Beat: Sports

TORCH RELAY OF OLYMPIC PARIS 2024 GAMES IS NOW IN CORSICA THE ISLAND OF BEAUTY

STAGE 6, 120 TORCHBEARERS

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USPA NEWS - In 1992, the Olympic Torch first came to Corsica to celebrate the Winter Olympic Games in Albertville. Thirty-two years later, it returned this Tuesday to put the spotlight on the island's natural beauty. The Olympic Torch also highlighted the Corsican's passion for sport and in particular football, through the collective relay organised by the French Football Federation in Bastia. In total, almost 120 torchbearers took part in the relay, including judoka Priscilla Gneto who lit the cauldron in the evening.

THE ICONIC NARTURAL SITES OF CORSICA IN THE SPOTLIGHT
Today offered a perfect occasion to capture some breathtaking images. As the relay and the day progressed, the route provided opportunities to highlight the iconic landscapes of Upper Corsica and Southern Corsica. The first site visited at the start of the morning was the Pointe de la Parata cape, an exceptional natural site overlooking the sea. The Olympic Torch also headed to Bavella, journeyed along a part of the legendary GR20 path before discovering some of the island's finest beaches at Ile-Rousse.
It took in the streets of Corte and some of the most beautiful villages on the island, including Campana and Piedicroce, as well as the seaside resort of Porto-Vecchio, renowned for its crystal-clear waters. To help ensure that as many people as possible were able to get close to the Olympic Torch, three convoys were organised across the island.

PRIDE OF PLACE FOR CORSICA'S PASSION FOR FOOTBALL
A moment of emotion and remembrance marked the passing of the Olympic Torch at Stade Armand-Cesari stadium, the home of Sporting Club de Bastia. It was in this stadium that 19 people died on 5th May 1992, while 2,300 others were injured when the south stand collapsed, a tragedy that marked the club's history. The Olympic Torch Relay wished to pay tribute to the victims. As a result, Josepha Guidicelli, the chairwoman of the collective for victims of the Furiani disaster, was the first to carry the Olympic Torch into the stadium, before a moment of silence in front of the memorial to the victims.
This sequence was followed by a collective relay organised by the French Football Federation. It was made up of 24 football enthusiasts led by Charles Orlanducci, the emblematic former captain of Sporting Club de Bastia and a former French international.

All aspects of the sport were represented by male and female football players who paraded in front of several hundred children gathered inside the stadium.
The group of almost 120 individual torchbearers was also made up of many people involved daily in developing sport on the island, including artistic swimming coach Lena Bardiot-Patroni, whose grandmother took part in the Grenoble Olympic Games (in 1968) and whose mother lit the cauldron in Corte during the Olympic Torch Relay organised for the Albertville Winter Olympic Games (in 1992). There was also Nicolas Filippi, who at the age of 81 is committed to encouraging people to take up athletics, Olivier Oggiano, who contributes to sport for all, and triathlete Nicolas Wallon. Like the latter, another nature lover, Joseph Acquaviva, a proud shepherd, was one of the relay runners.
Also featured among the torchbearers was the notable presence of Patrick Fiori,a native of the island who sang Mama Corsica at the Eurovision Song Contest in 1993. Mathieu Lehanneur, the designer of the Olympic Torch and Cauldrons for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, also took part in the Corsican stage.

It was an honour for the man who imagined the design of the Olympic Torch to take part in the convoy transporting the sacred fire of Olympia.
In Bastia, the Olympic Torch paid tribute to Philousports, a well-known figure in the sporting world for his comments on the social networks. This sport-loving native of Corsica died in 2021 due to a myopathy. Carrying the Olympic Torch was one of his dreams, even going as far as having the Paralympic Games' agitos tattooed on his forearm. It was his niece and his close friends who carried the Olympic Torch in his name.

PRISCILLA GNETO LIGHTS UO THE CAULDRON
At the same time, a number of events were organised throughout the day. Olympiad style sports events were organised throughout the morning in Porto-Vecchio, a pétanque pitch was set up and BMX as well as table tennis workshops were held in Bastia. This is also where the celebration site was set up, in the heart of the city at Place Saint-Nicolas. Workshops dedicated to rollerblading, break dancing and combat sports were on offer and open to all.
On completion of the festivities and the show that was put on, it was time for the last torchbearer to finish the relay, namely judoka Priscilla Gneto. She grew up in Porto-Vecchio and has been competing at the highest level for more than ten years, as demonstrated by her bronze medal obtained at the London Olympic Games in 2012. By lighting the cauldron, Priscilla brought this day in the heart of Corsica to a fitting conclusion.

Tomorrow, the Olympic Torch will return to mainland France to travel through the Pyrénées-Orientales. From the Pic de Canigo mountain to the coast at Collioure, from Prades to Perpignan, it will continue its journey to the delight of the many

PROGRAMME FOR WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY
View the full stage programme at https://olympics.com/en/paris-2024/olympic-torch-relay/stages/pyrenees-orientales-perpignan
CELEBRATION VENUE PROGRAMME:
Open to the public from 3:30 to 7:45 pm
Free admission, limited capacity
3:30 pm: opening to the public
4–5:30 pm: local authorities' activities on the sports esplanade
5:45–6:50 pm: partners' activities on the

ABOUT PARIS 2024
The mission of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024 Organising Committee, in accordance with the host city contract signed between the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français (CNOSF – French National Olympic and Sporting Committee) and the Ville de Paris municipal authorities, is to plan, organise, fund and deliver the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024.
The Olympic and Paralympic Games are the greatest sporting event in the world, with unparalleled media impact. They bring together 10,500 Olympic athletes and 4,400 Paralympic athletes, respectively from 206 and 182 delegations, across five continents. They are watched by over 13 million spectators and 4 billion television viewers across the world, across a total of over 100,000 hours of TV broadcasting. They are without equal in sporting, economic and cultural events throughout the world, and this power helps to further their impact.

Set up in January 2018, Paris 2024 is headed by Tony Estanguet, three-time Olympic champion. It is run by a Board of Directors, on which sit all the founding members of the project: the CNOSF, Ville de Paris, the French Government, the Île-de-France regional authority, the CPSF, the Métropole du Grand Paris, the Conseil départemental de Seine Saint-Denis, representatives of the local authorities involved in the Games, civil society and corporate partners. Source: Paris 2024

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com