

Russian Oligarch Suspected of Mafia Ties Sells Spanish Football Club

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Alexander Grinberg / marbella-fc.com

A Russian businessman suspected of mafia ties has sold a Spanish second-division football club that he purchased five years ago.

Alexander Grinberg served as Marbella FC's chairman after purchasing the crisis-hit club in 2013 for the symbolic sum of 1 euro. Spanish authorities [arrested](#) Grinberg with 11 other Russian nationals in a mafia raid in September 2017, and released him on bail Feb. 8.

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“Marbella FC starts a new era,” the club [announced](#) Monday.

It said China's Zhao Zhen, a sports business consultant at Hong Kong-based Guirenniao investment holding, acquired the club and took over its presidency.

Zhao bought a majority of Marbella shares from Grinberg for an undisclosed sum, according to the English-language version of Spain's Sur newspaper.

Grinberg had entered negotiations with Saudi, U.S. and Belgian groups after his assets were frozen and players' wages went unpaid during his arrest, Sur [reported](#).

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