# Dortmund Fans Protest Rheinmetall Sponsorship as Juventus Withdraws from European Super League



### Dortmund Fans Protest Rheinmetall Sponsorship Amid Controversy

Borussia Dortmund supporters have vehemently protested the club's recent three-year sponsorship deal with Rheinmetall, a German weapons manufacturer. The agreement, announced ahead of Borussia Dortmund's Champions League final against Real Madrid at Wembley, has sparked significant backlash among the fanbase.

During the Champions League final, Dortmund fans unfurled large banners decrying the sponsorship deal, with messages in German and English accusing Rheinmetall of attempting to "sportswash" its image through football. The banners read: "Rheinmetall: using football to create a cleaner image? Protecting BVB [Dortmund] from sportswashing is our mission!"

The logo of Rheinmetall will be displayed on Dortmund merchandise and advertising boards at Signal Iduna Park stadium but will not appear on team jerseys. This sponsorship marks the first time a Bundesliga club has partnered with a German defense firm, leading to public outrage.

Dortmund's CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke justified the decision, highlighting the importance of security and defense in contemporary Europe, while Rheinmetall's CEO Armin Papperger pointed to shared values between the company and the club.

The German Peace Society, led by Dortmund fan Michael Schulze von Glasser, has openly condemned the sponsorship, urging the club to end the partnership. Former footballer Gary Lineker also expressed his disappointment, stating the deal influenced his support for Real Madrid during the final.

### Juventus Withdraws from European Super League Initiative

Juventus has announced its departure from the proposed European Super League, leaving Real Madrid and Barcelona as the only remaining proponents. The decision was confirmed during a meeting of the European Club Association (ECA) Executive Committee in London before the Champions League final.

Juventus had initially joined Real Madrid and Barcelona in advocating for a new competition to replace the UEFA Champions League. However, the club has now rejoined the ECA, an organization opposing the Super League, which includes 600 teams.

ECA Chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi welcomed Juventus back, calling it a significant move and urging Madrid and Barcelona to reconsider their positions.

Florentino Perez, Real Madrid's president, continues to push for the Super League despite widespread opposition from fans and other clubs. Perez's stance was bolstered by a recent European Court ruling against UEFA and FIFA's efforts to prevent the breakaway league. Nevertheless, the initiative struggles to gain traction without broader support.

The original Super League proposal involved 12 of Europe's top clubs forming a 20-team tournament exempt from relegation. However, fan protests in 2021 led to the collapse of initial plans, leaving only Madrid, Barcelona, and Juventus as advocates before Juventus' recent withdrawal.

This article provides a factual account of two notable events concerning Borussia Dortmund's sponsorship controversy with Rheinmetall and Juventus' withdrawal from the European Super League initiative.