

“THE AGENT’S PLAYBOOK: WISDOM FROM FOOTBALL’S DEAL MAKERS”

*A compilation of quotes from
Football’s Super Agents.*

*A collaboration between Romaric Etong,
Founder of the Football Agents Site and
Peter Paleologos, FIFA Football Agent and
Football Lawyer*

- Talent alone is not enough. You have to be in the right place, right time, with the right people -

Quote by Juan Figer, Legendary Football Agent

Super Agents have become enormously influential powerbrokers in modern football, wielding significant control over player movements, contract negotiations, and even club decision-making. These elite intermediaries and brokers such as Jorge Mendes, Mino Raiola (RIP), and Jonathan Barnett represented portfolios of top-tier talent worth hundreds of millions in transfer fees and salaries, giving them substantial leverage in deals that can make or break a club's season.

Their influence extends beyond individual transactions: super agents often cultivate relationships with multiple clubs, creating intricate networks that can shape transfer market dynamics, managerial appointments, and even influence club strategy.



PIHA ZAHAVI

"I have never disappointed anyone in the whole world."

— Zahavi emphasizing his reputation and trustworthiness in the football world.

Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)

<https://www.faz.net/aktuell/sport/fussball/bundesliga/pini-zahavi-forciert-robert-lewandowskis-bayern-wechsel-15618444.html>

"Football was my love since I was a baby. ... Nothing other than football, I don't even watch other sports. It's just football, football, football."

Zahavi shared this personal declaration about his lifelong passion in a 2006 profile by *The Guardian*

https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2006/nov/26/football.features?utm_source=chatgpt.com & https://www.spiegel.de/international/business/football-leaks-zahavi-and-the-world-of-football-agents-a-1237628.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

"Working together happens everywhere. Co-operation is necessary to complete most deals. Agents work together... one brings the player, the other brings the club, then they share commissions. It is normal."

Zahavi defended the collaborative structure of his deals amid criticism of hidden agent fees, highlighting that deal-making often involves multiple agents pooling resources and networks

https://www.theguardian.com/football/2007/jan/17/sport.comment1?utm_source=chatgpt.com

“I don’t need (a) contract, because normally, you can ask (the players), I sign the first contract, and during 10 years, maybe it will not happen again. It works like a family.”

Mendes explains his informal, trust-based relationship model with clients, likening it to family ties rather than rigid contracts

CNN+1 Quotes.net+1 - https://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/23/football/jorge-mendes-cristiano-ronaldo-anthony-martial/index.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

People have the wrong idea about agents, being an agent means many different things. I’m someone normal ; I’m working hard every day. I have ambition, determination, and (value) being honest and doing the right things.– Jorge Mendes Found on CNN 10 years ago

Jorge Mendes (Lamine Yamal's agent): "I think Cristiano is a good example for Yamal and all young people for what he has achieved, a level that only a very few have reached. Today Cristiano has almost a thousand goals, and he has achieved something that no one else has been able to achieve. Lamine has a good example, not only on the pitch but also off it, with the way Cristiano has managed his career. As he approaches 40, he is still competing."

Ebrima BlackBerry @ Threads 12/31/24

JORGE MENDES, SUPER AGENT, GESTIFUTE



“First of all, there are good and bad agents ... I think to lump everybody together is ridiculous ... We look after players, and we look after them very well. That's our job.”

Barnett emphasises that agents are often unfairly stereotyped and underscoring his commitment to truly supporting players

https://www.foxnews.com/sports/the-other-football-superagent-barnett-laments-that-no-one-understands-what-he-does?utm_source=chatgpt.com

“There has to be a tremendous amount of trust between the client and the agent. ... At the end the day, the client knows his agent will be there for him...”

Barnett stresses the importance of a deep, unbreakable trust in the agent-player relationship

https://sportwitness.co.uk/jonathan-barnett-interview-agent-spurs-chief-saul-man-united-links-grealish-message-football-fans/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

JONATHAN BARNETT





JONATHAN BARNETT

“It’s not just about transferring from one club to another. It’s making sure his life is okay ... By the time the player retires, everything is done for him so that he can live the rest of his life the way he wants... That’s beyond anything else.”

