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World Championships: Fernando Alarcon, in Doha the pioneer of U.S. padel who inspires young talent

A great passion to pass on to the new generations. The mission of **Fernando Alarcon**, a pillar of the USA at the **FIP World Padel Championships** in Qatar, goes far beyond the sport played on the court. Born in Argentina — the country he left as a young boy to study in Houston, Texas — Alarcon is now a talent scout as well as a player, with the mission of finding and nurturing the future champions of American padel: *"In Houston, I was the general manager of the first padel club in the area. It was around 2013. And what I'm even prouder of is that I trained the first junior teams from the USA, who then competed at high levels in international competitions"*. His passion has taken him far, both in sports and in his professional life: the pioneer of padel on American soil was the number one in the USA for eight years and simultaneously established himself as a successful entrepreneur in his sport. *"In the last ten years, padel has spread rapidly beyond Houston, especially in the Miami area"*, he explains. *"Right there, padel is experiencing a 'boom' today, with many people playing and many clubs opening"*, says Alarcon, founder of one of Florida's largest clubs and currently engaged in a new entrepreneurial venture. *"The same is happening in many other states: within two or three years, it will reach everywhere in the United States"*.

Meanwhile, returning to the padel played on the court, there is a World Championship to think about and a team aiming for new achievements: *"A few months ago, I played in the Senior World Championships, and now here I am in Doha. After facing Argentina, I can't wait to take the court against Italy. It's a very strong team; it will be tough, but I would love to play against Marco Cassetta"*. Regarding goals at the World Championships, Fernando says: *"Realistically, we can aim for the top 10; we want to qualify for the next World Championship and continue to improve with the new generation of players we are developing in the Usa"*. Another ambitious goal that Fernando pursues alongside his wife Claudia, who accompanied him to Qatar and with whom he shares a life dedicated to padel on multiple fronts. *"I love being here, living the atmosphere. I'm grateful to the entire team, the management, and the Federation, but I'm 46 years old, one of the older players here. I'm a veteran now, and this could be my last tournament. It's time to make room for young talent, as our motto says, 'let the players play.' I'll keep training them, helping them to become great players—we need to support these young talents so they can become champions"*.

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