



ITALY TEAM PROFILE - Women's



The Italian women's Volleyball team heads into the 2003 World Cup on the back of a disappointing display at the 2003 World Grand Prix on their home turf. Following their triumph at the 2002 World Championship, big things were expected from this entertaining side but all they could return was three wins from 10 matches. Having often been the subject of comparison with their male counterparts, the Italian women's team finally won an international tournament - the World Championship - in 2002, having lost the final of the European Championship to Russia in 2001. It was a memorable performance and had finally put them on the map of genuine international contenders.

But this year's World Grand Prix was a blip in the process of feeding on their World Championship success and now after receiving a wild card, the "Azzurre" have the opportunity to make amends. This women's team, ranked sixth in the world, have all the qualities. The Most Valuable Player at the World Championship and one of Italy's tallest players Elisa Togut is out with injury and will be missed but the rest of the squad has talent and compliment each other with passion, drive and a sure-fire spirit which resembles the "Azzuri".



Volleyball is the most practiced women's sport in Italy and has received the backing of the national federation with over 100,000 registered players but it is only now that Italian women's volleyball is finally seeing the hard work bear fruit. The 2003 World Cup can be another performance in which to measure their progress towards the 2004 Olympics.

Recent Results

European Continental Championship in Turkey (September)

Playoff for 5th-6th: Italy beat Russia 3-0 (25-16, 25-14, 25-20)
Semifinal for 5th-8th: Italy beat Romania 3-1 (21-25, 25-15, 28-26, 25-21)
Italy lost to Bulgaria 3-2 (25-19, 20-25, 25-21, 15-25, 19-17)
Italy beat Poland 3-1 (20-25, 25-20, 25-20, 25-22)
Italy beat the Ukraine 3-0 (25-23, 25-22, 25-14)
Italy lost to Netherlands 3-0 (25-20, 25-19, 25-18)
Italy beat the Czech Republic 3-0 (25-18, 25-16, 25-22)



World Cup results
1999 - 7th

2003 World Grand Prix in Italy (July-August) finished fifth

Italy beat Korea 3-1 (25-19, 25-17, 22-25, 25-13)
Italy lost to Russia 3-1 (20-25, 25-15, 25-20, 25-17)
Italy lost to China 3-1 (25-22, 23-25, 25-15, 25-20)
Italy lost to USA 3-0 (25-19, 25-19, 26-24)
Italy lost to the Netherlands 3-2 (23-25, 23-25, 36-34, 26-24, 19-17)
Italy beat USA 3-2 (23-25, 20-25, 25-23, 25-15, 15-9)
Italy lost to Japan 3-2 (23-25, 16-25, 25-21, 26-24, 15-10)
Italy lost to Cuba 3-2 (16-25, 22-25, 27-25, 25-20, 15-12)
Italy lost to the Netherlands 3-2 (16-25, 25-20, 27-25, 15-25, 15-8)
Italy beat Germany 3-1 (24-26, 25-22, 25-19, 22-25)



Team Roster

1 Gioli Simona , 2 Rinieri Simona, 4 Leggeri Manuela, 6 Fiorin Valentina, 9 Centoni Nadia, 10 Paggi Paola, 11 Mifkova Darina, 12 Piccinini Francesca, 13 Sangiuliano Rachele, 14 Lo Bianco Eleonora, 16 Barazza Jenny, 17 Cardullo Paola.