Highlighting his holistic approach to managing players’ entire careers and well-being

https://sportwitness.co.uk/jonathan-barnett-interview-agent-spurs-chief-saul-man-united-links-grealish-message-football-fans/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

“Don’t just go with somebody because they offer you a mobile phone ... look for a proper agency that has a track record.” Advising players to choose representation wisely, based on substance and credibility *https://www.foxnews.com/sports/the-other-football-superagent-barnett-laments-that-no-one-understands-what-he-does?utm_source=chatgpt.com*

“There are a lot of idiots, especially in the press, who have written stupid and ridiculous stories... When the years go by ... they will say those who wrote these stories did not deserve to be journalists.” - *<https://www.besoccer.com/payment>*

“I’m ready to go to war for my players. ... I’ve never sat with a gun on the table in negotiations.”

Raiola emphasized that while he can be aggressive, he has never crossed ethical lines—his tactics are always about winning the best outcome for clients https://www.goal.com/en-us/news/gun-table-raiola-transfer-methods-haaland-future/blf14d8666857fd5140?utm_source=chatgpt.com

“If they hate me, then it's the biggest compliment for me. Then I’m doing something well.”

He comments on the pushback from clubs, stating critic—especially from those “sports directors”—signals his effectiveness https://www.goal.com/en-us/news/gun-table-raiola-transfer-methods-haaland-future/blf14d8666857fd5140?utm_source=chatgpt.com

“Think of the most valuable paintings in the world ... By signing Zlatan Ibrahimovic, PSG ... are making that dream come true. Paul Pogba ... a Salvador Dali ... Gianluigi Donnarumma ... a Modigliani.”

Raiola likened his top clients to priceless artworks, showcasing both respect and flattery https://football-italia.net/the-wit-and-wisdom-of-mino-raiola/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

MINO RAIOLA (RIP)



On Boldness & Ambition

“Without a bit of boldness, I wouldn’t be where I am today.” Struth attributes his success and rise in football agency to his audacity and confidence [sport.sky.de+10stern.de+10AbeBooks+10](#).

Defending the Role of Agents in Negotiations

“My job is to ensure my players are in the right place at the right time to play football.” Highlighting his core responsibility and rejecting the notion that agents are just profiteers .

“When I read contracts that were concluded without advisors, I think: thank God there are people like us.” He explains how crucial agent expertise is, especially when managing complex negotiations and protecting young players

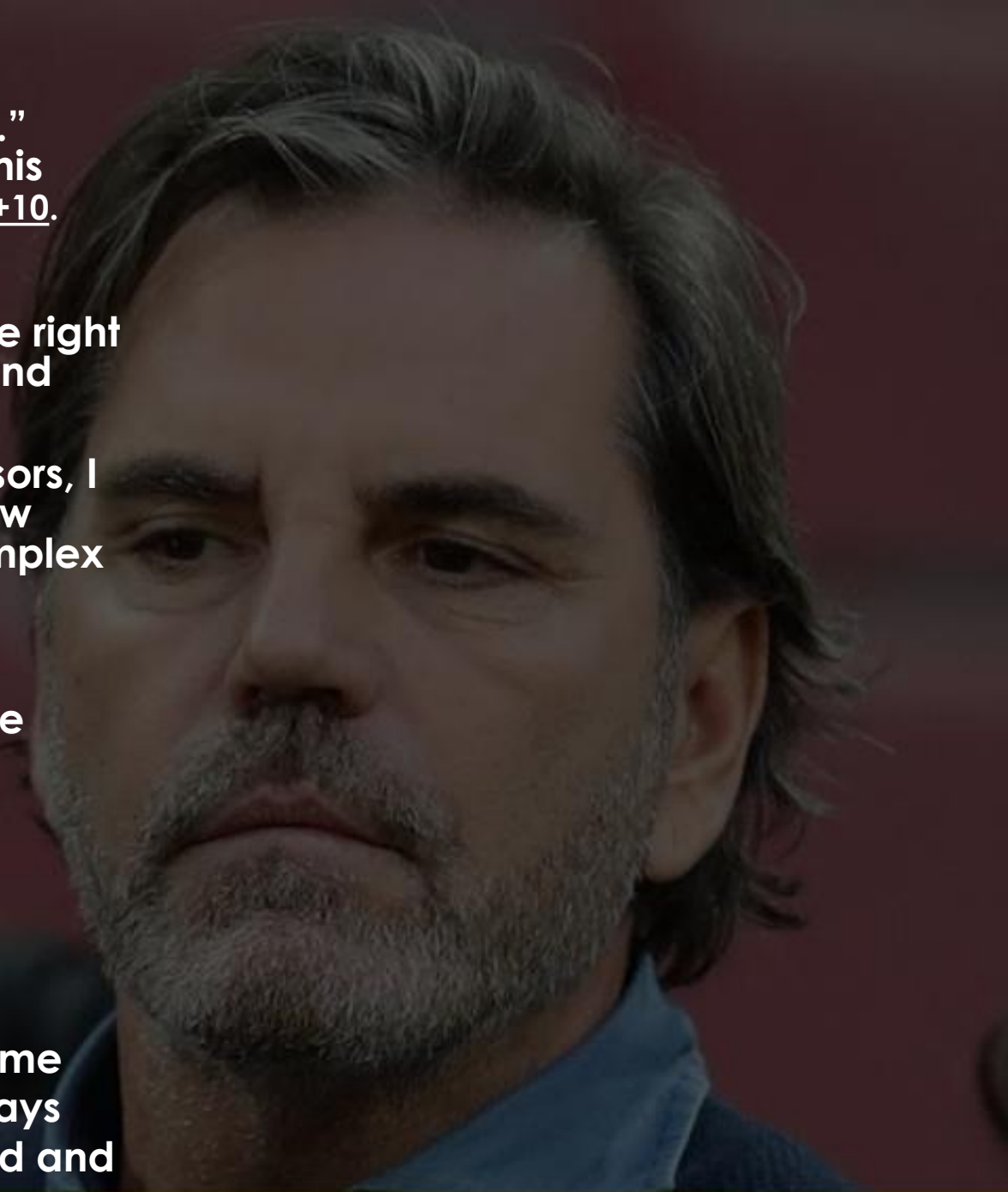
On Negotiation Skills & Market Positioning

