

THE SUPER LEAGUE PLAN

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I HOPE YOU WILL LEARN SOMETHING OVER THE COMPLEXITY OF TODAY'S
FOOTBALL AND ITS STAKES NOWADAYS.

GOOD READING!

“As an American who has had the privilege of being a manager and owner of clubs on both continents., I learned that the culture of sport in Europe is very different from that of the United States and that it must be respected. In Europe, the system is not based on the centralization of power and gratification in the hands of a few.” This is what, the owner of Olympique de Marseille said, one of the greatest clubs in the French football Championship, which won the Champions clubs’ cup in 1993. In this quote, the Boston native referred to the project of a European Super League aborted, but still looming over the most powerful clubs in Europe. These ones are represented by leaders such as Real Madrid, Barcelona FC, or Juventus that are on a warpath for years now, against the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) to make it reform the current Champions League. Effectively, the creation of a Super league would challenge directly the Champions League as we know it today, that is to say an open competition enabling clubs as Borisov, a Belarusian club to stand up facing giants like Juventus (2-2 during group phase in 2008) and Milan Ac (1-1 also during group phase in 2011) both in terrific momentum. There are plenty of reasons that could motivate historical clubs such as Real Madrid or Manchester United to be a part of a second European competition. In order to explore that, it may be interesting to wonder to what extent does the Super League project emphasize the concept of “winner takes all”. A winner takes all is for instance an economic situation in which an entity such as a company, benefits from success in contrast to the rest of the market, mostly thanks to a technological advance. To answer the question, let’s see how and why the Super League project embodies the concept of a “winner-take-all”. Secondly, we will underline the limits of such a system for national championships and towards Europeans values in sport. Finally, the third part will examine a possible solution to remediate this crisis threatening European football.

At first, even if the Super league project appeared in the aim to be applied sooner or later, it turned out to be a way to put pressure over the UEFA. Even though the latter was reforming as much as it could during the 90’, in 1998 Media Partners an advertising company proposed publicly the idea of a semi-closed league, to challenge the UEFA monopoly over TV rights revenues redistribution. TV rights have become more and more important through the time, and Media Partners followed by successful clubs at that time that wanted to ensure their revenues by gathering them to less clubs. A team needs to be managed economically speaking, and so owners need to get a steady cash flow, especially for giants as Real Madrid and Barcelona FC that are highly indebted. All the more so because they invest over the arrival of more star players, over bigger and bigger infrastructure etc. All these arguments led Media Partners to finance this project, finally abandoned, since the arrival of a new wave of reform following this crisis within European football. Situation hasn’t changed for the 2021 project regarding clubs’ desires, only the investor, JP Morgan an American Bank of Investments. The 1998 plan believed to create a tournament with

16 constant clubs and 16 others, qualified according to their results in national championships. With the latest project, this is only 5 renewable clubs that could be qualified and 15 constantly qualified, playing against themselves in 2 distinct groups, then would begin knockout games. This would by extension ensure the place of the constantly qualified within the competition and so revenues. To understand the economic aim, let's take an example. First, TV rights account for 2 billion euros between all the contenders, reducing the number of participants from 32 to 20 in the new format. Add to this almost 400 million euros for the winner, compared to "only" 120 million euros for the Champions League winner. There is a real benefit for investors/owners to be a part of such a competition. This illustrates how the most powerful clubs try to put into place barriers, consequently restraining small clubs to get into the private elite league.

Anyway, if economic interests are not enough convincing you as an owner of one of those 15 clubs, there are still sporting interests. If it is a very attractive draft, it is because it reduces uncertainty over the competition. Take the example of a knockout game, a very close game, lost at the very last second by Real Madrid, due to a penalty conceded. Real Madrid is eliminated and would not obtain the winning bonus etc. just because of a simple dangerous tackle almost breaking his opponents' knees. The player that has lost his cool, is sentenced by a red card but the team loses the game and so much potential money due to an unfortunate event. Creating longer group phases would solve that in a way, adding more games to the calendar. Investors would be way less afraid to put money in a competition that they can't lose in one game. There, they want to secure their investments, regardless of the nature of sport. You would say to me, that "every club would do that", then I would ask you "How many clubs have the real influence, power and financial resources?" Pep Guardiola said it better than anyone « sport is not sport anymore when success is guaranteed to be reached »

Whereas the "big ones" would monitor their own league through JP Morgan goodwill, what would be the consequences over the others? What about the impact of gathered revenues over National Championships? After all, the big question would be, do they participate or not. In the first case, that could be great for them, but chances are so tight to be a part of the process. Small clubs have a real economic interest to get into European competition whether it is the SL or the CL. Indeed, bonuses related to good results in CL are tremendous for clubs such as Marseille, Saint-Etienne or even Lyon which are known to be healthy economically-speaking. Even though these are not more indebted than Real Madrid or Barca, they live from less revenues than them that play almost every year the final four of CL (so collect way more bonuses). On the other hand, the SL would be composed of the most prolific clubs so they naturally entice Broadcast companies such as Disney + or

Amazon Prime that would catch the goose that lays golden eggs. Nobody wants to see a CL without Liverpool, Bayern Munich or Borussia Dortmund as most of them capitalize an incredible count of wins in CL. Audience would in this case drop, with tv rights decreasing as well. Non-participant of the SL, don't perceive much money from tv rights and we assist in the death of thousands of clubs all over Europe, including clubs in Ligue 1, Serie A, Premier League, Bundesliga etc.

