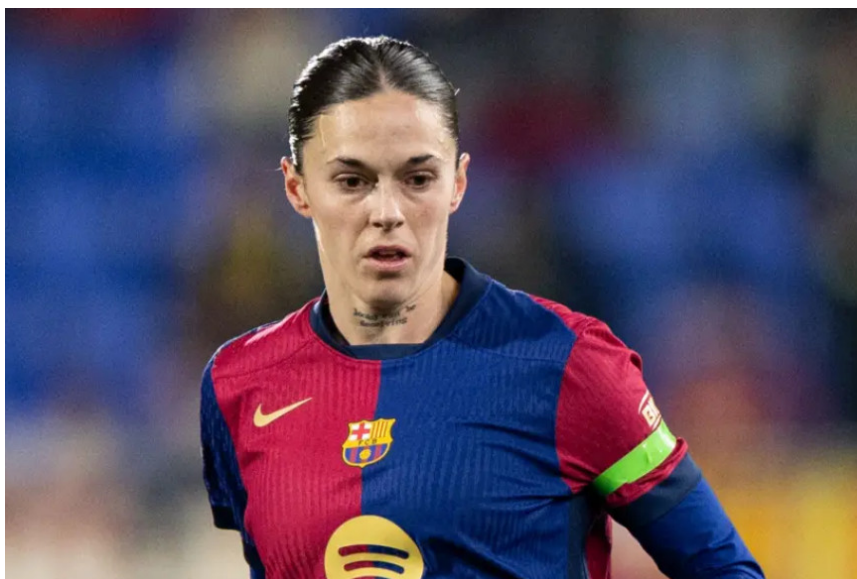




## Barca's Leon accused of 'violating privacy' of opponent



Espanyol have accused Barcelona and Spain defender Mapi Leon of "violating the privacy" of their player Daniela Caracas following an incident during a Liga F game.

Espanyol have accused Barcelona and Spain defender Mapi Leon of "violating the privacy" of their player Daniela Caracas following an incident during a Liga F game. In the 15th minute of the derby match between the Barcelona-based clubs on Sunday, Leon and Caracas collided while the Espanyol player defended a set-piece. Later on Monday, Leon released a statement denying any wrongdoing. "At no time did I, nor was it my intention, infringe upon the intimacy of my fellow professional Daniela Caracas," she said. "As the images show, it was part of a playing action in which she deliberately touches me and I touch her leg saying in reaction to the clash: 'what's up with you' Leon then appeared to touch Caracas around the groin area.

Espanyol expressed their "total discontent and condemnation" of the incident - a clip of which has gone viral on social media. There is no contact with her private parts, and certainly no intention. I insist, it was just part of the game that does not warrant the importance that has been attached to it."

She also condemned "the harassment that Daniela appears to have been suffering on social networks, which has nothing to do with football. Although Caracas was unable to react at the time... later, when she came to terms with what had happened, she became aware of the seriousness of the gesture, but chose not to react angrily to avoid a disciplinary sanction and harm to the team." Regarding the online abuse of Caracas, the statement added: "We are concerned that, instead of focusing on the act itself, part of the media attention has been diverted to other issues. Colombian centre-back Caracas has been "subject to hundreds of social media insults" as a result, Espanyol said Barcelona, who won the game 2-0, are five points clear at the top of Liga F while Espanyol are 13th in the 16-team league.

Leon, 29, is a key player for Barcelona who has won five league titles and three Champions Leagues with the club. Caracas, 27, is a Colombia international who was part of their run to the quarter-finals of the 2023 World Cup.