

Acrobatic Paganello 2003

Review by Tom Leitner (repaged by Claudio Cigna)

Wow!

Over-whelming, what an unbelievably great time!

Marco Regalbuti said it felt like the tournament lasted for over a week instead of 4 days because there was soooo much fun, jams, parties...and very little sleep.



Clay in action

The Thursday night party was once again way, way over the top, this time there was a light shining over a area of soft sand and of course the jam began and quickly a crowd of about 100 gathered to watch the 20 or so jammers - mostly Italian jam for hours into the night while the party of 1,600 ultimate players raged on, and on, and on. It was very special to have so many players travel here when there is a war and tourism is very low. It was the largest turn out in Paga history for Ultimate.

Friday the semi of the open pairs went smoothly and with nice weather and the standard redcarpet jam area, good wind and very attentive and responsive audience. There was an extra special buzz in the air with all the hype around the Nike ads which had just debuted days earlier and have been continually running on MTV about 2-3 times per hour around the clock all across Europe. By the end of the weekend 2 of the 3 frisbee shops had sold out all their freestyle discs and dozens of ultimate players had asked and received coaching on learning freestyle.

Saturday the weather changed and 30-40 mile per hour winds blew all day long. The freestyle event was moved into a large tent and although the playing area was small it made for an intimate round with the players performing right on top of the large crowd that had gathered. The energy of the crowd and of the players was very high and it turned out to be a very memorable round. It was great to see Carlo from Roma compete - his style is so unique and pleasing to watch. Hila was also a crowd favorite, she's only 20 years old and has great potential. It seems that every player attending has improved and most of them have improved dramatically! Combine that with all the new ultimate players who are devoting time to learning and you might see a change: instead of European players having to travel to the US to go to freestyle events, in the near future US players may have to travel to Europe instead!



Clay is everywhere

Saturday night the disco competition rocked the house, maybe the best audience I've ever played in front of - over 1,000 ultimate players, fired up to see freestyle, the energy, the vibe, the love - back and forth between players and onlookers. And right after the freestyle ends, everybody just goes crazy dancing for hours and hours. We had a perfect little area backstage to keep the jams going and we must have played from 1-3 am not stop! The party went on until around sunrise...

Paga thrills!

Sunday the weather cleared up the finals were a big success - a crowd of around 500 gathered to watch - Marco and Anned played especially well and team Cuakka Uakka performed a hilarious skit preceding their performance - you have to see this one on video. Also, Paul Kenny and Clay also had a clever and very funny skit dressing up as boxers with muscle t-shirts and jamming with boxing gloves. Sune and I did our Nike freestyle routine to the music of the commercial, "man, I can do that". All the teams played well and the crowd loved the show - the spirit of the game was very high with the competition being secondary. Let's keep the Paga vibe alive for FPA Worlds!

The media attention was great, TV crews were filming from MTV Europe - they're producing a 1 hour special on Paga to be aired tomorrow night in Italy, Spain and France. Italian national TV, an Italian Disney TV show, interviews and video for a Rimini Tourism DVD and one of the largest Italian sports magazines Sport Week (like sports illustrated) took pictures and will be publishing only the 2nd frisbee article they have ever done next week.

Once again major props to Clay, Lui, Ema and the rest of the Paganello staff for providing the means for us to experience one of the best weeks of our lives.

Much love and big kisses to everyone!