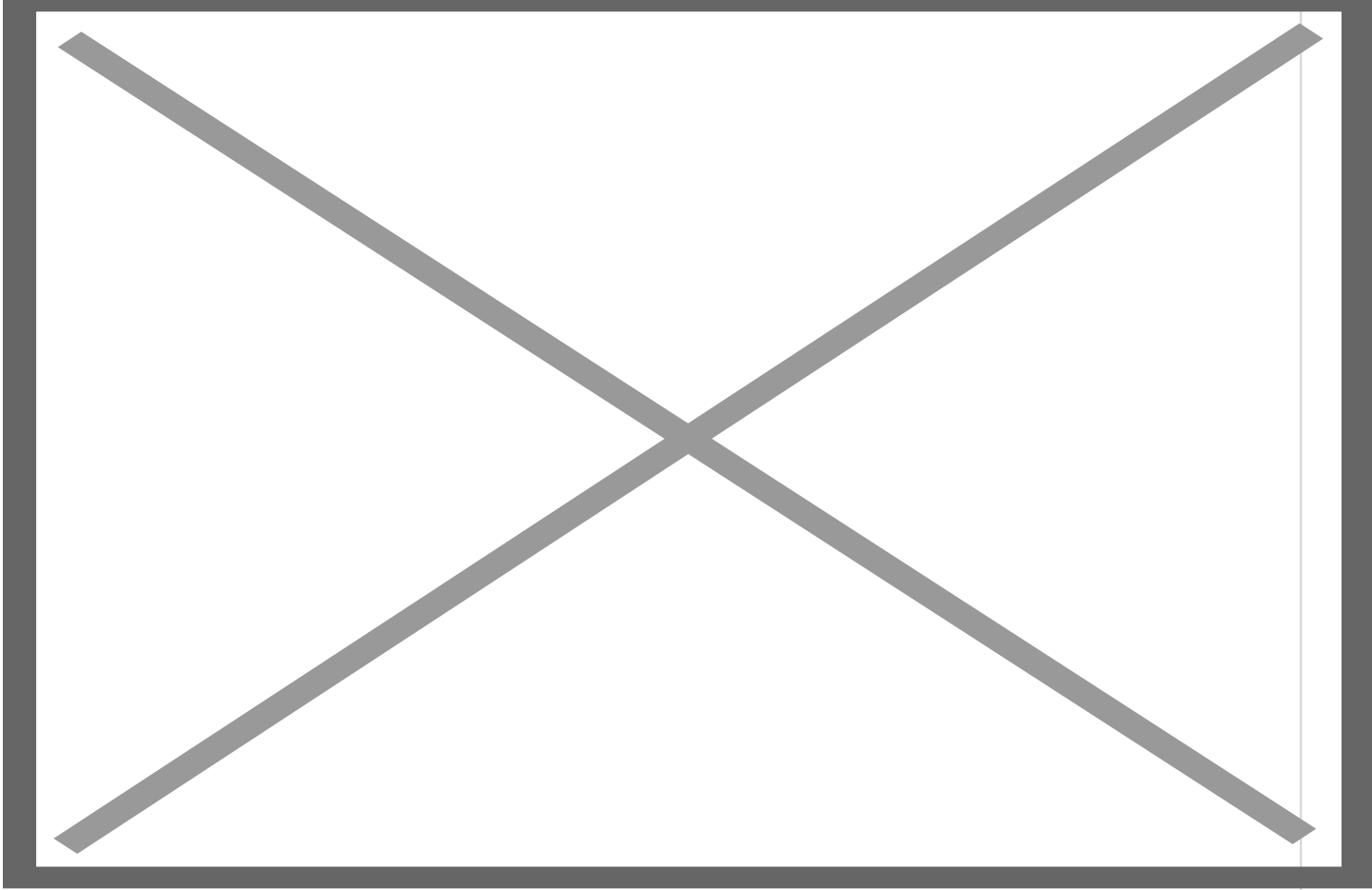


Lionel Messi sees PSG as Champions League title contenders

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Havana, November 23 (RHC)-- Paris Saint Germain (PSG) Argentine striker Lionel Messi said today that his club is a candidate for the title in the Champions League of European soccer, although he considers there are still things to improve.

"The Champions League is a very difficult competition, that's what makes it so beautiful and special, the best teams are there and it is increasingly complicated, yes, we are one of the favorites, but not the only ones," said the player in an interview with the Spanish sports daily Marca.

"Everyone says that we are the big favorites and I will not deny that we are one of the candidates by name, but we still need things to be a really strong team," explained the six-time Ballon d'Or winner, "We have to finish consolidating as a team and we have the advantage of a roster full of great players to achieve it," he said in reference to Frenchman Kylian Mbappé, Neymar, Di Maria and other excellent players.

The 2021 Copa America champion also spoke about his rivalry with Manchester United's Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo: "It's been a long time since we stopped competing in the same league, we competed individually and as a team for the same goals and it was a very beautiful time for us, also for the people who enjoyed it very much. It is a beautiful memory that will remain in the history of soccer.

Finally, Messi had words of praise for the signing of Xavi Hernandez as Barcelona coach: "He can contribute a lot. He is a coach who knows a lot, he knows the club perfectly and has lived in Barcelona since he was a child". "He has renewed the illusion in Barcelona because he is a person very respected by the fans and by the players. He will be a very important coach for the younger players because he will teach them. With him the team will grow a lot. I have no doubt about it.

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