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MEDIA ADVISORY

Embargoed until April 21 at 11:00 a.m (Italian time)

**Official presentation of the XLII Italian Bowl
Italian Football Championship Game,
to be played for the first time in the U.S.
& commemoration of the first American football match in Italy,
played in Florence in 1945.**

Friday April 21, 2023 | 11.00 a.m.
U.S. Consulate | Lungarno A. Vespucci, 38 |

For accreditation and security purposes, all participants are requested to RSVP
via the following email address: CGFIProtocol@state.gov.

Please include: first name, last name, and media outlet affiliation.

Photographers and videographers are requested to arrive at the Consulate by 10:40 a.m.

FLORENCE – The U.S. Consulate General in Florence, which has responsibility for over 85,000 American citizens resident in Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, and the Republic of San Marino, and over 1.5 million American tourists and students, has long embraced and fostered the rich cultural and economic-commercial partnership between Italy and the United States.

On Friday, April 21, 2023, the U.S. Consulate in Florence will host a press conference to announce the XLII Italian Bowl, the final of the Italian First Division Championship (IFL) of American football organized by FIDAF, the Italian Federation of American Football. The Italian Bowl will be played for the first time in the U.S. -- in Toledo, Ohio -- on July 1, 2023.

The selection of Toledo, Ohio as the site for the championship game is historically significant as Ohio is the birthplace of American football. It is thanks to the to the sister-city relationship between Ferrara and Toledo, which was established in 2021, that the finals will be hosted in Toledo.

The press conference will also commemorate the first American football game in Italy played in 1945 in Florence (January 1, 1945) between the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force. This event was the catalyst that brought American football to Europe, leading to the birth of the various National Federations and the consequent organization of regular championships throughout the continent.

At the press conference, featured speakers will include U.S. Consul General in Florence Ragini Gupta, the Region of Tuscany, Vice Mayor of Florence Alessia Bettini, the Mayor of Toledo, Ohio, Wade Kapszukiewicz, the Federal Councillors FIDAF Manfredi Leone and Edoardo Cammi, and the Estra Guelfi Florence, the 2022 American football Champions of Italy.

The Italian Bowl, which is the Italian Super Bowl, will be the culminating event of the celebrations for American Independence Day and will be accompanied by a series of collateral initiatives aimed at fostering intercultural exchange between the two countries. Among these, the most significant event will be the Business Forum on June 30, a unique opportunity for engagement between local businesses and potential Italian investors that provides substantial networking opportunities. Several exceptional speakers will participate in the seminar on the regulatory, administrative, and fiscal aspects of "Doing business in the USA and the Toledo region."

On July 1, 2023, the Championship Final will take place at the "Glass Bowl" stadium of the University of Toledo. It will host the two best First Division teams (the Italian Premiere League of American football). The match will be broadcast live on cable TV in the United States and visible in Italy in prime time.

The XLII Italian Bowl will see the participation of the following personalities:

- Mariam Battistelli will sing the American and Italian national anthems. She performs at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan and is one of Europe's most renowned emerging opera stars. She is also a former American football player and played in the Italian Women League until a few years ago.
- Former NFL star Calvin Johnson will be the guest of honor in Toledo as he was (in 2017) at the Italian Bowl in Vicenza.
- John Grisham is scheduled to attend. Grisham is the best-selling author of "Playing for Pizza," which tells the story of an American football player who arrives in Italy to play with the Panthers Parma. On Saturday, April 22, The Panthers will face Guelfi at the Florence Otel Stadium for the seventh regular season game.
- Marco's Pizza (the fifth largest pizza chain in the United States) is the main sponsor of the XLII Italian Bowl and has created a "signature Pizza" specifically dedicated to the event U.S.