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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### IFL's AMERICAN DREAM

*During a Press Conference on September 30 in Toledo, Ohio, it was officially announced that the XLII Italian Bowl, the final of the 2023 Italian First Division Championship (IFL), will be played in the United States.*

Last Friday, a Press conference at the **Glass City Metropark** in **Toledo** (Ohio) unveiled The American Dream of the **Italian Football League** that had become a reality: the final game of the 2023 First Division Championship, the **XLII Italian Bowl**, will be played internationally in the United States for the first time in the history of the sport. In Toledo, Italian football was represented by **Fabio Tortosa**, FIDAF Deputy Vice President, and by **Edoardo Cammi**, FIDAF Board member.

The Mayor of Toledo, **Wade Kapszukiewicz**, hosted the event and opened the press conference, visibly excited for what he called a "*historic and exciting announcement.*" In November 2021, the City of Toledo twinned with **Ferrara**. Since then, the underlying mission has been to cement the friendship between the United States and Italy, promoting it through sport, cultural exchanges, and beyond. After hosting the 2021 edition of the prestigious Solheim Golf Cup, Toledo's sports figures and Wade Kapszukiewicz have focused on fostering a relationship with the Italian main football league. The birthplace of American football put its powerful spotlight on the Italian football movement and fully supported the groundbreaking event of playing the XLII Italian Bowl on American grounds.

The IFL Final Game will be played in the beautiful Toledo Rockets University Stadium, the **Glass Bowl**, and the finalist teams will be hosted on campus for a week of total immersion in the unique atmosphere that only the United States can create around an American football game. Many events will surround the Italian Bowl: from the **Fourth of July celebrations** (US Independence Day) to a **Business Forum** and various scheduled meetings involving potential investors.

During the unveiling, **Geoff Shook** expressed great enthusiasm for this project. Shook is the President and GM of **Buckeye Broadband**, the provider of telephone and internet services and the cable television broadcaster that followed the Italian championship in 2022 and will continue to do so throughout 2023. Shook is also one of the founders of the organizing committee, "**Italian Bowl USA**," and he gave the most resonant and disarming answer to the reason behind this unique initiative: "*We want to bring Toledo back on an international, global stage, through sport.*" With the support of many companies and sponsors, the organizing committee's goal is to make the "Italian Bowl USA" an event of the highest international level.

More positive comments came from **Rob Sims**, a former Ohio State University player who also played for the NFL Seattle Seahawks and the Detroit Lions. Last season, Sims was one of three commentators of the IFL's Game of the Week broadcasted on BCSN. Sims recalled attending the Italian Bowl in Vicenza in 2017 with his teammate, Calvin Johnson. Sims expressed his admiration for Italian players' passion, pride, intensity, and commitment, which he considers not so different from those of professionals. Sims communicated his pride in being part of the project, which will allow Italian players to experience the full power of the American organizational machine behind a football game of this caliber.

**Nick Eyde** closed the conference. A former player at the highest level in the US and Italy, he is now an enlightened entrepreneur and *deus ex machina* of the extraordinary adventure that awaits the 'made in Italy' Football. Nick explained that the idea for this event was born three years ago and then, unfortunately, put on standby (together with the entire world) because of the pandemic. Eyde thanked all those people who immediately believed in the 'dream.' Among others, Eyde's sincere thanks went to **Allegra Bastrocchi**, the Italian Consul in Detroit in attendance at the conference and an enthusiastic supporter of the entire project; and to **Lou Tosi**, partner of the Law Firm Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, who attended the XLI Italian Bowl at Dall'Ara in Bologna on July 2, 2021.

The Italian Bowl will take place on **Saturday, July 1, 2023**, at **2:00 PM** Toledo time (8:00 PM in Italy) and live-streamed in Italy, too. The two finalist teams will arrive in Toledo several days before, on June 27. They will be involved in a series of visits and events: from the **Football Hall of Fame** in **Canton** to a meeting with the NFL players of the **Cleveland Browns** and the **Detroit Lions**, as well as other significant public events surrounding the celebrations of the Fourth of July. The Organizing Committee is already preparing special promotional travel packages for Italy fans, with discounts on travel and stay. Besides having access to the stadium, Italian fans will experience the US national holiday of Independence Day and its dazzling festivities.

FIDAF, together with all the IFL Teams, intends to make the most of this incredible opportunity, working side by side with the impressive organizational machine set up by the American hosts to give maximum visibility to the First Division Championship and the entire Italian football movement.

The IFL's American dream has just begun...

Tickets are already on sale at: <https://www.italianbowlusa.com/tickets/>.

Prices: \$15 (generic, no seat assigned); \$30 (with seat assigned)

For more information and constant updates on the XLII Italian Bowl, visit [www.ItalianBowlUSA.com](http://www.ItalianBowlUSA.com) and follow all the news on the dedicated social channels.

Link to the press conference video: <https://youtu.be/g8cpgk0maZw>

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