



Astralis Group opens new team

With 3 Major titles out of the last 5 and a record long position as number one in the world rankings, Astralis has been the dominating Counter-Strike team over the last 3 years. The team and the organization behind Astralis has set new standards within performance optimization, healthy lifestyle in esports and business development and the organization and the organization announces new initiatives.

Astralis Group already runs Astralis and the League of Legends team Origen, and together with a circle of commercial investors from business and traditional sports the new organization launches “Future FC” - a FIFA team with massive ambitions.

Nikolaj Nyholm, co-Founder and CEO in Astralis Group, explains::

- We founded RFRSH Entertainment with the ambition to create an international center for esports entertainment and I believe we got a long way over the past 3 years. Splitting up the tournament and teams is a natural development and when the possibility to buy out the teams' side came up in the discussions, Jakob and I didn't hesitate long. We started out building the performance model around Astralis and the opportunity to take the team development even further is something we strongly believe in, says Nyholm.

- Astralis is a great story in itself both as a business and as a brand and together with our League of Legends organization in Origen, Astralis Group stands on very solid ground when taking the next steps. Our ambition is to reach a much broader audience with our teams and FIFA is obviously a great platform for building that bridge, the co-founder comments.

The first player in Future FC is no other than Fatih Üstün, who on October 1st will join the organization from Mesut Özil's M10. Üstun ended up in the top 4 at the recent FIFA eWorld Cup, and he is a player straight out of Sports Director Kasper Hvidt's head:

- When launching a new team, it is always done on the basis of our performance model, which is all about optimizing facilities, training as well as the physical and mental condition of the players. Fatih Üstün is an extremely skilled player, who we believe we can help improve even further, says Hvidt.

- It's all about a healthy and focused lifestyle where the players, just like any other top athlete, works with the details in all aspects of his game, and we facilitate everything else around him based upon both technology, physical facilities and training, mental tools, analytical and reactional skills. We focus on the immediate improvements, but also on the long term conditions of and around the players, enabling everybody to perform to their best over a long career.

International investors - global ambitions

The separation of teams and tournament was done through a management buy out, and following the launch of Astralis Group, Nikolaj Nyholm and Jakob Lund Kristensen no longer have any ownership or other interest in RFRSH Entertainment. With them they bring Sports Director Kasper Hvidt and VP of Comms and Brands Steen Laursen together with a number of investors from commercial and traditional sports.

Nikolaj Nyholm:

- A lot of people are becoming aware of what we do and the potential in developing some of the biggest esports teams and brands. Our ultimate goal is to develop brands that match the biggest teams from Premier League, NBA, NFL and other major leagues in traditional sports, and already now we've seen a lot of interest from the world of traditional sports and business.

- We have established a very strong performance model which short and long term will create a solid foundation for reaching our ambitions. At the same time, through our team and player channels as well as earned mainstream media, we have demonstrated a unique ability to create value for our commercial partners. This is one area we will develop further through Astralis Group, where we expect all our teams and brands to establish themselves as international top teams and brands.

- We now have three top teams and ultimately we also expect to bring in young talent, we will help develop into top players and -brands. With Astralis Group we have established a platform from where we can contribute to and lead the development of international esports, Nyholm comments and continues:

- We have previously set the bar for commercial excellence and are excited to continue to grow our successful partnerships with such prolific brands as Audi, HP, Logitech, Turtle Beach and Unibet. We are adamant in our quest to prove that esports, if done right, is not only a great investment for the future but also a solid business in the now. We will continue our investments in the commercial setup around the teams and make a partnership with our strong portfolio of teams a rational choice for any brand looking to excel in this space, he concludes.

Fatih Ülstün will have his first day in the Astralis Group office on October 1st.