

# Jose Eshkenazi Smeke: "The great challenges of soccer in China have lessons for Mexico."

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MIAMI, FLORIDA, ESTADOS UNIDOS, February 15, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- During the 2016 summer transfer window, the Chinese Super League shook up the transfer market in a definitive attempt to position its soccer on the global radar. In that transfer window, the Chinese Super League was the second-highest spending league in the entire world with a total of €400 million.

"In retrospect only the Premier League spent more than the Chinese League, attracting superstars that would otherwise be unthinkable outside Europe" recalls sports specialist [Jose Eshkenazi Smeke](#).

The plan, initially spearheaded by Xi Jinping's government, was intended to compete with Europe's big leagues in the short term. Six years later, the government itself has turned its back on it and the Super League is going through a deep economic crisis that calls into question the future of a project that was once the most ambitious of its kind.

The crisis has been so severe that, in an unprecedented event in the world, the reigning Superliga champion has disappeared. The big companies that not so long ago squandered millions to hire the great figures of world soccer are now struggling to continue operating with just enough money.

The attempt to awaken the giant.

After China's historic first participation in the 2002 World Cup in Korea and Japan, the Asian giant mistakenly thought that this success would be the definitive boost that its national team and domestic league needed. The country's first step would be to try to have the strongest league within the Asian confederation in order to consolidate a national team that could compete for the World Cup. The Super League was initially backed by large real estate companies that



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invested heavily in the nascent clubs with the intention of benefiting in the future in their industry.

The first signing that surprised the entire soccer planet would be that of Carlos Tevez, who in 2016 would pack his bags along with 40 members of his family and leave for Shanghai. Tevez would sign a contract for almost 650,000 euros per week, which would make him one of the best paid players in the world, his salary being at the same level and even above the incomes of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo at that time.

In addition to the surprise purchase of the Argentinean star, there were the Colombian Jackson Martinez, Brazilians Oscar, Ramires, Joao Miranda, Paulinho and Hulk, as well as Belgians Fellaini and Yannick Carrasco, just to mention some of the great stars of the Chinese Super League. Even the former captain of the



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Italian national team Fabio Cannavaro would be the highest paid coach in the world during his stay in the Asian country.

The Super League would thus have a few seasons where it was able to materialize a sustained growth that managed to discomfort a sector of European soccer that began to fear the worst.

"Different Chinese companies saw in the Chinese teams led by these superstars an opportunity for truly effective sports marketing on a global level," said José Eshkenazi

Smeke, director of [Soccer Media Solutions](http://Soccer Media Solutions).

The Salary Cap hit hard.

The soccer party in China suffered a hard blow when the federation obliged its clubs to comply with a financial Fair Play, where it was established that at the moment of spending 50 million in a contract, the same amount had to be paid to the federation, something completely out of proportion compared to the best leagues in the world.

The maximum authority of Chinese soccer would give another blow when it began to limit the astronomical salaries that were the main attraction for the great figures to decide for the adventure in the Asian country. Nowadays, the maximum that clubs can pay is 3 million euros, a situation that caused the flight of almost all their stars just six years after their arrival.

For the current season, the most expensive addition was the Croatian Majstorovic, whose signing "only" cost 3.3 million euros.

The impending slump

The effects of the pandemic were also felt in the Super League. The few remaining sponsors gradually left and the clubs also failed to find new ways to continue operating normally. This led to Jiangsu Suning disappearing despite being one of the few surviving clubs from the old competition that preceded the Super League. An unbelievable event would take place when the team announced the cessation of all operations shortly after winning the first championship in its history.

Another similar case is that of the world-renowned Guangzhou. Managed by Evergrande, the real estate giant that has triggered the worst crisis that the Asian country has experienced in recent years, and which, incidentally, has gone on to splash the Super League. The group's disastrous financial situation means that its \$300 billion debt has caused its stock market value to fall dramatically, making the soccer team the least of the entity's problems.

Today most of the clubs are not certain to be able to start the nascent season because many of them have complaints to FIFA for non-payment of their former European stars. What started as a big dream ended up being the worst failure in the history of modern soccer where millions still do not guarantee success.



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"They have tried to do in five years what it takes 30 to 50 anywhere. If you want potatoes, you have to plant them, water them and wait for them to grow. There is no other way. No matter

how much you pay, their selection is not going to raise the level all of a sudden. Here in Spain and in Europe there is a work of soccer base and the boys since they are small work the technique, the tactics. They wanted to start soccer from the roof, from the national team. When that should be the consequence of the work". Spanish player Jonathan Soriano, who was in the championship for two seasons before packing his bags to return home, said.

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