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FIP European Padel Championships, kicking off with colors, chants, and fair play. Carraro to the athletes: "You build a dream, day by day"

A celebration of flags, colors, enthusiasm, and friendship. And naturally, a padel celebration without borders or boundaries, as sport in its deepest sense intends. The opening ceremony of the thirteenth **FIP European Padel Championships**, held on the 'Central' court of **TC Cagliari**, once again reiterated how sport is one for all, without distinctions. It is no coincidence that in the athletes' oath, represented by Spain's **Marta Ortega**, Italy's **Marco Cassetta**, and the referees with **Simone Bosca**, it was emphasized loud and clear that sport is about fair play, inclusion, equality, without doping and without cheating. A strong, beautiful, essential message.

RECORD EDITION This was reiterated and loudly remembered by the president of the FIP, **Luigi Carraro**, in his speech which, in fact, raised the curtain on this great, extraordinary competition scheduled from tomorrow until July 27 at **TC Cagliari**, one of the recognized 'homes' of padel. Carraro, after the customary thanks to all the protagonists - from the **Region of Sardinia**, the **Italian Government and the Ministry of Tourism**, to the **Italian Tennis and Padel Federation** and its president **Angelo Binaghi** - emphasized how this edition of the European Championships is: *"a record, with 51 requests for participation that led to the organization of a qualifying tournament to arrive at the 16 women's and 16 men's teams who are here to compete and put on a show. For this, I want to thank the national federations, the coaches, the referees for the work done so far and above all I want to thank - said Carraro addressing the athletes - each of you and all those who have made Europe become the first continent in the world by number of practitioners: 18 million".* Carraro also added how *"each of you - still speaking to the athletes - carries the privilege of representing your country. A great honor and a great responsibility, but also one of the greatest emotions you can experience in your sporting life. I thank you for what you do every day, sacrificing, taking time away from your families, from your free time, from your activities. All this for padel. And so I want to tell you that all of us are proud of you. You are the players, the ones who make the young dream and build day by day the stories of this wonderful sport"*.

THE ATHLETES' PARTY Before Carraro's speech, a never-ending party. The stadium chants of **France**, with a cheerleader and duet with the players of the **Dutch** team. The singing response could only come from the **Italians**, who jumped and sang a 'padel version' of 'Sarà perché ti amo' by Ricchi e Poveri. The teams paraded with their flag bearers improvising choreographies: the 'train' of the **Swedes**, the chant before the entrance of **Portugal**, the jumps of the **French** led by 'mama' **Lea Godallier** and the uncontrollable and almost incredulous joy of the younger players of the teams, with their phones in video mode to capture a unique and unrepeatable moment. On the sidelines, more than one president of the participating federations, with the flag bearers filling the side of the court placed under the stand which gradually filled with the colors of the teams.

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