

VareseNews

An extremely close-call for MC-Carnaghi, who nonetheless make history

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The Village People used to sing “Go West”, the Villa People change direction and go East: MC-Carnaghi make history, they **defeat Foppapedretti after a never-ending battle and qualify for the first time for the Champions League’s final four**, which will take place on the 24th and the 25th of March in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. What words could we possibly use to describe a match that, until the 3-2 score, had lasted 2 hours and 11 minutes, before resetting everything and starting again from the golden set? If an insurance against heart attacks during matches existed, all of Villa’s supporters ought to sign it; **Abbondanza’s team waste all they can, including two match points on the score of 12-14** during the tie break, giving every impression bar that of confidence. However, they give everything they can, they play from the heart rather than from the mind and in the end, in the cruel, decisive set, obtain help from two players that until that moment had not really affected the match: **Aury Cruz, 5 points in the golden and also in the previous 5, and Giulia Pincerato**, main player in the service turn that earns the team the definitive 11-15 (Makare Wilson, on the contrary, is always great, top scorer with 28 points). This would be enough for us to say that this has been a match out of every logic, in which MC-Carnaghi were extremely scared but also found the necessary pickup to defeat the phantoms of the past. Foppa’s members had already had their passports stamped with a visa for Azerbaijan, but instead it will be MC-Carnaghi who will head to the Black Sea; an extremely but well-deserved goal. The final will be extremely difficult, but you never know...

THE MATCH – There was a good crowd at Treviglio’s PalaFacchetti, with a good presence by Villa Cortese’s supporters. Due to TV requirements, the match starts a bit late, but despite that the live broadcast on Sportitalia starts only at the score of 8-7 during the first set (this is not new in the records of the matches between these two teams). Bergamo’s supporters show once more that they do not like superstitious practices and they **immediately show a cardboard aeroplane headed for Baku**, accompanied by the writing “Prendiamo il volo”, which means “We take flight”. In the stand there were also the ex Secolo and Rondon, greeted by the cheering of Villa Cortese’s supporters. The initial line-ups were identical to those of the first leg match; Abbondanza still prefers Caterina Bosetti to her sister Lucia. The two teams immediately try to force the serving; **Serena hits from one side, Wilson and Pavan from the other** (two aces for the score of 4-4). Two consecutive errors by Caterina break the balance for the score of 10-7; Pavan again solves matters (11-11), and a wall by Guiggi earns them the overtaking, for the score of 12-13. The two teams go point by point, with Villa Cortese almost always leading by one point (14-15, 19-20), and Cruz gets a precious ace of 22-23; however, Bergamo wins the first set point with Nucu. Caterina Bosetti counters it, **but Piccinini makes the 25-24 and on the following exchange Caterina herself makes a mistake**, giving the first set to Foppa.

The second period opens up with two walls by Nucu which make MC-Carnaghi shiver, then

Serena's service brings Bergamo to a score of 6-2. **Lucia Bosetti takes Caterina's place and immediately plays an important role**, together with Wilson, with a service that turns over the score: 6-8 (with 5 points made by the American). Pavan and Guiggi play extremely well for the score of 8-12 and also Mazzanti tries a substitution: Di Iulio takes Vasileva's place. However, Foppa keeps making mistakes and Quaranta concedes the opponent team the score of 10-16. The home team get back into the game with a partial of 4-0 obtained by Di Iulio herself, and her service gets the match going again, bringing back Bergamo to 19-20. The comeback is completed with an error by Cruz (21-21), the finale is a point by point affair again but **Villa Cortese, without any setters on the court, obtains two set points** with Lucia Bosetti. Quaranta and Serena counters them both, and in the advantages Foppa wastes a chance (25-24), then finally Wilson and Pavan settle the accounts: 1-1.

Mazzanti confirms in the field Di Iulio during the third set, while Caterina is back in the ranks of Villa. Bergamo starts even better (3-1) and with the ace of Nucu it flies on 7-4. The 10-5 of Di Iulio convinces Abbondanza at the time out, but at 13-6 (block of Arrighetti) the coach white and blue has already to play another one; the comeback fails even with the change Lucia Bosetti-Cruz, also because the serve MC-Carnaghi is much less effective. Quaranta **signs two aces for the break of 18-10, Serena scores 20-13 with her block**; the comeback signed by Barborkova is late (23-18) and does not prevent the closure of the orobiche, which come forward.

