

# lingua business

## Secret Formula

By Paul Gibson



While the majority of business sectors all around Europe are feeling the sting of the crisis “bee”, there is one sector that seems to have it all: the sport of football. But could we possibly solve the crisis by making a few small changes?

Changes in football? Well, not exactly. What we are speaking of is a slight modification in the rules of the game. Nowadays where money doesn't exactly grow on trees, footballers such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Leo Messi, Samuel E'too, Kaka, Rooney and many others are raking in the dough. Sure, these professionals are worth every euro, but are they really worth that much?

The challenging financial times we live in today seem to beg a very important question. How can anyone justify the millions of euros that footballers make, while the majority of football fans, season ticket holders and stadium owners are taking the hit or softening the blow of a worldwide crisis?

This issue is certainly not a new one. For years now - even when I was a teenager - the debate over the salaries of sports figures and athletes

has been ongoing. But never have the astronomical figures we read about in the newspapers taken on so much meaning.

As always, we need to resort to the facts before making any reasonable assessment. While most people are trying to make ends meet, Cristiano Ronaldo looks for a pay rise, going from 147,000€/week to an astounding 209,000€/week, and gets it. We are talking upwards of about 10.8 million euros per year. Okay, that's just one. What about the others?

David Beckham, when he was playing with LA Galaxy was taking in 31 million euros, Ronaldhino was racking up a cool 24.1 million euros and Lionel Messi coming in with a measly (not quite) 23 million euros. Rooney 20.4 million, Henry 10.2 million, Ballack 15.3 million, del Piero 14.6 million euros, Gerrard 11.3 million, Cannavaro 11.6 million, ... the list goes on and on.

And just as the climax of the crisis begins to reach epidemic proportions, we have the case of Kaka. Manchester City is willing to pay 111 million euros for Kaka to play for them. Does the business of football have no limits, no shame, no conscience? Apparently not.

But what would happen if the government decided to impose an embargo and seize these assets to cover the additional expenses of the financial crisis? After all, if every footballer decided to voluntarily give up half of their wages, they would put an important dent into the bill this financial crisis is accumulating. But until then, we will just have to live with the sad reality that comes with greed and exorbitant pay checks - at least until, we have our own!