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DIGITAL EDITION | SEPTEMBER 2024

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2024 SUMMER

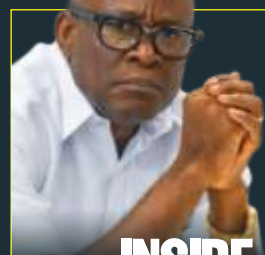
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NIGERIAN SPORTS
UNDER SCRUTINY
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MEDAL SHAME

OSIMHEN

€130MILLION STAR, MOST
VALUABLE PLAYER IN TURKEY

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome esteemed readers to the digital return of Sports Market International. We want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated readers who have supported us and stayed engaged, helping us to come back even stronger in the digital world. Sports Market International is a long-standing and highly respected magazine that specializes in evaluating the global sporting market. Our publication provides in-depth analysis and expert insights into the business of sports, with a specific focus on emerging trends in sports investments and their impact on top players across the world. Our dedication to providing comprehensive coverage of sports business makes us a valuable resource for industry professionals and enthusiasts alike.

In the latest digital publication, we meticulously researched numerous online and offline sources to provide a comprehensive analysis of global investments in sports. Our in-depth investigation focused on the 2024 Olympics in Paris, shedding light on the disappointing performance of Nigerian athletes that garnered global attention. Our post-event coverage delved into the Nigerian sports industry, with the headline emphasizing the scrutiny faced by Nigerian sports following the Olympic medal letdown. Despite the participation of standout athletes such as the 100m hurdles record holder Tobi Amusan, Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, failed to meet Olympic expectations. The article discussed Nigeria's previous Olympic achievements, highlighting their best performance in Atlanta 1996, where the team secured two golds, one silver, and three bronzes. While Beijing 2008 brought five medals, the following games in London yielded no medals for Nigeria. The article emphasizes that there can be no excuse for Nigeria's performance in Paris. The Minister of Sports, John Enoh, aptly described it as a disaster.

In another piece of news, we have an extensive report on the Nigerian forward, Victor Osimhen, which delves into the intricate details of his transfer saga and sheds light on his unexpected move to Galatasaray in Turkey. This piece has been aptly titled "From Limelight to Dark Light." In January, the president of Napoli made a bold declaration, stating that Osimhen would be joining either Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain, or an English club during the 2024 summer transfer window. However, his eventual move to Istanbul has raised questions. Many have attributed this surprising turn of events to a combination of factors including greed, pride, and sheer incompetence.

Chelsea, by contrast, tried until deadline day to get a deal done but, again, could not agree terms with Osimhen. The Blues may be willing to throw plenty of money around, but their wild recruitment strategy is founded upon signing players on long contracts but relatively low wages.

On the transfer market, the summer transfer window saw clubs from Europe and Saudi Arabia spend a lot of money to strengthen their ranks for the 2024/25 campaign. We detailed the players and the amount involved.

We are excited to announce that Sports Market International will be launching a monthly digital publication. This publication will be easily accessible on our website, featuring engaging layouts and high-quality photos for an enhanced reading experience. We can't wait to share our content with you!

Thank you for being part of our journey

Enjoy reading!

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VICTOR OSIMHEN

FROM LIMELIGHT TO DARKLIGHT?

THE Nigerian was meant to join Real Madrid, PSG or an elite English club this summer – but he’s ended up at a Europa League team instead. Victor Osimhen was a man with a plan. He may have signed a new contract with Napoli last December in order to significantly increase his salary, but he never had any intention of staying at Stadio Diego Armando Maradona beyond the end of the 2023-24 campaign.

The striker knew where he wanted to go and, more importantly, how he was going to get there. “Since I’ve started [playing professionally], I’ve been the one making my own decisions,” he told CBS Sports in January, “and everything is working out well for me.” Not anymore, though.

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, Osimhen was given a rapturous welcome after arriving in Istanbul ahead of the completion of his loan move to Galatasaray. He may have been all smiles – but this was not part of the plan. This was a most unexpected humiliation, an utterly calamitous conclusion to a transfer saga involving Osimhen and Napoli that has yielded no winners – only losers.

Extension that wasn’t really an extension

Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis admitted in January that the club had known since last summer that Osimhen wanted out – and they were willing to let him go, too. Just not right away.

De Laurentiis understandably didn’t want to sell Osimhen immediately after the striker had scored 26 times to finish as the capocannoniere at the end of a historic Serie A title triumph. Osimhen, for his part, was willing to spend another year playing for a club and fanbase that had shown him so much love and support since his arrival from Lille in 2020.

So, after painfully protracted negotiations a compromise was reached: Osimhen would sign a contract extension until 2026 and see his salary rise to approximately €11m (£9m/\$12m) per annum, but the new deal would also feature a buyout clause of €120m (£100m/\$130m), which was significant as De Laurentiis had claimed during the summer of 2023 that it would take an offer of €200m (£170m/\$220m) for him to even consider parting with his most valuable asset.

