

Candy Bonanza

Mark Ogden explains why he thinks the attraction of the Saudi Pro League will only increase in years to come. (2:07)

Why the Saudi Pro League will only continue to grow (2:07)

Cristiano Ronaldo's Saudi Arabian club, Al Nassr, are banned from registering new players until they settle a debt with Leicester City, FIFA said on Thursday.

Al Nassr were ordered to pay Leicester £460,000 (\$513,000) plus annual interest of 5% in an October 2024 ruling by a FIFA-appointed judge at its players' status committee.

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Leicester filed the complaint in April 2024 because of unpaid additional clauses due from the £18m (\$20m) sale of Nigeria forward Ahmed Musa in 2024.

Al Nassr -- which was taken under majority ownership last month by the \$700 billion sovereign wealth Public Investment Fund -- can still sign new players though not register them to play.

"The club Al Nassr is currently prevented from registering new players due to outstanding debts," FIFA said Thursday. "The relevant bans will be lifted immediately upon the settlement of the debts being confirmed by the creditors concerned."

Al Nassr's signing of Ronaldo as a free agent in January sparked an unprecedented spree of spending by clubs in the Saudi Pro League, with four now majority-owned by PIF. The fund is chaired by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman.

Al Nassr signed Croatia midfielder Marcelo Brozovic this month from Inter Milan in a transfer reportedly valued at £18m (\$20m).

Al Nassr are in Portugal on a preseason training camp. On Aug. 22, they have a qualifying playoff in the Asian Champions