



SPORTS FACILITIES

# The Serradells swimming pool is being reborn four years after the fire

Marsol highlights the ability of the corporation and of citizens to «recover» from wounds

Different members of the municipality, the Government and special bodies attend the presentation.

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA  
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The indoor swimming pool of the Serradells sports complex was officially inaugurated yesterday by the Consul Major of Andorra la Vella, Conxita Marsol, after four years of the fire that completely devastated a good part of the indoor facilities and exteriors and which, at the same time, endangered the structures of the nursery school integrated into the affected building. As Marsol pointed out, «I remember November 22nd, 2018 as one of the most complicated days at the head of the municipality; luckily, we didn't have to worry about any physical damage to people, but we were scared.» In the same way, she highlighted the «capacity of Andorran citizens and institutions to recover from the wounds and come back stronger».

After the setbacks caused by the coronavirus pandemic and the brakes that have been the legal appeals of construction companies and insurers, the Olympic swimming pool will finally open its doors on September 1st. As Marsol stated, «it is a unique reference center in the country, which I did not think would look like this after witnessing the destruction of the flames».

The official opening ceremony began around 7:00 p.m. inside the pool, whose stands were filled with guests and spectators. Among the attendees, personalities such as the Head of Government, the Minister of Culture and Sports, the Minister of Education and Higher Education, all the members of the community, sports organizations, and different representatives of the special bodies that participated in the intervention stood out of the fire to whom Marsol thanked for his «indispensable» task.

After making a historical review of the processes that the facilities



► Different moments of the official presentation of the Serradells indoor swimming pool.



COMÚ D'ANDORRA LA VELLA / TONY LARA



**The event featured performances by top-level athletes such as the medalist Gemma Mengual**

es have undergone to be able to carry out the final rehabilitation, two artistic swimming exhibitions were given by the Spanish couple made up of the Spanish swimmers Pau Ribes and Emma García, who performed a piece from the musical Cats in the water performing pirouettes and synchronized actions to the rhythm of the music. Next, it was the turn of the famous Spanish swimmer Gemma Mengual, who has been awarded several times with Olympic gold me-

dals and is one of the most outstanding sportswomen of the neighboring country to the south. The swimmer performed a solo exhibition along the new pool leaving the audience speechless and starting a loud applause.

Finally, an aperitif was held by the outdoor pool for all attendees. Then, in response to the statements to the media, Marsol emphasized the corporation's commitment to the rehabilitation of the outdoor facilities du-

ring the winter «to be able to enjoy the swimming pool in its fullness in the face of the next summer». Likewise, she pointed out the complexity that has entailed the 18 months of total works on the facilities for the reconstruction of an Olympic swimming pool that has dimensions of 50x21 meters. In turn, the Consul Major of the capital expressed her approval of a building that «respects energy efficiency criteria and offers users a top-quality experience».

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SEASON BALANCE

# The campsites are over 90% occupied during the month of July

The owners detect an increase in tourists traveling with motorhomes or campers

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The average occupancy recorded by the campsites during July exceeds 90%, a result that has reached 100% on some weekends and in the last days of the month. These figures have been possible, in part, thanks to the programming of Cirque du Soleil and the MTB World Cup held in La Masana, according to the owners. «During the days that these events took place, we worked harder», pointed out a manager of the Casal campsite, Daniela. At the same time, the manager of the Valira campsite, Santi Sánchez, pointed out that «it has also been noticed that on the days when the Cirque was not there, occupancy dropped a little». In general, however, the head of Xixerella Park, Raül Armengol, observed that «we have been at our best». So, the three businesses emphasize that the income of this summer season is comparable to that of the pre-pandemic. «I suppose it's also related to the fact that there are few

**MTB World Cup** events and Cirque du Soleil have brought more customers to the facility

campsites in Andorra and a couple have closed in the last year», recalled Sánchez.

The number of reservations has also increased this July, which has caused sometimes a greater demand than the facilities can handle. Along these lines, Sánchez asserted that at the Valira campsite «we work with a system with which we do not occupy all the places with reservations, and we cannot take everyone; however, we have the same ones as before covid».

In relation to the nationalities of the customers, Armengol indicated that «most of the guests who come to our campsite are French and Spanish». For his part, Sánchez stated that Spanish and French customers have also predominated, since «they are always present due to proximity», but this summer «there have been a lot of Dutch, Swiss and, in general, people from different countries», he asserted. Along these lines, a German and Dutch audience has been detected at the Casal campsite, especially at the beginning of the month, along with Spanish and French in recent weeks. At the same



► Archive image of caravans parked in a campsite in the country.

time, and with reference to overnight stays, Armengol stated that «those who stay the most nights are the Spanish, they can stay for up to a week perfectly».

Otherwise, as all those responsible agree, the average overnight stay is between one and two days, with «very short stays, especially by motorhomes, who only stay one night», indicated Daniela, who observed that there are also some cases where some families can stay up to ten days. In this sense, she pointed out that «normally, those who stay longer are those who bring tents, since once they have set them up they want to avoid moving». Regarding the vehicles, she also informed that due to the capacity of the Camping Casal, they cannot accept the larger motorhomes on some occasions and therefore their audience is focused on the campers. However, the alternative they have adopted is to offer a service so that they can fill the water tanks and meet their basic needs. Likewise, Sánchez explained that «there has been a significant boom in people who come with motorhomes or camper vans».



**RAÜL ARMENGOL**  
MANAGER OF THE XIXERELLA PARK CAMPSITE

«Most of the guests who come to our campsite are French and Spanish»

**DANIELA**  
WORKER AT THE CASAL CAMPSITE

«Normally, those who stay longer are the ones with tents»

**SANTI SÁNCHEZ**  
CAMPING VALIRA

«We have to see if the atypical July we've had influences with a drop in employment»

With regard to entries and exits, Sánchez reported that «we have around 70 a day». Therefore, the Valira campsite, which has between 135 and 140 plots, «during July keeps around 110 occupied», he detailed. However, each campsite has a different number of plots and, consequently, the number of entries and exits will depend on the space available. For example, the Xixerella Park «has managed to fill all 76 plots», according to Armengol.

Finally, and with reference to the forecasts of the three businesses, «August is expected to be positive», they agree. For now, many people have already made their reservations and «everything will be quite full», said Armengol. All in all, Sánchez assessed that «we have to see if the atypical July we've had has an influence with a drop, but in principle, with what we have had this month, which is just four days, we have been at 100% of employment», especially this Wednesday. At the moment, businesses expect the first three weeks of August to be very busy. ≡

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