According to reports, he had even turned down a €140m (£120m/\$154m) offer from Al-Hilal. But De Laurentiis was happy to accept slightly less money if he meant getting another season out of Osimhen, and there was not a doubt in his mind that a top European team would meet the fixed asking price.

Indeed, in January, the Partenopei president went so far as to publicly proclaim that Osimhen would join “Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain or an English team” during the 2024 summer transfer window. So, how on earth did he end up in Istanbul instead? A combination of greed, pride and complete incompetence.

It quickly became clear that this summer’s transfer market would not be awash with the same amount of money as last year for a couple of key reasons.

Firstly, most English clubs were wary of breaching the Premier League’s Profit & Sustainability Rules (PSR), which had resulted in both Everton (twice) and Nottingham Forest being deducted points last season.

Secondly, the Saudi Pro League clubs backed by the Public Investment Fund (PIF)

were more focused on retaining the stars they signed last summer, rather than buying new ones, which meant less money flowing into European football.

This minor depression of the market could not have come at a worse time for Napoli and Osimhen.

No bids from Madrid or Paris

Even though Madrid had more need of an orthodox centre-forward than another left winger, they prioritised signing Kylian Mbappe over Osimhen – and had no money left to further strengthen their attack after committing so much money to bringing the France captain to Santiago Bernabeu.

As for PSG, the nature of their project had already shifted significantly. Under Luis Campos, they’re now prioritising potential rather than established stars, as underlined by the acquisitions of Joao Neves and Desire Doue.

And while Goncalo Ramos was ruled out of the first couple of months of the season, PSG felt that they still had sufficient options up front to cope without the Portugal international. Based on what we’ve seen so far from Luis Enrique’s team this term, they were right, with the French champions having scored 13 times in their first three games.

Wage demands ruled out EPL clubs

Of course, there was still Premier League interest in Osimhen, who has never hidden his desire to play in England. According to reports, Liverpool explored the possibility of signing Osimhen but were put off by his wage demands, thus immediately scuppering any hope of a move to a team that already looks capable of doing some serious damage in both the Premier League and Champions League under Arne Slot this season.

Chelsea, by contrast, tried until deadline day to get a deal done but, again, could not agree terms with Osimhen. The Blues may be willing to throw plenty of money around, but their wild recruitment strategy is founded upon signing players on long contracts but relatively low wages.

Consequently, Osimhen appeared almost certain to move to the Middle East, but a transfer to Al-Ahli collapsed because Napoli allegedly tried to increase the agreed fee at the last minute, prompting the enraged Saudi side to pull out of the deal.

Both Napoli and Osimhen were, therefore, left with no option to thrash out a loan agreement with Galatasaray that will, at





This is an embarrassing step down in class for one of the game's best No.9s. Even if it is only a temporary transfer, Osimhen is simply too good to have ended up in Turkey.

least, give both parties a chance to find a far more agreeable conclusion to this affair either in January or next summer.

Counting the cost of hubris

However, the fact that it's come to this is an absolute shambles, and reflects horribly on everyone involved: the club, the player and his agent.

De Laurentiis never should have so flagrantly flagged the fact that Osimhen was leaving unless he already had a buyer lined up. He has paid a heavy price for his hubris and lack of foresight, as interested parties tried to take advantage of Napoli's mounting desperation to sell their wantaway striker.

Osimhen's continued presence at the club also stalled their own recruitment strategy for more than a month - much to the frustration of new coach Antonio Conte - and the best-case scenario for Napoli now is recouping the €70m they paid to sign Osimhen from Lille when

they had hoped to make just under double that figure.

Embarrassing step down

As for Osimhen, he can use all of the superlatives he wants to describe Galatasaray and their famously fanatical supporters, but this is an embarrassing step down in class for one of the game's best No.9s. Even if it is only a temporary transfer, Osimhen is simply too good to have ended up in Turkey.

After all, the initial reason for his reluctance to join a Saudi Pro League side was his desire to play in the Champions League and even his representative, Roberto Calenda, pointed out in one bitter attack on Napoli for trying to hawk the No.9 to the highest bidder that there was "still much to do in Europe" for his client.

However, while Osimhen is still in Europe, he's now joined a club that just got knocked out in the play-off round of this season's tournament by Young Boys of Switzerland. It's also worth remember-

ing that just eight months ago he reacted furiously to the suggestion that he would move to Saudi Arabia this summer - and yet he was on the verge of doing precisely that until Al-Ahli withdrew their interest.

Now, he's neither got the bumper pay packet on offer in the Middle East nor the prestigious switch to one of Europe's elite he so desperately wanted.