Cruz returns with Lucia Bosetti in the fourth set, Piccinini go out right away to make room for Vasileva. Pavan, nothing in the third set, comes back with two attacks in a row for 5-7, and repeats for 9-13 after two errors by the Bulgarian. **Villa Cortese stretches of 12-18 with two aces of Bosetti, Foppa tries another recovery** with an ace of Nucu (16-19) but is blocked by a miracle of raising the same Lucy Cruz's lopsided: 17-22. The white and blues still risk a lot on service Arrighetti, but in the end Wilson and Pavan take the match to the tie break.

The tension is very high during the set that can be decisive. The Foppa continue to serve and Nucu is the first to unlock the score with a block on Cruz (4-2), advantage confirmed by Di Iulio and expanded by a block on Wilson: 7-4. Over? Not a chance: **an attack and a block of Wilson worth the 8-8, and so it goes back to the point to point**. Bergamo has repeatedly the ball break (it was strongly criticized the attack by Quaranta for the 12-12) but in the end it is Villa to take forward: 12-13 of Pavan, then the ace of Pincerato for the double match point. Not even this time it's over, though: **Di Iulio and an error by Pavan worth 14-14**. In the advantages Wilson and Pavan cancel two chances for the girls from Bergamo, but two other errors (invasion on the last point) condemn Villa to the golden set.

THE GOLDEN SET – The MC-Carnaghi reacts well to the defeat: Cruz for the 0-2. It doesn't last long, because Bergamo regains straight after the parity (3-3), and even passes on the lead 7-5. Villa is still there and the exchange field is 8-7. **The error of Pavan (9-7) is very heavy, but once again the 'white and blues' leave it behind**, and from the 10-9 they sign a break of 0-3 (with two opponent errors). After a time out called by Mazzanti, it is Cruz to find the hands-off of 10-13, and still makes up the block that brings to three match points in Villa Cortese. On the serve goes **Pincerato, who also performed in two defensive recoveries** and the final error by Quaranta decisive: the MC-Carnaghi is in history.

INTERVIEWS – Very first comments after an exhausting game: "Sometimes we take too much from the desire to win and we get nervous" says **Martina Guiggi** "this explains why so many errors. But it was a beautiful game, because they fought to the last. Between the fifth set and the golden set we told each other that nothing had happened and that the outcome would depend only on us". **Sarah Pavan** exhausted but happy: "Very balanced match, we knew it would have been like that. We are very happy, we wanted this win more than others to redeem the defeat of the Super Cup. In the final four we'll find very strong teams, we want to win but we know it won't be easy. "

Norda Foppapedretti Bergamo-MC-Carnaghi Villa Cortese 3-2 (26-24, 25-27, 25-18, 20-25, 18-16), 11-15 at the Golden Set

Bergamo: Nucu 21 (1), Signorile, Quaranta 18 (0), Gabbiadini ne, Diouf ne, Merlo (L), Di Iulio 11 (1), Ruseva ne, Piccinini 14 (2), Arrighetti 16 (3), Vasileva 8, Serena 7 (1). Coach Mazzanti.

Villa C.: Carocci (L) ne, Stufi ne, Berg 0 (1), Pavan 23 (1), Guiggi 16 (0), Cruz 5 (5), L.Bosetti 11 (1), Pincerato 1 (0) , Barborkova 3 (0), C.Bosetti 5 (0), Wilson 25 (3), Puerari (L). Coach Abbondanza.

Referee: Avelino Azevedo (Portugal) and Zdravko Hranic (Croatia).

Notes: Attendance 2080. Bergamo: winning serves 7 (0), wrong serves 6 (2), attack 37% (20%), receiving 44% -32% (54% -46%), blocks 15 (3), errors 21 (4). Villa: Winning serves 7 (0), wrong serves 9 (1), attack 37% (33%), receiving 50% -28% (60% -30%), blocks 15 (4), errors 23 (3).

Quarter-finals: Azerrail Baku-Dinamo Kazan 3-0 (1-3), 11-15 at the golden set; Fenerbahce Istanbul-Rabita Baku 3-0 (3-0); RC Cannes- Vakifbank Istanbul on Thursday 1st of March at 8 p.m. (0-3).

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