“Negotiating lies in my nature.” Struth emphasizes his innate talent and confidence in handling discussions with club managers [ankegroener.de+12mz.de+12stern.de+12](#).

VOLKER STRUTH

SWR1 LEUTE

Clubs are often glad when “I’m at the table instead of some clueless person demanding unrealistic money. ”He portrays himself as a trusted voice keeping negotiations grounded and professional [mz.de](#).



VOLKER STRUTH

Integrity, Fairness & Professionalism

“I consider myself an honorable businessman — we work cleanly, I don’t allow scandals.”

Struth stresses his commitment to transparency and ethical dealings manager-magazin.de.

Every contract is reviewed by labor and tax lawyers — still unusual in the industry. manager-magazin.de.

On Money & Player Happiness

“Once wealth reaches extraordinary dimensions, it doesn’t matter if you have 50 million more or less at the end of your days.”

He emphasizes that beyond a point, happiness and professional fulfillment matter more than accumulating wealth turi2.de.

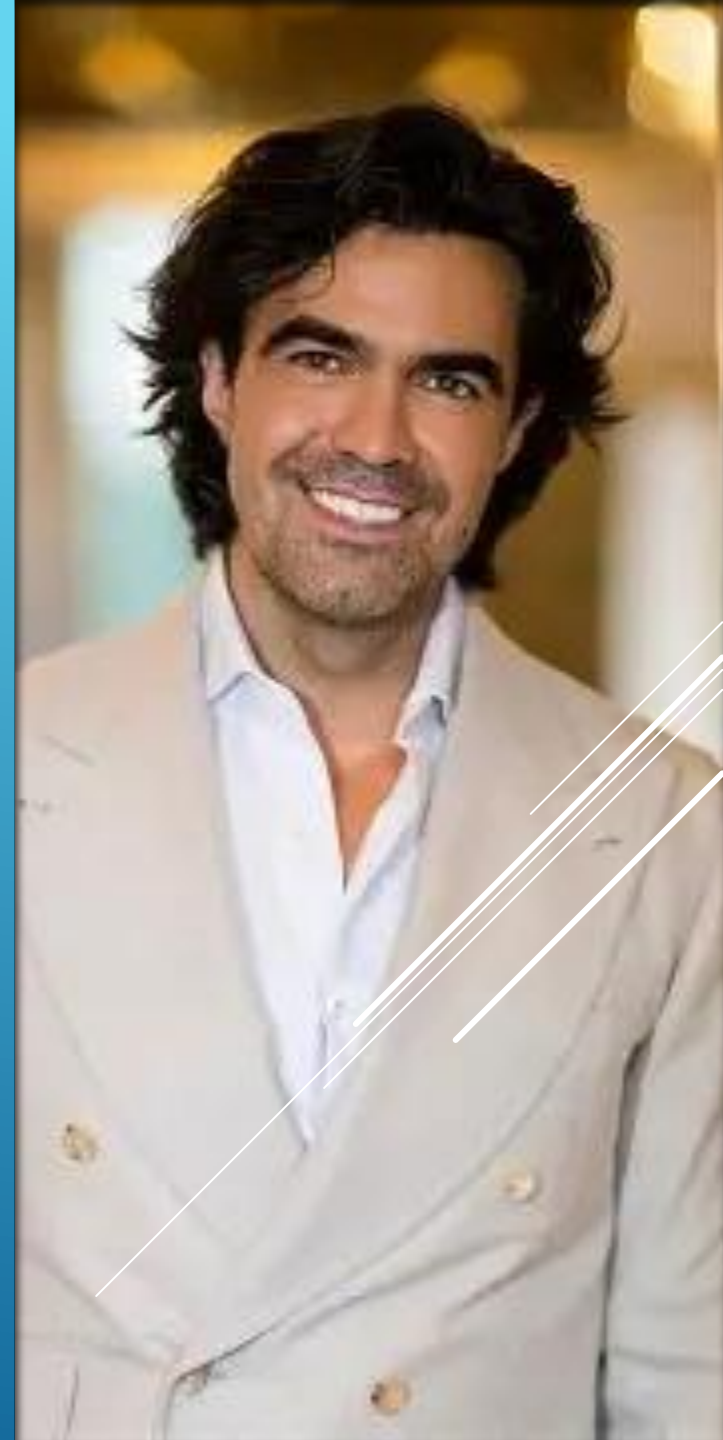
“We (agents) are not the main actor in this movie. The players are the stars. The clubs are the producers...”

