《梅西在南京建立足球主题公园》

导读:主题公园里还有足球训练场，结合虚拟现实。这会不会掀起中国又一波足球风潮呢？

Argentine soccer star Lionel Messi brought Chinese kids a unique Children's Day gift by launching a project to build a soccer theme park that would feature his personal training program in China.

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To the delight of hundreds of fans waving his posters while chanting his name, Messi, who is on a four-day China visit, announced in Beijing on Thursday that Messi Experience Park, an innovative venue exhibiting his personal items and demonstrating his training regimes, will be established in November 2018 in Nanjing with support from local and international partners.

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Aimed at promoting soccer culture in an interactive way, the park would provide Messi-inspired training and entertainment activities, including displays of his career highlights, a small personal museum and immersive training clinics enhanced by virtual reality and augmented reality technologies, according to Phoenix U-Art, Messi's Chinese partner.

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"The project will reshape the way fans can connect with Messi and will enable soccer culture to take deeper root in China by combining Messi’s career experience, his training program and entertainment," said Liu Wei, CEO of Phoenix U-Art.

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Messi said he expects the park will help ignite greater passion for the sport among Chinese youth by providing them with opportunities to stay connected with him and learn from him despite great geographic distances.

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"I hope to provide them the experience they never had before and to inspire them to pick up the sport early on. Hopefully, they will feel that I am around when visiting the park," said the star of the Argentine national team and Spanish club Barcelona FC.

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Messi will continue his tour in Beijing and Nanjing until Sunday, when he flies to Australia to join the Argentine squad, preparing for an exhibition game against Brazil on June 9 in Melbourne.

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After leading Argentina to gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and a series of offseason tours in China with Barcelona, Messi has built a solid fan base, as demonstrated by Chinese fans who mobbed his hotel on Thursday afternoon before the event, hoping for a glimpse of their beloved star.

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Wu Jilong, a sixth-grader from a rural area in western Hunan province’s Huayuan county, was lucky - he was one of two young fans selected to receive a jersey from Messi and chatted with his idol at the event on Thursday.

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"I am speechless now because I am too excited," said Wu, who has been following Messi since he was 8. "It’s a dream come true to meet him in person, and I will definitely go visit his park once it’s completed."

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Wu was selected to meet Messi by the Barcelona Great Wall Fans Association.

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Geng Lijun, chairwoman of the association, said the park and the training program will bring Messi closer to his Chinese supporters.

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"From a street boy kicking a soccer ball in Rosario (Messi’s hometown in Argentina) to one of the biggest stars of the game, his upbringing and development path is inspiring. We’d love to learn more about that and the park is an ideal bridge connecting us with him," she said.

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