

# History since 1995

Since 1995 in the province of Verona, a maxi-event lasting 24 hours or more has been held, a sort of long track athletics meeting: it is the LUPATOTISSIMA.

From 1995 to 2019 the Lupatotissima gravitated to the "Nino Mozzo" Municipal Track of Athletics of San Giovanni Lupatoto, This municipality is located just 8 km south from the center of Verona and includes the hamlets of Pozzo, Camacici and Raldon. Thanks to its proximity to the provincial capital, with which it borders, you can easily visit the attractions of world significance of the city of Verona, such as the Arena, Romeo and Juliet's balcony, Piazza Erbe, Piazza Brà, Castel San Pietro, the Ponte di Castelvecchio, the Agricultural Fair, Vinitaly, Fieracavalli, Lake Garda itself and one of the most beautiful amusement parks in the world, Gardaland.

The Lupatotissima is organized by the Mombocar's Club. The presence of the Municipal Administration of San Giovanni Lupatoto until 2019 was not a sort of simple Patronage, as usually happens, but a real constant and active presence in the organization of a very complex and demanding event, starting with everyone the Sports Councilors who have succeeded each other over many years, not to neglect the Executives and the employees of the various offices involved.

The Mombocar Amateur Sports Group is one of the most famous Veronese running clubs in Italy for having organized and collaborated in various initiatives, including international ones. Among the most important races organized, the Sgambada de San Giuseppe, the Grand Prix Santa Croce, the Maratonina Città di Verona and the rebirth of the Palio del drappo verde di Verona, the oldest and longest-running race in the world with over 600 editions already disputed. In the second half of the 90s, the notoriety of Mombocar had a sudden surge thanks also to the achievements of its most representative athlete of the time, that Rosanna Pellizzari who won in 1997 and 1998 one of the most beautiful and fascinating extreme Ultramarathon races in the world. the Marathon des Sables in Morocco.

The Lupatotissima was born in 1995, taking over a historic event for Verona, the Staffettissima SCM 24x1 hour, after 6 years from the interruption of the latter. The first editions of the Lupatotissima were entirely dedicated to the 24x1 hour Relay and to the non-competitive Sunday morning race initially called "Ritornemo a corer a San Giovanni" then called StraLupatoto starting from 1999.

The 24x1 hour relay is a non-stop relay lasting 24 hours, scheduled for the Italian Sports Center, which over the years has seen some of the strongest running clubs in the Veneto and neighboring regions participate over the years. In 2012 the highest number of participating relay races was reached: 33. Each men's club team is made up of 24 athletes, each of whom runs for 1 hour. At the end of each hour the evocative changeover phase takes place, in which the competing fractionist of each team must change - with the touch of his hand - to his teammate who will take over for the next hour. At the end of the 24 hours, the team with the highest number of laps will win. In addition to the hourly change, another very exciting

moment is the last minute of the race. The women's teams and the municipal representatives for some years have been made up of 12 members. With the incessant beating of the seconds, by the speakers of the event, the unforgettable Franco Masola and a little more recently Fabio Rossi and Enzo Tubini, the crowd crowded around the track follows applauding the final sprint of the last fractionists, controlled very last seconds by the CSI judges, who will then have to measure the meters covered in the last lap of the track until the final shot of the 24 hours.

To understand a little more the intensity of this race for the Veronese, just think that the best team performance of all time in Italy, over 453 km, was achieved in Verona by the San Martino B.A. team. to the hourly average of km. 18.879. Since 2000, participation has also been extended to relay teams made up of municipal representatives. The municipal representatives have fought over the coveted Municipal Trophy for several years, while the Club teams competed to win the "Adalberto Discotto alla memoria" Trophy set up to commemorate a great figure of Veronese Sport and the Italian Sports Center, who disappeared in spring 2001 and that he did his best to restart the 24x1 hour relay in 1995 ”.

In 1998 the "ultramarathon runners" arrived. Thanks also to the clamor of the successes reported as mentioned earlier by Rosanna Pellizzari in the Moroccan desert, the Lupatotissima opened in 1998 to the world of ultramarathon by introducing the races of the 100 km and the individual 24 hours: in the first three internal lanes the 24x1 hour Relay takes place, in the three external lanes, from the fourth onwards, the Ultramarathon races are held. In particular, it was the individual 24 hours that catalyzed the attention of local and national media, perhaps due to the suggestion created by the efforts of the athletes, by the charm of the night, by the small episodes that take place in the assistants' tents, to the cursed blisters, of sleep, tears of fatigue and joy, but it is difficult to summarize a 24 hours in a few words. Over the years, the big names of the national Ultramarathon have also arrived first and then internationally, thanks also to the positions held by the secretary of Mombocar Scevaroli within the Italian coordination body of the Ultramarathon in Italy called I.U.TA. (Italian Ultramarathon and Trail Association). Thanks to the interest of the then President and founder of IUTA - the journalist and statistician Franco Ranciaffi - and to the good relations with the leaders of the IAU (the Association that coordinates the Ultramarathon in the world on behalf of the IAAF), in particular with the then President (the English Campbell) and his Deputy (the French Stenger), Mombocar had the opportunity to host a European 24-hour track review in 1999 and then was assigned the organization of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the World Championship of the same discipline in 2001. The races were ennobled by the presence in 1999, 2000 and 2001 of the Greek Yiannis Kouros (still today the men's world record holder with 303,506 km), but also of the Russian Irina Reutovich (until then female world record holder with 242.624 km) and of the Hungarian Edit Berces (then a fresh 100 km World Champion in 2000 in the Netherlands, who wanted to switch to the longer distance), a coincidence that few events in the world they could boast.

Also in 2001, Fidal assigned to Lupatotissima the organization of the Italian 100 km road championship for the Masters categories: it was the only occasion that the Lupatotissima Ultra Marathon went outside the stadium.

