



RELEASE

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Virtual Bundesliga to be included as additional competition in DFL statutes

The Virtual Bundesliga (VBL) is to be included as an additional competition in the league statutes of the DFL Deutsche Fußball Liga. At Monday’s DFL Members Assembly, the clubs in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 passed a resolution to this effect, setting out the official staging of the competition for the title of “German eFootball Club Champion”.

This step establishes the Virtual Bundesliga Club Championship as the eFootball competition of the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 and serves to advance its professionalism.

From the 2023-24 season, the aim is for all clubs in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 to take part in the Virtual Bundesliga Club Championship. The essential conditions for this will be set out in the Licensing Regulations, based on the findings from recent seasons. These include the running of an eFootball team (comprising three to five players) and the appointment of a full-time person responsible for eFootball, as well as the maintenance of premises declared as main eFootball venues and the necessary technical equipment. By including an eFootball competition in the licensing regulations and in the statutes, German professional football once again leads the way internationally, as it did with the foundation of the Virtual Bundesliga ten years ago.

The VBL criteria will be examined from the 2023-24 season as part of the licensing process. Any sanctions in the event of non-compliance with regard to VBL licence criteria will not affect match operations or competition in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2. As with other licensing criteria, (temporary) exceptions are possible in justified cases.

The motion underlying today’s resolution was submitted and discussed in advance with the involvement of the 26 clubs that have already participated in the VBL, as well as those that have not yet taken part. Previously, the clubs in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 had resolved on 14 December 2021 that the DFL was to prepare the Virtual Bundesliga for integration into the statutes, for resolution by the DFL Members Assembly.

Season to end with the VBL Grand Final

In 2012, in partnership with EA SPORTS, the DFL became the first professional football league to launch an eSports competition. The VBL is also directly integrated into the EA SPORTS FIFA game series.

In 2018, the decision to launch the VBL Club Championship with the clubs in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2, in addition to the VBL Open competition for individual players, was taken in response to the increasing popularity of the VBL, the growing relevance of eSports in general and the DFL’s focus on football simulation games. The two competitions are being brought together first in the VBL Open Playoffs and then in the VBL Grand Final (this year taking place on 4-5 June in Cologne).

The DFL has also been cooperating with ESL, the world’s largest eSport company, since 2020. With its expertise in building up and expanding ecosystems in conjunction with digital sport, the DFL aims to further develop and professionalise the VBL.

You can find further information on the competition at virtual.bundesliga.com/en.

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