



Earlier today, Formentera Council president Jaume Ferrer presented Mateo Sanz with a plaque recognising his achievement: Sanz recently become the first Formentera athlete to qualify for the Olympic Games. At one o' clock midday, Council officials held an homage for Sanz in the administration's plenary hall, an event attended by a great many local figures in politics and sport.

After a dedication that included words for the ceremony's attendees, Ferrer noted that just five years earlier in the same hall Sanz had the honour of a similar homage in his name. Indeed, in August 2010, at the age of 16, the local star was proclaimed the world champion under 19 in Olympic class RS:X windsurf. Today, Ferrer exclaimed proudly, «we celebrate your achievement as Formentera's very first Olympic qualified athlete».

An example to follow

In President Ferrer's words, Sanz is a marvellous example for other youth and athletes on the island. «They will no doubt watch intently as he takes part in the Olympic Games, the most important sporting event in the world». The president acknowledged that Sanz, in so doing, is poised to «take Formentera sports farther than they've ever gone». Ferrer also congratulated Sanz' trainer, Asier Fernández, and the entire generation of windsurfers that boasts Sergi Escandell and Joan Carles Cardona.

The president spoke to the day's crowd about the beginnings of the municipal sailing school. He thanked two local politicians, Isidor Torres and Felip Portas, for their work founding the school in the year 2000, «when the only aim was to get Formentera residents out into the sea that surrounds us». «Even with the addition of Asier Fernández in 2002», confided Ferrer, «we never could have dreamt it would become the champion-producing school it has today».

Sanz expressed gratitude to his entire team and assured the crowd, «without them I wouldn't be here». For his part, Mr Fernández underscored the importance of the efforts of Torres and Portas and the support of the Council in getting the sport off the ground early on.