

Occupation of the Speroni Stadium goes ahead

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This is the first day of occupation of the Speroni Stadium in Busto Arsizio, **by the players, trainer and fans of the Pro Patria football team**. The stadium, which, for over 90 years, has been home to the team, will be the venue of a **new experiment in the world of football: permanent occupation**, as a sign of protest against the non-payment of salaries and against a series of promises not kept by the current and previous managements.

In the early afternoon of today, Wednesday, the first van, driven by one of the longstanding fans of Pro Patria, entered the area reserved for the team, loaded up with mattresses and folding beds, blankets, and everything necessary for the night. The folding beds and mattresses were put down inside the changing rooms, and **another group of fans prepared the banner announcing the occupation of the Speroni Stadium**.

In the meantime, the players continued with their normal afternoon training session, under the guidance of their coach, Raffaele Novelli, who appeared to have been energised by the affection demonstrated by the fans. In the meantime, this strange experiment in self-management in Busto aroused the curiosity of the Italian media, and one by one, local journalists arrived, followed by their colleagues from Sky, Mediaset and RAI, and the popular sports newspapers, like *La Gazzetta dello Sport*.

The players, fans and coach are going to occupy the stadium at least until Saturday, when they leave for Sacile (in Friuli Venezia Giulia), where Pro Patria are playing against the team of Sacilese. The deafening silence of the owners is a sign that nothing good is going to happen from now until Sunday, although the chairman, **Massimo Pattoni, has made it known, at least indirectly, that the players' salaries and contributions will be paid on Friday**. In fact, there is a shortage of everything at the Speroni Stadium, including the detergent for washing the shirts, and there is no money to pay for the transport and hotel. Tomorrow evening, a barbecue has been planned, with meat offered by the historic butcher of Busto, Piran (who is a great Pro fan), and a sweet offered by Lele Magni, the spokesperson of the fans, and the owner of a confectioner's shop.

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