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Qatar Airways Premier Padel Finals, Barcelona kicks off with a show: Top seeds move on, what a comeback by Salazar-Castelló

The first day of the **Qatar Airways Premier Padel Finals** was full of excitement at the **Palau Sant Jordi** in **Barcelona**. The pairs with the most tournament wins in 2024 made a strong start, securing their spots in Saturday's semifinals. In the last match of the day, **Arturo Coello** and **Agustin Tapia** extended their winning streak to 46 matches, beating **Pablo Cardona** and **Paquito Navarro** 7-6 6-2. After an exciting first set, where **Cardona** and **Paquito** came back from 0-3 down to force a tiebreak, the top seeds finished strong, wrapping it up in 1 hour and 19 minutes. In the semifinals, **Coello** and **Tapia** will face **Martin Di Nenno** and **Juan Lebron**, who won 6-4 6-3 against **Javi Garrido** and **Lucas Bergamini**. **Bergamini** was the last player to qualify for the Finals.

WOMEN The women's tournament saw the only upset of the day. After a hard-fought two-and-a-half-hour match, **Ale Salazar** and **Jessica Castelló** made an amazing comeback (3-6 6-4 6-2) to beat the fourth seeds **Marta Ortega** and **Sofia Araujo**. Despite a strong start from **Ortega** and **Araujo**, the comeback from **Salazar** and **Castelló** was too much. In the third set, a double break early on sealed the win. On Saturday, **Ale** and **Jess** will face the world's top-ranked pair, **Paula Josemaria** and **Ari Sanchez**, who defeated **Lucia Sainz** and **Patty Llaguno** 6-3 7-5.

FRIDAY Friday will see the remaining eight pairs in action. The schedule starts at 2 PM CET with **Delfi Brea** and **Veronica Virseda** (the only duo who didn't team up during the season) facing **Ale Alonso** and **Andrea Ustero**, with Ustero playing at home in Barcelona. After that, **Franco Stupaczuk** and **Mike Yanguas** will take on **Coki Nieto** and **Jon Sanz**. Not before 5 PM CET, the second-seeded pairs will hit the court: first **Gemma Triay** and **Claudia Fernandez** against **Claudia Jensen** and **Tamara Icardo**, followed by **Fede Chingotto** and **Ale Galan** against **Momo Gonzalez** and **Edu Alonso**.

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