We can observe an attempt to disrupt European values through the introduction of the SL. The closed league is subject to the US economic logic; the reason why a league decides to accept a certain club (or franchise) is only a matter of profitability that it could help to generate collectively with others. In Europe, values are more about social virtues as solidarity between clubs, priority given to training programs. There is a certain relation with egalitarian values, leading to the redistribution of wealth to a wider part of the club. To highlight this, Roxanne Maracineanu, French sport minister said "I feel strongly attached to the solidarity system which is ours", France is for instance not ready to centralize power in the hands of few.

So, what could be the solution to such a dilemma? Most of the European governments seem reluctant to the birth of the SL, could it be a lead? Actually, the SL would take place from August to May, overlapping with the National team schedule. Players would not be available for their national team and this for every country within Europe. On one hand the SL put at risk domestic championships but also national teams. In France, it challenges the FFF (French Federation of Football), a state agency, which doesn't share the idea of profitability of the SL. Its aim is to make the domestic Championship shine, just as the national team regulates and subsidizes club training of young players and coaches. The divergence of objectives could lead states to take action to deter the SL to destroy the French Championship. Otherwise, territories are also in danger, as clubs make the entire territory live.

Out will go the old system which let small clubs compete among the most powerful clubs in the world and sometimes beat them. In will come an economic-based league gathering resources to less clubs to ensure results economically and sportingly speaking. As a result, this would lead to a major threat over clubs which do not have sufficient revenues to sustain without television rights, and to a certain extent threaten values that are not spread and shared by people, and politics over Europe. Finally, it may be interesting to involve governments with the aim of defining a common ground, preventing this Super League from wiping out national championships as the Ligue 1, without interfering with the business logic of profitability. So, we're not yet entirely in a "winner take all" situation, as the current Champions League still encourages small clubs to be a part of this beneficial tournament. In the future, the elite of giants in European football tends to be

reinforced, either by the outcome of a Super League or by UEFA reforms that create barriers, favoring the rise of clubs with great financial resources.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

[Winner-Takes-All Market Definition](#)

[Comment la Ligue des champions a rétréci la coupe d'Europe – Une balle dans le pied](#)

[WHY US sports are more socialist than European football - YouTube](#)

[L'AUTRE MATCH - Ligue fermée : quels avantages ? - YouTube](#)

[Quelle Ligue 1 pour la nouvelle Ligue des champions ? AFTER FOOT 17 k vues il y a 2 ans](#)

[✗ La Super League est morte ! Voici ce que j'en pensais Wiloo 169 k vues il y a 6 mois](#)

[The Winner-Take-All Economy: Robert Frank - YouTube](#)

[Super League : Un nouveau format dans les tuyaux ? <https://madeinfoot.ouest-france.fr> › Infos](#)

[Manchester United: une nouvelle absence en Ligue des champions réduirait l'énorme contrat d'Adidas](#)

[OM owner Frank McCourt also takes a stand against the Super League - The Limited Times](#)

[Combien gagnera le vainqueur de la Superligue ?](#)

[Superligue : C'est Quoi? Qui? Combien? Pourquoi? - Avec FC Geopolitics - YouTube](#)

COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCES TO GO FURTHER

To understand how does work a closed league in the US : [L'AUTRE MATCH - NBA : business à tout prix - YouTube](#)

The Super League in a fun way : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IHtrtJrcBs>

INFOGRAPHICS THAT RECAP THE ESSAY:



Trois formules de Coupe d'Europe



Ligue des champions actuelle	Nouvelle formule de l'UEFA (à partir de 2024)	Projet de Super Ligue
<p>32 clubs</p> <p>8 poules de 4 équipes</p> <p>6 journées (matchs aller-retour)</p> <p>16 matchs par journée</p> <p>96 matchs de poules de sept. à déc. (mardi et mercredi)</p> <p>Les 2 premiers de chaque groupe qualifiés pour les 8es de finale Les 3es reversés en Ligue Europa Les 4es éliminés</p> <p>13 matchs pour remporter la compétition Nombre de clubs français engagés : les 2 premiers du championnat + le 3e s'il franchit les tours préliminaires</p>	<p>36 clubs</p> <p>1 poule unique</p> <p>10 journées (5 à domicile, 5 à l'extérieur)</p> <p>18 matchs par journée</p> <p>180 matchs de sept. à janv. (mardi, mercredi et jeudi)</p> <p>Les 8 premiers qualifiés pour les 8es de finale Les clubs classés de la 9e à la 24e place participent à des barrages sur matchs aller-retour dont les vainqueurs accèdent aux 8es de finale et les battus sont reversés en Ligue Europa</p> <p>17 ou 19 matchs pour remporter la compétition Nombre de clubs français engagés : les 3 premiers du championnat + le 4e s'il franchit les tours préliminaires</p>	<p>20 clubs (15 clubs fondateurs et permanents + 5 choisis à travers un système basé sur leurs performances de la saison précédente)</p> <p>2 poules de 10 équipes</p> <p>18 journées (matchs aller-retour)</p> <p>10 matchs par journée</p> <p>180 matchs (mardi, mercredi et jeudi)</p> <p>Les 3 premiers de chaque groupe qualifiés pour les quarts Les 4e et 5e d'un groupe disputent un barrage sur matchs aller-retour pour se qualifier pour les quarts</p> <p>25 ou 27 matchs pour remporter la compétition Nombre de clubs français engagés : au minimum 2</p>

