

Xavi reveals Messi was signed to return to Barcelona: "Laporta threw everything away"



The Spaniard revealed the details of Operation 'The Last Dance' and why it collapsed. © Getty

There's no doubt that **Lionel Messi** left an enduring legacy at **Barcelona**. However, **Xavi Hernández** has just revealed that everything was in place for his return after winning the 2022 World Cup, but **Joan Laporta refused** to allow the deal, dubbed '*The Last Dance*'.

After leaving due to financial issues, the Argentine star arrived at PSG with a clear desire to return to Catalonia. Almost immediately after winning the World Cup, the Rosario native **had agreed to his return**, but the free transfer fell through due to a presidential decision.

"Leo was signed! In January 2023, we contacted him, and he told me he was keen to return. We talked until March... the president started negotiating the contract with

Leo's father, and we had LaLiga's approval."

Hernández continued: "But it was the president who threw everything off," implying a political decision against Messi. "Leo isn't coming to Barça because the president doesn't want him, not because of La Liga or because Jorge Messi is asking for more money—that's a lie."

According to Xavi, Laporta's inner circle feared Messi's influence: "Laporta told me verbatim that if he came back, Leo would wage war against him and that he couldn't allow that. Suddenly, Leo stopped answering my calls because he'd been told it couldn't happen."

"From a footballing perspective, there was no doubt; we were going to have a **Last Dance like Jordan's**. Everything was ready," Xavi confessed.

KEY DATA

- **Xavi Hernández** publicly revealed that Lionel Messi did not return in 2023 because of **Joan Laporta**.
- "Leo isn't coming to Barça because the president doesn't want him, not because of LaLiga."
- "Laporta told me if he came back, Leo was going to wage war against him."