



When Paris Believed: Sánchez, Ustero, Tapia & Coello conquer Roland Garros.

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Photo Credit: Mariano Castro.

Rain closed the roof over Philippe Chatrier for the women's final. By the time the men arrived, the sun had returned, bathing Roland Garros in the sort of golden light that makes Paris feel like the centre of the sporting world.

For one remarkable Sunday, the famous clay of Roland Garros belonged to padel.

Ari Sánchez and Andrea Ustero produced a near flawless display to claim the women's Alpine Paris Major Premier Padel title. Hours later, Agustín Tapia and Arturo Coello survived a spectacular fightback from Alejandro Galán and Federico Chingotto to retain the men's crown.

Different finals. Different stories. The same destination. Victory on Court Philippe Chatrier.

The eighth edition of the Alpine Paris Major Premier Padel also delivered a new attendance record, with 81,000 spectators passing through Roland Garros during the week. It was another indication of how quickly padel is establishing itself in some of the most recognisable sporting venues in the world.

And Paris was given two finals worthy of the occasion. Sánchez and Ustero leave no opening

The women's final was billed as a contest between two of the sport's most exciting partnerships. Instead, it became a demonstration.

Sánchez and Ustero, the No. 3 seeds, barely gave Martina Calvo and Claudia Fernández a foothold. With the roof closed because of rain, the Spaniards immediately took control of the conditions and never surrendered it.

Sánchez conducted the match from the front of the court, moving the ball with the precision that has made her one of the defining players of her generation. Ustero supplied the finishing power, repeatedly finding opportunities to unleash her smash.

The first set lasted just over half an hour and produced a 6-2 scoreline. More tellingly, Calvo and Fernández didn't earn a single break point.

The second set was even more emphatic.

Sánchez and Ustero raised the intensity again, converted all three break points they created and completed a 6-0 set to seal their first Major title together in only 71 minutes.

It was sort of performance that leaves an opponent searching for answers long after the final ball. We had to be really focused from the start because our opponents play very well," Ustero said. "We did a perfect match. Ari showed her best version and I showed mine."

The victory also carried a remarkable piece of history. It was the youngest women's Major title in the sport.

For Ustero, still establishing herself at the highest level, the moment was particularly significant.

Sánchez, meanwhile, was back in familiar territory. This was her third victory in the four years since she won the first Major. "To win like this against Calvo and Fernández means that we did things really well today," she said.

There was also a glimpse of what Sánchez believes may be ahead for her young partner. "I want to congratulate Andrea because she played really well again today and is improving so much. She is going to win a lot of titles."

That prediction may prove easier to believe after what happened on Philippe Chatrier.

If the women's final was about control, the men's was about survival.

Tapia and Coello arrived as the world No. 1 pair and defending champions. Across the net stood Galán and Chingotto, the No. 2 seeds, who had pushed them closer to defeat than any team had managed during their remarkable run in Paris.

It was the fourth consecutive Paris title for Tapia and Coello, and the third time they had beaten Chingotto and Galán in the final.

But this one looked different.

The opening set belonged to the Golden Boys. Tapia produced the decisive moment with a corner volley on a Star Point, creating the only break of the set and giving the No. 1 seeds a 6-3 lead.

Then Galán and Chingotto changed the match.

They stepped higher into the court, attacked with greater conviction and began winning the exchanges that had previously belonged to their opponents.

Galán produced one of the shots of the tournament, a no look backhand fired through both court doors, bringing the packed Philippe Chatrier crowd to its feet.

A 6-4 second set forced a decider. Momentum was with Chingotto and Galán.

Galán was producing winners almost at will. Chingotto was winning the cross court battle with Coello. The world No. 2 team looked to have found the formula, and at 5-3 they were serving for the championship.

Then the match turned.

Tapia and Coello, who have spent so long occupying the summit of the sport, found the composure that separates champions from contenders. They broke back, levelled the set and forced a deciding tie break.

There, the opportunity disappeared for Chingotto and Galán.

The Golden Boys closed it out and retained their Paris crown.

They leave France with another 2,000 FIP Race points and a second Major title of the season. More significantly, they leave with their status as the team to beat intact.

"We have no words," Coello said. "It was another great battle against Chingalán, who are an incredible team. They fight in every tournament and every match. They should have won, but we did."

Then came the tribute to the man beside him. "I'm very happy to play alongside Agus... I love him more every day!"

Tapia was equally emotional. "The feeling I have right now is incredible. I love Arturo, who works alongside me tirelessly to make these things happen."

He also made sure the victory was shared beyond the two players. "Our team and families, who gave everything so that we could be here today. Without them, we would be nothing."

That sentence perhaps captured the weekend better than any statistic.

Padel arrived at Roland Garros carrying the ambition of a sport determined to move beyond its traditional boundaries. It left having filled one of tennis's most historic arenas with noise, drama and a new generation of fans.

The women's final offered precision. The men's delivered theatre.

Sánchez and Ustero were ruthless. Tapia and Coello were resilient.

Both pairs walked away as Major champions.

And as the final spectators filtered out of Philippe Chatrier, the significance of the week was hard to miss. Padel isn't simply visiting Roland Garros anymore. It is beginning to look at home there.

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