

= Juan Fernández ( basketball ) =

Juan Manuel " Lobito " Fernández ( born July 22 , 1990 ) is an Argentine professional basketball player . His father , Gustavo , was a point guard for a number of professional basketball teams in Argentina . Pepe Sánchez convinced Fernández to play basketball at his alma mater , Temple University , and Fernández joined the Temple Owls team in December 2008 . As a sophomore , he was named Atlantic 10 Tournament Most Valuable Player . After struggling through a prolonged shooting slump as a junior , he hit an off @-@ balance 18 @-@ foot shot with .4 seconds to play to defeat Penn State in the 2011 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament and was named to the All @-@ Atlantic 10 Third Team . In addition to his college exploits , he led Argentina to a gold medal in the 2008 Under @-@ 18 World Championship .

= = Early life = =

Fernández was born on July 22 , 1990 in Río Tercero , Argentina to Gustavo Fernández and Nancy Fiandrino . His father was a point guard for a number of professional basketball teams in Argentina . He earned the nickname " Lobito " ( Spanish for " little wolf " ) after starring on a basketball team with a wolf mascot . Juan Fernández 's little brother , also named Gustavo , fell out of a chair when he was a toddler and used a wheelchair for life . He is one of the top wheelchair tennis players in the world under the age of 18 . The family operates the Pinot Grigio restaurant in Río Tercero .

At the urging of his father , Juan Fernández began playing basketball when he was six years old . He described himself as a " fat little kid " who was more interested in being a soccer goalie at first . When Fernández showed star potential on junior club teams , he was given the " Lobito " nickname , while his father became known as " Lobo " .

As a teenager , Fernández was offered deals to play in the Spanish B and C league when he graduated from Dr. Alexis Carrel High School . At the same time , he was considering playing college basketball in the United States . His mother went to Connecticut for six months to learn English , and she persuaded him that it would be a good place to be a student @-@ athlete . Pepe Sánchez , an Argentine basketball player who played college basketball at Temple University , offered some advice in an e @-@ mail :

" I 'm not the kind of guy who preaches about what people should do . But when kids like Juan ask me , I tell them my two greatest experiences in basketball was playing for my college team and my national team ? the two times that money wasn 't involved . It was about the chance to represent your school and your country . More than that , it just opened my mind to so much .

" When I spoke with Juan , it just struck me he was the same and that college was the right situation to him . I told him regardless of what happens in basketball ? whether he plays in the NBA , in Europe , whatever ? going to college would make the biggest difference in his life . "

Sánchez had recommended Fernández to the coach of his alma mater , Fran Dunphy . Dunphy dispatched assistant Matt Langel to recruit Fernández to Temple . On one recruiting trip , Langel drove for 10 hours on the backroads of Argentina searching for Fernández , who was practicing with the national team instead of home in Río Tercero as Langel had thought . After his official visit to the Philadelphia campus in September 2008 , Fernández signed his letter of intent . He graduated high school in December , and enrolled at Temple .

= = College career = =

= = Freshman = =

Fernández played college basketball with the Temple Owls men 's basketball team . At Temple , Fernández drew immediate comparisons to Sánchez ; he was dubbed " Pepe Sánchez with a jump shot . " He chose Sánchez 's jersey , number 4 , but Fernández said this was to honor his father . Unfamiliar with the practice of lifting weights , Fernández wore gloves to his first session , drawing

the laughs of his teammates . Against Kent State , Fernández contributed eight points and four assists in his Temple debut , three days after arriving in the United States . He scored a season @-@ high 19 points on February 15 , 2009 , to power Temple past Duquesne 78 ? 73 . The Owls reached the 2009 NCAA Tournament after winning the Atlantic 10 tournament title . In 23 games , he averaged 5 @.@ 5 points and 2 @.@ 7 assists per game on the basketball court , and earned a 3 @.@ 0 grade point average in the classroom .

= = = Sophomore = = =

In his sophomore year , Fernández was moved to shooting guard in the Temple starting lineup , a change that felt strange for him as he was used to playing point guard . He was still in frequent playmaking positions , and led the team in assists with 3 @.@ 6 per game . He increased his scoring average to 12 @.@ 6 points per game , second on the team , and led the Atlantic 10 in three @-@ point percentage ( 45 @.@ 3 % ) . Fernández scored in double figures in 23 games . On December 13 , he netted a career best 33 points to upset local rival and third @-@ ranked Villanova 75 ? 65 ; he shot 7 @-@ for @-@ 10 from beyond the arc . This earned him Philadelphia Big Five Player of the Week honors for the week of December 7 ? 14 . As a result of his performance against Villanova and his 21 points versus Seton Hall , Fernández was named Atlantic 10 Player of the Week on December 20 . In the Fordham game on January 23 , 2010 , he took a blow to the head and was forced to leave in the second half . He missed the February 2 game against Richmond with post @-@ concussive symptoms .

