

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. (in) a league of one's own (phrase) – It refers to a person who is so good at what he/she does, and so they cannot be compared to others; be much better than the others; be far more superior than others.
2. accountable (adjective) – responsible, liable, answerable; under the charge of, obeying, bound by.
3. look for (phrasal verb) – search for, try to find.
4. unveil (verb) – present, disclose, make public.
5. turmoil (noun) – disorder, turbulence, confusion, trouble, chaos.
6. put on (phrasal verb) – organize, stage, present, produce (an event).
7. sustainable (adjective) – reasonable, sensible, well-founded.
8. footing (noun) – foundation, support, basis.
9. upend (verb) – to affect/damage something completely/drastically.
10. Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) (noun) – the governing body of football in Europe.
11. coincidence (noun) – co-occurrence, coexistence.
12. inevitably (adverb) – unavoidably, certainly, definitely.
13. whereas (conjunction) – in comparison with the fact that.
14. miss out (phrasal verb) – omit, fail to include someone/something.
15. stream (noun) – flow.
16. whopping (adjective) – huge, massive, very large, substantial.
17. certainly (adverb) – surely, definitely, unquestionably.
18. appeal (verb) – be attractive to, be of interest to, tempt.
19. balance the books (phrase) – to regulate the finances.
20. in the wake of (phrase) – as a result of, in the aftermath of, as a consequence of.
21. for-profit (adjective) – lucrative, moneymaking, profitable/remunerative.
22. crux (noun) – essence, most important point, central point.
23. public-spirited (adjective) – charitable, humanitarian, community-minded.
24. entity (noun) – organization, institution, establishment.
25. meritocratic (adjective) – relating to the belief that rulers should be chosen for their superior abilities and not because of their wealth or birth.
26. awash (with) (adjective) – filled, flooded, overflowing, fraught, swamped, rife.

27. **hedge fund** (noun) – a pooled investment fund.
28. **handout** (noun) – aid, financial support.
29. **oligarchy** (noun) – a small group that controls the country & government.
30. **outfit** (noun) – team, squad.
31. **scenario** (noun) – situation, background, context.
32. **unpredictability** (noun) – changeability.
33. **anathema** (noun) – strong curse; someone or something that you strongly dislike/hate/oppose; abhorrence, abomination, detestation, aversion, antipathy.
34. **seek** (verb) – try to find, attempt.
35. **displease** (verb) – annoy, irritate, infuriate, anger.
36. **keep in the dark** (phrase) – unaware of, ignorant of, uninformed about.
37. **desperate** (adjective) – urgent, pressing, compelling, crying.
38. **turf** (noun) – area/sphere of influence, area of activity, sphere of activity, territory, domain.
39. **bar** (verb) – ban, forbid, prevent.
40. **flagship (event)** (noun) – the biggest, the best, the most important (event).
41. **bemoan** (verb) – express regret/sorrow about, complain about, express discontent.
42. **stop short of** (phrase) – balk at, shy away from, recoil from, draw back from. (“balk at” means “be unwilling to, be reluctant to, refuse to (do/accept something, because it is difficult, threatening, unpleasant, etc.”).
43. **sanction** (noun) – embargo, ban, prohibition.
44. **expel** (verb) – throw out, remove, oust.
45. **stern** (adjective) – strict, severe, stringent, tough.
46. **endorsement** (noun) – support, backing, approval.
47. **skew** (verb) – distort, misrepresent, change, alter.
48. **in favour of** (phrase) – in support of, to the advantage of, approve of.
49. **sign up** (phrasal verb) – engage in, involve in something officially (by enrolling).
50. **rethink** (noun) – reconsideration, re-examination, reassessment, re-evaluation.

A league of their own: On Europe's biggest football clubs

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European clubs, accountable only to investors, are looking for profit and ignoring fans

The decision by 12 of Europe's biggest football clubs to unveil a plan to launch The Super League, a multi-billion-dollar tournament to be played largely among a closed group of 20 teams has thrown the European game into turmoil. Manchester United, Manchester City, Liverpool, Arsenal, Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur from England, Real Madrid, Barcelona and Atletico Madrid from Spain, and Juventus, Internazionale and AC Milan from Italy have come together for an initiative "to put the game on a sustainable footing". But the principal aim seems to be to upend the Champions League, the crown jewel among all competitions managed by European football's governing body UEFA. That the announcement came just a day prior to UEFA announcing a reformatted Champions League starting from 2024 is no coincidence. The Super League will inevitably damage the domestic leagues in each of the countries. Currently, league positions decide who qualifies for the Champions League, whereas in the proposed competition, the permanent members are under no risk of missing out, and are guaranteed a steady stream of revenue. According to one report, each founding member is assured of a whopping \$400 million in exchange for a mere commitment to establish a "sustainable financial foundation". This certainly appeals to clubs struggling to balance their books in the wake of COVID-19.

This use of a football club as mere for-profit business is the crux. Traditionally, clubs considered themselves to be public-spirited entities. Meaningful competition among them was seen as a meritocratic exercise. But with leagues increasingly awash with hedge fund money and handouts from oligarchies, outfits are answerable more to investors and shareholders

than actual supporters. In such a scenario, unpredictability can be anathema and the Super League seeks to eliminate that. Understandably, fans are displeased. Jurgen Klopp, Liverpool manager, even claimed to have been kept in the dark. UEFA, desperate to protect its turf, has threatened to bar Super League players from its flagship events like Euros. FIFA bemoaned a “closed league”, but stopped short of announcing sanctions. The Premier League, Spain’s La Liga and Italy’s Serie A are open to expelling teams, while British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has issued a stern warning. However, this is no endorsement of UEFA’s new Champions League format, in which the number of games has nearly doubled and the additional revenue is sure to skew the domestic leagues further in favour of a few teams. Juventus has won the Serie A nine times in a row; Bayern Munich (Germany) and Paris Saint-Germain (France), both of whom have not signed up for the Super League, have been equally dominant. None of this feels like competitive sport. European football needs a rethink.

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