He emphasizes agents as facilitators, not lead actors—and underscores their rôle in enabling players [skysports.com+1Reddit+1](#).

We cannot be earning more than the player and this does happen in football.”

Advocates transparency and fairness in agent compensation
[naijafotball.com+2skysports.com+2Reddit+2naijafotball.com](#).

FEDERICO PASTORELLO





GIULIANO BERTOLUCCI

“I live football, I watch matches almost every day, I travel a lot to be in the market at the right time and especially know the needs of teams and offer the right player to the club, knowing there is a performance department that will analyze everything about the player.”

Bertolucci underlines his hands-on approach: he embeds himself within clubs' routines to match talent with specific needs [Reddit+6Esporte](#) [Uai+6Reddit+6MundoBola](#).

GIULIANO BERTOLUCCI

When asked how he gets selected by clubs:

“When you have good players, many times they [clubs] ask themselves and end up recommending our work. I brought players who performed very well at the club, and that made them reach out to me.”

He attributes his growth to building trust through consistent results [Extra](#).

On club “politics” during negotiations:
“There is no politics and no friendship. Professionals decide the names, and you have the players.”

Bertolucci highlights that deals are made based on professional evaluation—not influence or favoritism [MundoBola](#).

GIULIANO BERTOLUCCI

On Influence and Access

Described by Wagner Ribeiro as:

“Very intelligent, his doors were open everywhere. He helped take the Brazilian national team to Europe... He was a visionary.”

This positions him as a pioneering agent connecting Brazilian talent to top European clubs

Notably powerful at Flamengo:
He has six players in the squad and is seen as deeply influential:

“this Bertolucci is one of the biggest beneficiaries” of the club becoming a public company—“ridiculous how much the club is hostage to this guy.”

[jornalfolhadoestado.com+5Reddit+5Reddit+5MundoBola+1jornalfolhadoestado.com+1](#)

[Uai+15ESPN.com+15Reddit+15.](#)

GIULIANO BERTOLUCCI

On Mentorship and Crisis Management

Regarding young players and parental influence (Casemiro case):

“It’s better to negotiate with an experienced man than with someone who doesn’t have experience.”

His involvement convinced parents and clubs alike during contract renewals, as noted by São Paulo’s vice-president blogdopaulinho.com.br.

On parental interference:

Reports say he emphasized eliminating undue influence:

“The ones who give me the most trouble are athletes’ fathers...”

Bertolucci preferred direct, professional dealings over family-driven pressure [Esporte Uai+15ESPN.com+15Reddit+15](https://www.espn.com/soccer/story/_/id/15151515/bertolucci-preferred-direct-professional-dealings-over-family-driven-pressure).

“I am here to maximise my clients’ earnings during their careers.”

*Stretford explains that his role goes beyond contract negotiations. He emphasizes helping clients manage their finances wisely by guiding them to competent financial advisors—without taking commissions on those services.
(source: Tortoise Media)*

“The best players, those performing at the highest level, will always be subject to speculation from the biggest clubs.”

