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Focus on... Egypt Many courts and projects for young players

When talking about padel in Africa, one of the first countries that comes to mind is **Egypt**, home this week to **FIP Rise Cairo**, a stop on the **CUPRA FIP Tour**. This North African nation is home to more than 40 per cent of the continent's clubs (more than 190) and padel courts (almost 500), thanks to a strong push over the past six years by the **Egyptian Padel Federation**, founded in December 2018 and since 2022 under the authority of H.E. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports. The EPF, since 2019 an official member of the **International Padel Federation (FIP)**, has as its mission to facilitate the development of Egyptian padel players in order to improve their physical, tactical and mental levels and trying to reach the top positions of the FIP ranking within the next five to seven years.

To this aim, the EPF has decided to focus on three main pillars:

- development of qualified and professional coaches with the aim of expanding the potential number of top padel players in Egypt in combination with a larger pool of top coaches;
- growth of a new generation of junior padel players to have competitive players already by their late teens;
- increased participation of its players in all FIP international tournaments to increasingly stimulate its athletes to compete.

And it is precisely on **FIP tournaments** that the EPF is concentrating its efforts, which since the **CUPRA FIP Tour** has existed, has already organised 22 tournaments from 2020 (13 of which in the men's category and 9 in the women's) and one **Premier Padel**, the one in New Giza in 2022: a tournament that was also scheduled last year but is also on the calendar in 2024.

In terms of players, according to data from the **FIP Research & Data Analysis Department**, under the Pyramids there are an estimated **300 thousand to 400 thousand** amateur players and **700 thousand** followers on social media. In the **FIP ranking** there are 31 women and 132 men, almost 90 per cent of the African players who play International Padel Federation tournaments. The best placed player in the men's ranking is **Youssef Hossam** (No. 260, who reached the final of the FIP Rise in Doha and the final of the Marassi Open) followed by **Georges Wakim** (No. 265 and the only winner of a FIP tournament in 2022 paired with another Egyptian, **Aly Zaghloul**, currently No. 379). Among women, the best placed player is **Laila El Nimr** (No. 215 and finalist in the FIP Rise II Bosco in May 2023 with compatriot

Yasmeen Ebada, No. 289) followed by Farida El Halaby (No. 267).

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