For Immediate Release:
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An Open Letter to the Fans of the American Football League Europe and the Rhein Fire Family

Dear AFLE Fans,
Dear Rhein Fire Family,

There are moments when the only right thing to do is speak openly and honestly, even when the truth is difficult. This is one of those moments.

This season, while Rhein Fire fought its way into the AFLE playoffs, the franchise was also facing a serious financial situation, stemming from years of accumulated losses under the previous league structure, that put its future at risk. We know this news raises questions, and you deserve to hear directly from us what happened and what we are doing about it.

Throughout the season, the league has worked closely with Rhein Fire to address these challenges, restructure the organization and put the franchise on a sustainable financial and operational path. As we worked through the situation together, it became clear that a short-term solution would not be enough. A deeper, more permanent commitment was needed to secure Rhein Fire's long-term future.

For that reason, the AFLE has taken a further step as part of its Stabilization Plan and has become the majority owner of Rhein Fire.

This is a significant decision, and one we did not take lightly. It means that the AFLE now carries direct responsibility for the financial stability, governance and long-term future of the franchise.

At the same time, we want to express our sincere gratitude and respect to Rhein Fire's founders, current shareholders and management. Their work, commitment and dedication have played a fundamental role in building and developing this franchise and in bringing Rhein Fire to where it is today. We recognize the effort that has gone into creating and sustaining Rhein Fire, and we are grateful for everything they have contributed to the franchise and to European American football.

From the very beginning the founding owners' vision for Rhein Fire included bringing a strategic investor on board alongside them. As we worked together to put the franchise's future on solid ground, the founding owners came back together around that original vision and others stepped aside to make room for that strategic investor and new owner – bringing Rhein Fire back to its core values from day one.

With that foundation in place, we can also look outward, building trusted, professional relationships across European American football, for the good of the sport we all love.

This means: a new chapter begins for Rhein Fire; one we see as a great opportunity. With renewed financial strength and confidence, we will work to re-establish the Rhein Fire experience among the top tier of European football. All parties are aligned on this.

Our goal is not simply to help Rhein Fire get through a difficult moment. Our goal is to create a sustainable foundation from which the franchise can grow and remain a strong part of European American football for many years to come.

And there is something we want to make very clear: Rhein Fire remains Rhein Fire.

Its history, its identity, its colors, its connection to this region and, above all, its relationship with its fans are at the heart of what we are committed to protecting. The purpose of the AFLE's involvement is not to take that identity away, but to give Rhein Fire the stability and structure it needs to build its next chapter.

Before looking ahead, we also want to say thank you.

Thank you to the Rhein Fire Family who filled the Schauinsland-Reisen-Arena throughout the season. Thank you to everyone who wears the colors with pride, supports the team, works hard behind the scenes and continues to stand with the franchise through difficult moments.

And thank you to every AFLE fan who has believed in this league and in the future of European American football since day one. Rhein Fire's run to the Semi-Finals would not have been possible without you. And the next chapter will not be possible without you either.

Rhein Fire is one of the most recognized and storied names in European American football. We believe it has the potential to be a flagship franchise for the sport across the continent. But we also understand that Rhein Fire is about much more than what happens on the field. It is part of a community, a region and a football culture that has been built over many years.

That is something worth protecting.

And there could hardly be a better place to look ahead than the Schauinsland-Reisen-Arena. This Sunday, September 6, Rhein Fire's home will host the first-ever AFLE Gold Bowl. Fans from across Europe will come together in Duisburg to celebrate a historic moment for the league and for European American football. We hope that Fire fans and football fans from across Europe will fill the stadium together and make this first Gold Bowl weekend a celebration of what this sport can become.

The road ahead will not always be easy. We know that. But we also know that difficult moments can become turning points. We will build that future together with the fans, with the people who make Rhein Fire what it is, and with the wider AFLE community.

We also want to keep the Rhein Fire Family informed as this chapter develops. For ongoing updates and reports on the development and well-being of the team, as well as to share fan suggestions or learn about employment and volunteer opportunities, please contact info@rheinfire.eu. We want to keep the conversation open and make sure there are clear ways for everyone who cares about Rhein Fire to stay involved.

Together, we move forward.

With gratitude and commitment,

For the AFLE

Jim Tomsula
Joel Nagel
Moritz Heisler
Andreas Nommensen

For Rhein Fire

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About The AFLE

The American Football League Europe (AFLE) is a newly established professional football league dedicated to building a sustainable, team-driven competition across Europe. Headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, and Hamburg, Germany, the league operates as an association in Vienna Austria, owned and governed by its participating teams.

Founded on principles of transparency, collaboration, and long-term development, AFLE was created to provide stability and professional structures for European football after years of uncertainty across the landscape.

The league's inaugural season kicked off on May 23, 2026, and will run through the summer, concluding with the AFLE Gold Bowl on September 6, 2026.

The first season features eight franchises from across Europe: Rhein Fire and Berlin Thunder from Germany, the Vienna Vikings from Austria, the Wroclaw Panthers from Poland, the Alpine Rams from Switzerland, the Paris Lights from France, the Firenze Red Lions from Italy, and the London Warriors from the United Kingdom. Together, these teams represent a broad and diverse European football landscape.

The AFLE aims to connect fans across borders and establish a truly international competition platform that brings together established football markets and ambitious new projects.

Backed by long-term private investment, the AFLE focuses on responsible growth, modern governance, and strong media engagement. The league works closely with clubs, players, officials, and partners to develop football sustainably for the next generation.

The league's mission is to create a trusted home for European football, built on stability, professionalism, and community.

Digital Presence

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