Perhaps most depressingly of all for such a likeable character who overcame so much hardship and heartbreak growing up in Lagos to become a hero in Naples, Osimhen has ruined the remarkable relationship he had cultivated with the city and its fans by exiting in such sorry fashion.

Questions clearly need to be asked of his agent, as Osimhen not been well advised here at all, while Napoli have also played their part in this perfect sh*tstorm. But Osimhen was the man with the plan, so the fact that it's been left in tatters is sadly all on him.

By goal.com

€100m star, most valuable player in Turkey

VICTOR Osimhen is an announcement from officially being unveiled as a Galatasaray player, after quickly agreeing a deal with the Turkish Super Lig giants on Monday, which will save Napoli a significant sum for the 2024-25 season.

Osimhen receives a net salary of around €10m per season, although some outlets in Italy report the figure to be closer to €11m. Galatasaray are expected to cover the player's wages in full for the duration of his season-long loan.

For Napoli, though, the savings on wages will amount to around €22m gross, which also includes performance-

related bonuses and add-ons.

The intention for Napoli had been to cash in on Osimhen this summer, but a permanent move away from the club collapsed in spectacular fashion on deadline day.

According to Tuesday's reports, Napoli still want to control the bargaining chips, and will look to extend Osimhen's contract, which is currently set to expire in the summer of 2026.

The Partenopei would like to extend the deal at least until 2027, because the player will be into the final year of his contract next summer, which usually leads to a reduced fee when the club looks to move him on.



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INSIDE

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**Nigerian sports
under scrutiny
after Olympic
medal shame**

WHILE smaller nations on the continent came home with multiple medals, the "giant of Africa" left empty-handed for the first time since the 2012 London Olympics.

Despite fielding continental champions like 100m hurdles record holder Tobi Amusan, Africa's most populous nation did not live up to Olympic expectations.

A day after the Olympics closed, former and current Olympians lashed out at the country's sporting federations calling for a shakeup in organisations they say failed their athletes.

"I must apologise to our compatriots and reflect on what went wrong," Sports Minister John Owan Enoh said on social media after Paris.

He said when he assumed the ministry less than a year before the Games, he learned that Nigeria's Olympics preparations had not even started.

"As a country, we deserve more," he said. "Let's turn the disastrous outcome of the 2024 Olympics to a huge positive for Nigerian sports."

Nigeria's best haul in the Olympics was in Atlanta in 1996 when the team won two golds, one silver and three bronzes. Beijing brought five medals in 2008, but there were zero in London four years later.

Atlanta Olympics gold medal winner in the long jump, Chioma Ajunwa, said Nigeria's sporting federations needed a shakeup to bring in sports people who knew what they were doing.

"One thing I think the people in the helm of affairs should do is to overhaul

the sports department in Nigeria. They should stop recycling the old administrative officers that never know what they are doing," she told Arise News channel.

"When you put people who know their onions, we would not be speaking in this manner."

"Our problem is that we are using those that never knew what sports is, those that never did sports in their life. When you go to the ministry of sports, before 3pm, they have all gone home."

Among others, the 84 Nigerian representatives performed woefully in athletics, basketball, boxing, table tennis, wrestling, and football. It is a

sobering moment for the so-called 'Giant of Africa.' Instead of mouthing rhetoric and looking for scapegoats among the sports federation bosses, it bears repeating that the ministry should begin the preparations for the Los Angeles 2028 Games immediately.

There is no excuse for the outing in Paris. Rightly, the Minister of Sports, John Enoh, described it as a disaster. The humiliation was spiced by fleeting moments of triumph. D'Tigress won two group games against Australia and Canada in women's basketball, becoming the first African team to reach the

quarterfinal. That was interspersed with the men's 4x400m relay team, which took second in the semifinals but was disqualified for lane violation.

Nigeria probably put all its eggs in one basket. Tobi Amusan, the best hope, and the world record holder at 12.12secs, crashed out of the women's 100m hurdles in the semis. Controversy dogged the team as the Athletic Federation of Nigeria and the Nigeria Olympic Committee mismanaged Favour Ofili's registration in the women's 100m.

The Super Falcons crashed out in the group stage; the boxers, wrestlers, weightlifters, and table tennis players suffered the same ignominy.

It was an unpleasant moment for those nostalgic about the past. Yet, the handwriting was clear. In the intervening Games between London and Paris, Team

Nigeria recorded only three medals – none of them gold. In Rio 2016, the U23 men's team secured bronze. At the delayed Tokyo 2020 Games, Blessing Oborodudu (wrestling) and Ese Brume (long jump) medalled. This suggests that Team Nigeria is poor.