*This reflects the inevitable transfer rumors surrounding top players like Wayne Rooney and the competitive nature of high-level football markets.
(source: Tribuna)*



PAUL STRETFORD

On the value of top players

“I believe Haaland is worth €1 billion.”

Pimenta asserts that Haaland's potential and marketability make him worth a record-breaking transfer fee.

On being a woman in a male-dominated industry

“To make yourself heard as a woman you have to prove yourself much more than men do, all the time.”

She discusses the challenges women face in the football industry and the double standards they often encounter. [The Guardian](#)

RAFAELA PIMENTA

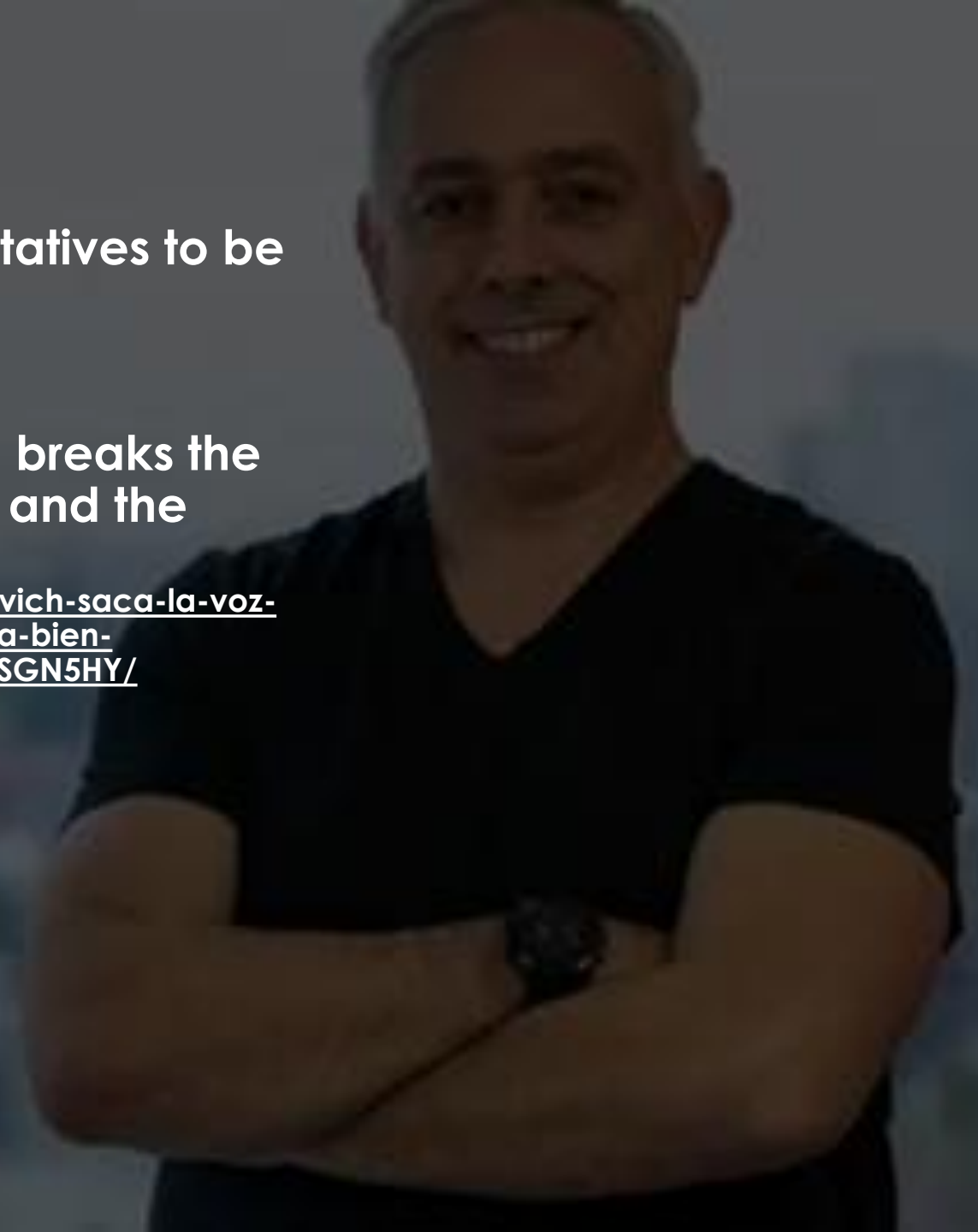


"I would love for the activity of the representatives to be well regulated; now it is up in the air"

The most powerful agent in Chilean football breaks the silence. As few times, he reviews his career and the series of questions that exist about him.

