

Bolivian problems solved after strike threat

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The new season in Bolivia began with a strike, but also with a unique fact. On Friday 26 February players' union Fabol reached an agreement with the League, which ensured that all players will be paid their salaries from last season.

Fabol had announced a players' strike if, at the start of the new season, there would still be footballers who had not received their salaries from the 2009 campaign. Sixteen players were waiting on their money. But last Friday, one day before the scheduled kick off, union representatives met with the board of the League and they soon reached an agreement.



According to Fabol's secretary ge

neral David Paniagua the four clubs that have not paid all their players (Wilstermann, La Paz FC, Real Mamoré and The Strongest) have promised to do so when they receive their first share of this year's television rights. The League has guaranteed that these four clubs will solve these debts.

Fabol had more good news. The League proved that all clubs have realized health assurance for their players. And a new Dispute Resolution Chamber was created. 'We were able to draft the regulations in two hours', reacted Paniagua.

The agreement came too late to commence the new season last weekend. Next Saturday 6 March the teams can finally start their campaign. Paniagua lamented that it took a strike to bring the club owners to act. 'After we had threatened to strike, they finally invited us to come to Cochabamba and then we realized in one afternoon, what they could not manage in the three months before.'

There are still two players whose debts have not been solved yet: Murilio Cazagrande (Real Mamore) en Regis de Souza (La Paz FC). But Fabol and the clubs will try to come to a solution on Monday. If that happens, then Fabol will have accomplished a unique fact. Because it will be the first time in Bolivian history that the season starts without clubs having debts with players.