decided, in the face of so many requests to participate, to enlarge it to 16 teams instead of the 16 initially planned”.*

**ALTERNATIVE CIRCUIT** *“I read in the newspapers about this circuit, there were no contacts: respect for anyone, but we have everything to manage well what we have. We count on a large number of competitions, from the Majors to FIP Promotion, to world and European team competitions from Juniors to Seniors: I keep repeating that whoever wants to organise a tournament can do so. The important thing is the agreement with the national federation and compliance with the FIP rules”.*

**PARTNERSHIP PREMIER PADEL AND RED BULL** *“When we started the Premier Padel project, one of our goals was to take padel to a new level and a new era. I think the whole management of Premier Padel is doing an excellent job: Premier Padel is broadcast in 187 countries, something that was unthinkable just a few years ago. I remember when we had the first big broadcaster for the European Championships, it was 2019, because before that the discipline was only broadcast on YouTube and some matches on a Spanish TV station. Then, as FIP, we signed an agreement with Sky. And it was Sky that started a project in which some big broadcasters later believed. I think the news about Red Bull is the best we could imagine for our sport, not only for the potential of this great brand, but also for what it is doing in many disciplines with great results. We are very happy about this and would like to thank the Premier Padel team for reaching this agreement, and congratulations for all the other partnerships as well”.*

**GOLDEN POINT** *“We made the decision to use the advantage system with the players and players. Premier Padel is a special circuit: some would prefer the Golden Point, some prefer the advantages, but for the moment I think this remains the best system. But if we see in the future that we need to change something, we will study the best option for the sport, the fans and the TV broadcasters”.*

- - \* The full audio of the press conference is available on request from the FIP press office, at the email addresses [press@padelfip.com](mailto:press@padelfip.com) ; [paolo.franci@padelfip.com](mailto:paolo.franci@padelfip.com)

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