In 2002 something truly extraordinary happened: Edit Berces wanted to return to San Giovanni Lupatoto to beat the record of the women's world of 24 hours and she succeeded by overcoming the 250 km wall of 106 meters. In the same edition, our great Antonio Mazzeo won among men.

In 2003, the Lupatotissima then had the honor of hosting on behalf of the IAU the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the men's world record in the 100 km track of the Scottish Ritschie, a guest for a few days in San Giovanni Lupatoto. The invitation-only competition attracted some of the best athletes in the world and was called "The stars under the stars". It was truly a stellar 100 km, with the victory in the women's field and the new record in the world of specialties in 7h14: 05.8 by the Japanese Norimi Sukarai. Nine national records were achieved on the track, including the Italian ones of Mario Ardemagni (winner among men in 6h41: 48.6) and Paola Sanna (in 8h26: 19.4 third classified woman). Passing through the 50 km Monica Casiraghi also achieved another national record, with 3h39: 06.6 which thus became the tenth national record beaten.

Finally, in 2006 the Lupatotissima once again hosted the IAU European Championship of the 24 hours, with the victories of the Russian Irina Koval (229.452 km) and compatriot Vladimir Bychkov (254.774 km), while Antonio Mammoli stood out among the Italians in the blue jersey and bronze medal, which represented the first medal achieved by a blue individual in the history of the 24 hours.

To conclude this important chapter, here are the firsts of the event:

24x1h relay men: GP Pier Sport Footwear Peron Tencarola PD 425,281 km (2004)  
24x1h women relay: Rappr. women Verona - Amighini 312.519 km (1996)  
24x1h joint relay: Verona Bentegodi Oxyburn 386,958 km (2003)  
relay 12x1h women: Athletics Lupatotina Turbo Lupe 154,706 km (2014)  
12x1h relay municipalities: Municipality of San Giovanni Lupatoto 167,774 km (2013)  
men fractionists: Korir Hillary 19,931 km (2004)  
women fractionists: Disconzi Stefania 16,173 km (2004)

100 km male: Ardemagni Mario 6h 41: 48.6 (2003)  
100 km women: Sakurai Norimi (JPN) 7h 14: 05.8 (2003)  
24 Hours Male: Kouros Yiannis (GRE) 275.828 km (2001)  
Women's 24 Hours: Berces Edit (HUN) 250.106 km (2002)  
50 km male: Mario factor 3h 04: 23.9 (2003)  
50 km women: Sakurai Norimi (JPN) 3h 33: 23.3 (2003)  
12 Hours Male: Ivan Penalba Lopez (ESP) 148.797 km (2018)  
12 hours female: Monica Barchetti 123,687 km (2016)  
6 hours male: Ardemagni Mario 90,400 km (2003)  
Female 6 Hours: Sakurai Norimi (JPN) 83,200km (2003)

"But the Lupatotissima is not just competition"

Thanks to the sensitivity of many friends, various associations and volunteer forces, the Lupatotissima gave birth to other collateral events.

A prestigious award, the "LUPETTO D'ORO" was from 1998 to 2018 to the Italian athlete or manager who distinguished himself in one of the individual or career competitions by a prestigious jury composed of the Directors of the main national sports magazines and some qualified journalists or local and national experts. President of the Jury for many years was the late journalist Renata D'Antoni, supported by our Giampaolo Aloisi. Since 2001, a specific special "LUPETTO ROSA" prize has also been awarded to female athletes and managers of the fairer sex.

Thanks to the IUTA, the GALA of the ITALIAN ULTRAMARATHON has been set up in various editions, with the presence and awarding of illustrious personalities, chosen from among the athletes and managers who have written important pages of the Italian Ultra Marathon.

Since the birth of the Lupatotissima, the running groups of San Giovanni Lupatoto have teamed up to organize a non-competitive race on the Sunday morning of the Lupatotissima, initially called "Ritornemo a corer a San Giovanni" and then renamed STRALUPATOTO in 1999, and which sometimes hosts over 3,000 runners, who are divided on several paths, the longest of which crosses the Parco dell'Adige and the so-called "Savana".

The Lupatotissima has been combined with the numerous activities carried out over time by his friend Piero Armani, currently at the helm of the Alba Association whose primary objective is to raise public awareness of the disease of cystic fibrosis and in particular to economically support the development of important projects in Belarus related to the treatment of the disease (treatment centers, hospitals, first support for families, drugs, etc.). Under the pressure of Piero Armani, from 2003 to 2013 the Lupatotissima also organized the RELAY OF HOPE, aimed at students of elementary, lower and middle high schools, as well as promoting sport also and above all to stimulate and educate children to raise awareness towards solidarity in general.

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Before the 24 hours of the Lupatotissima, there were other 24 hour races, but only on the road, such as:

- the 24 hours of Gonars in Friuli (ten editions from 1982 to 1991 - essentially a non-competitive one but with unofficial rankings);
- the 24 hours of Castiglion Fiorentino (in the province of Arezzo) organized by Renato Menci (8 editions from 1996 to 2003).

There were also individual participations in some 24x1 hour relay races; Relay races were very fashionable in the 1980-90s, especially in Lombardy.

But the 24 hours of the Lupatotissima was the first race (therefore open to all) of 24 hours on the track and it was the longest (oldest) in Italy among the 24 hours on the track (10 editions held from 1998 to 2011).

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The same can be said for the 100 km track race, only for the longevity, as it was disputed 10 times (from 1998 to 2013 inclusive). In fact, there were exceptions that preceded the 100 km of the Lupatotissima, in the 100 km track specialty, such as Bologna (1982-83-84) and Turin (1988).

Stefano Scevaroli  
Summer 2020