Fernández became a fan favorite at Temple . Every time he made a three @-@ pointer against Bowling Green , the Temple student section chanted " Ole , ole , ole ! " Seton Hall fans were not so kind , mocking him with " Messi , Messi . " Little did they realize that Lionel Messi was one of his favorite soccer players , and their comments only served as inspiration . On his return flights to Argentina , strangers frequently went up to Fernández to congratulate him on his recent performances .

Fernández helped Temple to a 29 ? 5 season , capture a share of the Atlantic 10 conference regular season championship with a 14 ? 2 record , and earn a third consecutive Atlantic 10 conference tournament title and an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament . He was named Atlantic 10 Tournament Most Valuable Player after scoring 18 points in the final versus Richmond . In the NCAA Tournament , Temple was seeded fifth and matched up with 12 seed Cornell in the first round . Fernández had 14 points , but his Owls were upset by the Big Red 78 ? 65 . Following the season , Fernandez was an All @-@ Atlantic 10 Honorable Mention selection .

= = = Junior = = =

With the graduation of Luis Guzmán , Fernández switched back to his natural position at point guard in his junior campaign . Fernandez was a preseason All @-@ Atlantic 10 Second Team selection . He was on the watchlist for the Bob Cousy Award honoring the top point guard in college basketball . A shooting slump that lasted the majority of the season saw his field goal percentage drop to 35 @.@ 5 % , his three point percentage drop to 33 @.@ 3 % , and his scoring average drop to 11 @.@ 2 points per game . He still led the team in assists , with 3 @.@ 9 per game . Fernández did miss four games in the middle of the season due to a bone bruise in his knee , but the shooting slump was more devastating and caused him to consult a sports psychologist . One of the worst games of his career was in an Atlantic 10 Tournament loss to Richmond , in which he went 3 @-@ for @-@ 17 from the field and committed three turnovers . After the game Fran Dunphy convinced Fernández that he had to take less shots and get his teammates involved .

Fernández led Temple to a 26 ? 8 record and a seven seed in the 2011 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament . In the Round of 64 , he hit an off @-@ balance 18 @-@ foot shot with .4 seconds to play to defeat Penn State , 66 ? 64 , and finished with a season @-@ high 23 points . In the timeout that preceded the shot , teammate Khalif Wyatt convinced coach Dunphy to draw up a play for Fernández , despite his struggles during the season . Fernández finished with 14 points

against San Diego State , but the Owls fell in double overtime . He was named to the All @-@ Atlantic 10 Third Team and Academic Team at the conclusion of the regular season and was a Philadelphia Big Five Second Team honoree .

= = = Senior = = =

Fernández was a preseason All @-@ Atlantic 10 First Team selection as a senior . He was named to the All @-@ Atlantic 10 Third Team and Academic Team at the conclusion of the regular season .

= = Professional career = =

Fernández began his professional career in 2012 , after signing with the Italian League club Olimpia Milano . At the beginning of the 2012 ? 13 season he was loaned to Centrale del Latte Brescia of the Italian Second Division . In 40 games played in the Italian 2nd Division , he averaged 28 @.@ 2 minutes , 8 @.@ 8 points and 4 @.@ 8 assists per game .

He was then released by Olimpia Milano , and signed with the first division Italian League club Dinamo Sassari .

For the next season he returned to Centrale del Latte Brescia of the Italian Second Division . Posting 12 @.@ 7 PPG and 5 APG in 23 games of the 2014 @-@ 15 regular season .

In the 2015 @-@ 16 season " Lobito " played in 28 games of the regular season , he averaged 23 minutes , 10 @.@ 6 points and 4 @.@ 3 assists per game . In the Second Division playoffs he started 16 games , averaged 8 @.@ 1 points and 4 @.@ 3 assist per game helping Basket Brescia Leonessa win the finals against Fortitudo Bologna in 5 games and returning to Italian League after 28 years .

= = Argentine national team = =

Fernández was a participant in the 2008 Under @-@ 18 World Championship representing the junior national team of Argentina . In six U18 matches , he averaged 8 @.@ 4 points , 3 @.@ 0 assists , 1 @.@ 4 steals and 17 minutes per game . In a victory over the United States squad in the World Championship game , he scored 16 points . In the 2009 U19 World Championship , he averaged 8 @.@ 4 points , 3 @.@ 6 rebounds , and 3 @.@ 6 assists per game .

Fernández has also been a member of the senior Argentine national basketball team .

= = Statistics = =

= = = NCAA = = =

= = Awards and accomplishments = =

= = = College = = =

2009 ? 10 All @-@ Atlantic 10 Honorable Mention

2010 Atlantic 10 Tournament MVP

2010 ? 11 All @-@ Atlantic 10 Third Team

2010 ? 11 All @-@ Atlantic 10 Academic Team