To complete Nigeria's shame, other African countries did proudly in Nigeria's traditional areas of strength. Botswana's Letsile Tebogo grabbed the men's 200m gold, the first African to attain the feat. Kenya won four golds (17th in the world), relying on its strength in middle/long distance races; Algeria (two), Uganda, Tunisia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Morocco took one gold each apart from other silver and bronze medals. Ivory Coast and Zambia returned home with one bronze each.



The summer transfer window saw clubs from Europe and Saudi Arabia spend a lot of money to strengthen their ranks for the 2024/25 campaign.

While some clubs had to operate within a relatively small budget, the likes of Manchester United, Tottenham and Chelsea were still able to complete big-money deals.

10. Teun Koopmeiners – £43.7m

After replacing Massimiliano Allegri in the Juventus dugout, Thiago Motta identified their midfield as an area that they needed to improve.

They bought Khephren Thuram from OGC Nice in a deal worth an initial £16.9million and also paid Aston Villa an initial £42.35million for Douglas Luiz.

The 26-year-old midfielder has spent the last three seasons at Atalanta and was a key part of the side that beat Bayer Leverkusen in the 2023/24 Europa League final.

9. Michael Olise – £45m

Bayern Munich's 11-year reign as Bundesliga champions came to an end in 2023/24 as they finished third behind Stuttgart and champions Bayer Leverkusen.

They are looking to reclaim the title and fought off competition from Chelsea and Newcastle to sign Olise from Crystal Palace in a deal worth an initial £45million and another £5million in potential add-ons.

The 22-year-old winger registered an assist two minutes into his debut as Bayern beat SSV Ulm 4-0 in the DFB-Pokal.

8. Dani Olmo – £47m

A La Masia academy graduate, Olmo left Barcelona at the age of 16 before enjoying successful spells with Dinamo Zagreb and RB Leipzig.

He also played an integral role in Spain's successful Euro 2024 campaign, registering three goals and two assists at the tournament. Barcelona have now spent an initial £47million and another £6million in potential add-ons to bring the 26-year-old

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midfielder back to Camp Nou.

He missed the first two games of the 2024/25 season due to a registration issue but has since scored two goals in two La Liga appearances.

7. Joao Neves – £50m

Neves' brilliant performances for Benfica in 2023/24 attracted interest from Europe's biggest clubs, including Manchester

6. Amadou Onana – £50m

After selling Douglas Luiz to Juventus, Aston Villa identified Onana as the perfect replacement for the Brazil international.

Villa spent £50million to prize the Belgium international away from Everton, making him the most expensive signing in the club's history.

He made a dream start to his Villa

United, Arsenal and Liverpool.

Paris Saint-Germain won the race for his signature after agreeing to pay Benfica an initial £50million and another £10million in potential add-ons.

The 19-year-old midfielder has already started to justify that price tag by registering four assists in his first three Ligue 1 appearances.

career, scoring just four minutes into his debut to help Unai Emery's side secure a 2-1 win over West Ham United.

The 23-year-old also scored the opener in their 2-1 win over Leicester City, and he has now matched his Premier League goal tally from the 2023/24 season.

5. Moussa Diaby – £50.4m

Diaby previously held the title of Aston Villa's most expensive signing, having joined the club last summer in a deal worth an initial £43million.

Villa turned a profit on the France international by selling him to Al-Ittihad for a fee of £50.4million, and he has signed a £250,000-per-week contract with the Saudi Arabian side.

4. Pedro Neto – £51.4m

Enzo Maresca spent over £200million and made 11 first-team signings during his first transfer window as Chelsea manager.

The most expensive of those is the signing of Pedro Neto from Wolves, with the winger costing an initial £51.4million and another £2.6million in potential add-on.

The 24-year-old returned to Molineux two weeks after the deal was completed and registered an assist in a 6-2 win for Maresca's side.

3. Leny Yoro – £52.1m

After making two unsuccessful bids for Everton defender Jarrad Branthwaite, Manchester United switched their attention to Yoro.

The centre-back – who was entering the final year of his Lille contract – was also linked with Real Madrid, Liverpool and Paris Saint-Germain but United won the race for his signature.

They forked out an initial £52.1million on the 18-year-old, making him the sixth most expensive teenager of all time.

But he will miss the start of the 2024/25 season after fracturing the fifth metatarsal

on his left foot in a friendly against Arsenal.

2. Dominic Solanke – £55m

Having failed to replace Harry Kane in the summer of 2023, Tottenham identified Solanke as one of their top transfer targets for this window.

The striker enjoyed the best season of his career in 2023/24, scoring 19 goals in 38 Premier League appearances four Bournemouth.

1. Julian Alvarez – £64.4m

Alvarez was the most expensive signing in the summer of 2024, having joined Atletico Madrid from Manchester City in a deal worth an initial £64.4million and another £17.1million in add-ons.

"I felt that I needed a change in my career," the Argentina international said during his official unveiling with the La Liga side.



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