The “Messianic” prophecy is over

What’s next for Barcelona captain Lionel Messi?

Lionel Messi’s time with Barcelona looked to be over or so it seemed. The Argentinian forward dropped a bombshell by announcing that he would stay for another season at the Catalan club. This comes after the talisman was heavily linked with a move to Manchester City. The six time Ballon d’Or winner has not been shy of expressing his dissatisfaction at Barcelona and insists that the management of the club is a disaster. Barcelona, under new coach Ronald Koeman, looks to rewrite all the wrongs made in the club’s previous season and hopefully reclaim its lost glory.

With such news making headlines in the world of football, what does this exactly mean to the ardent football enthusiasts?

Football fans have clearly missed out on an opportunity to see the Barcelona talisman in another league. It’s widely acknowledged that the English Premier League is the ultimate test of a footballer’s mettle and players such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang have all shown versatility in terms of gaining major success in different leagues.

Barcelona fans have been at the forefront of this as they were eager to know where their captain’s fate would ultimately lie. Upon the decision been revealed, some expressed sheer gratitude as they couldn’t imagine a Barcelona without Messi in it, while others saw a missed chance of the club rebuilding with much more youthful exuberance.

The decision to stay at Barcelona was influenced by Messi’s love for the Blaugrana and his desire not to fight with his long time club. This can be looked at in two ways: His passion and commitment to the club as he is arguably the most eminent product to come out of Barca’s famed youth academy. With over 700 career goals for club and country and six Ballon d’Ors to his name, he’s unquestionably one of the greats to ever lace up a pair of boots.

On the other hand, Messi felt that he was dealt a raw deal by the club president who reneged on his word to allow him to leave at the end of the season if he so pleased. Furthermore, the 700 million euros (Sh90 billion) release clause in Messi’s contract added a further hurdle to the situation. This meant that Messi’s hands were tied albeit to a contract clause and he couldn’t leave as he had expressed earlier. Critics have argued that his decision to reluctantly stay at Barcelona, could mean a less motivated Messi on the pitch moving forward hence both the club and the player could be on a downward trajectory.

Barcelona looks to kick off their 2020/21 La Liga campaign with a bang as they face off against Villarreal on 27th September. It’s safe to say all Barcelona fans will want to forget the past season as they went trophy-less in all competitions for the first time since 2013. Hence, Lionel Messi will be on the spotlight as he hopes to carry the team on his back and lead it to the promised land.

Messi’s ultimate decision to stay at Barcelona was a moment etched in history as fans were left with a key question in mind, “What if?” What if Messi could have gone to Manchester City and reunited with his former boss Pep Guardiola? What if he could have joined Juventus and teamed up with Cristiano Ronaldo in becoming the two most powerful duo in football history? All these will remain to be questions left unanswered, at least for another season that is. Till then only time will tell as we, the football fans, await what will happen to Lionel Messi at the end of the 2020/21 season.

Do you think Lionel Messi made the right decision by staying at Barcelona? Drop your comments below