<https://www.latercera.com/el-deportivo/noticia/fernando-felicevich-saca-la-voz-me-encantaria-que-la-actividad-de-los-representantes-estuviera-bien-reglamentada-ahora-esta-en-el-aire/EAYM4FIJDNHAZHSMUEHSGN5HY/>

FERNANDO FELICEVICH





"I was behind Peñarol champion of America (1987), Nacional champion (1988). I put together River -Argentine- of 86"

"To have a livelihood, but fundamentally to dignify the player" - he illustrated.

At the beginning of the 80s he became a " recalls who has been the representative of most Uruguayan players for two decades and owner of the company that has owned the television rights of Uruguayan soccer and the national team for nine years.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20131112173626/https://www.terra.com/deportes/articulo/html/fox461809.htm>

**PACO CASAL,
REPRESENTATIVE OF
MOST URUGUAYAN
PLAYERS FOR TWO
DECADES**



"We have practically closed an agreement with a foreign club but this announcement does not rest with us,"

https://www.sportsmole.co.uk/football/cardiff-city/transfer-talk/news/bluebirds-in-for-guerra_135451.html

**PEPE MESAS, MEXICAN
AGENT**



“If I give a clear answer now, I’ll be opening a can of worms,”

Manuel Neuer’s agent, Thomas Kroth, has left the door open for the legendary goalkeeper to make a return to the German national team ahead of the 2026 World Cup. Speaking about the possibility, Kroth admitted that giving a definitive answer could create speculation, but he did not rule out a comeback.

https://tribuna.com/en/news/2025-09-09-manuel-neuers-agent-opens-door-to-possible-germany-comeback-for-world-cup-if-nagelsmann-i/?utm_source=copy

THOMAS KROTH



“Reality has not changed and the truth has always shown it, it cannot be changed. Our will is clear and it is to stay. Theo wants to stay at Milan, he wants to renew with Milan.”

Theo Hernandez’s agent Manuel Garcia Quilon has confirmed that his client intends to stay at AC Milan and renew his contract.

<https://sempremilan.com/theo-hernandez-agent-milan-stay-renew>

MANUEL GARCIA QUILON

"It seems to me that there has been a confusion between wishes and reality, people think that football is a churrera that instead of taking churros takes out tickets, but that has never been true, and now even less. I wouldn't recommend a little brother to become a footballers' agent at this time. It requires a lot of work, vocation too (I know because I lack it) and luck. A lot of work but also luck. Then also some conditions, a certain ability to provoke that word, empathy in others. Have something attractive so that your speech is convincing and convincing. Those things are necessary".

"There it depends on two characters: the one who gives and the one who receives the message, the agent and the player. I know representatives who are very annoying. Very heavy. And that they cannot help but be like a hammer, or like a miner's hammer. But those guys are heavy, but they are usually effective and even brilliant".

Full interview with José Antonio Martín, "Petón" from Mayhem Magazine

<https://mayhemrevista.wordpress.com/2013/06/12/entrevista-completa-a-jose-antonio-martin-peton/>

JOSÉ ANTONIO MARTÍN, "PETÓN" - " FORMER REPRESENTATIVE AND CEO OF BAHÍA INTERNACIONAL



(Giroud's agent): "What would be ideal for him would be to discover a new culture, to take another trip. Now, a new English club with ambitions could also give him some thinking to do because the big difference with the Premier League, is that it remains an extraordinary league, which offers a different form of pleasure. So if a really good Premier League club came knocking, that could be a major factor. But there is a feeling in the camp to go and experience something abroad."

<https://www.getfootballnewsfrance.com/2020/olivier-girouds-agent-on-france-move-it-is-not-out-of-the-question-but-it-is-not-an-priority/>

**MICHAEL MANUELLO,
OWNER OF FRENCH
FOOTBALL AGENCY -
BM FOOT**

**“Nicolas (Jackson) needed a platform that matches his ambition. At Bayern, he finds a structure of excellence, a football identity tailored to his strengths, and a project that will allow him to write the next chapter of his legacy”
(@kierangill_DM)**

Pys@CFCPys - 2 September 2025 – X/Twitter

ALI BARAT, AGENT



CONCLUSION

*“Super-agents
don’t move
players between
clubs - they
move clubs
around players.”*

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