



Romania's most famous football team, Steaua Bucharest, announce a ban on VACCINATED players, because their madcap owner says that athletes 'lose strength' – and claims those that are jabbed die in hospitals

Description

ROMANIA: Romania's most famous football team, Steaua Bucharest, announce a ban on VACCINATED players, because their madcap owner says that athletes 'lose strength' – and claims those that are jabbed die in hospitals

- **Mr Gigi Becali believes players vaccinated against coronavirus are 'powerless'**
- **He claims players at Steaua Bucharest and rival clubs are struggling after taking the vaccine**
- **The Romanian businessman singled out 36-year-old winger Ciprian Deac as an example of vaccine allegedly affecting older players**
- **Becali also recently said Steaua Bucharest striker Claudiu Keseru can no longer play at a high level**
- **His latest statement has drawn a furious reaction from the country's government**
- **Romania's vaccination rate of 86.52 doses per 100 population means they have the second lowest in Europe**

The owner of Romanian side Steaua Bucharest has sensationally announced the club will ban all players vaccinated against [Covid-19](#) from playing for them.

Mr Gigi Becali – a Romanian businessman and politician – said he is not allowing vaccinated players to play anymore because they are 'powerless'.

Becali went on to claim that people who are vaccinated against the virus die in hospitals, as opposed to those who have refused the jabs.

He also claimed players at Romanian rivals CFR Cluj and Rapid Bucuresti were struggling as a result of taking the vaccine, singling out 36-year-old winger Ciprian Deac.

'You're going to laugh, but I might be right. Those vaccinated lose their strength. That's something scientific,' he said [according to Romanian journalist Emanuel Rosu](#).

'Haven't you seen it at CFR? With Rapid, the players seemed to be fainting. They slept on the ground. All vaccinated people lose their strength!

'I also see mine, the vaccinated ones. It doesn't affect some, but it does affect those who are older. Haven't you seen [Ciprian] Deac? There is no more storm.'



Gigi Becali has sensationally announced Steaua Bucharest will ban all players vaccinated against Covid-19 from playing for them



Romanian businessman Becali believes players vaccinated against coronavirus are 'powerless'

The same journalist also said Becali suggests he only allowed players who faked getting vaccinated to play, though this information remains unconfirmed.

Becali also recently said Steaua Bucharest striker Claudiu Keseru – who returned to the club in August after six years at Bulgarian outfit Ludogorets – can no longer play at a high level because he was vaccinated.

'I gave him the money, I had a contract with him, he was a football player, I was the owner,' Becali [said via sport.ro](#) about Keseru's return.

'I said, "You can't go to this level anymore. You can play in Romania, but not at FCSB (Steaua Bucharest) and CFR!"

'He said he would show me, but he has nothing to show me. It can't be at this level anymore. It's possible because of the vaccine. I say what I think. I don't want to offend him.'

But his latest statement has drawn a furious reaction from the country's government.

In a statement, RO Vaccinare, [the official Facebook page of the government's national information platform](#) on vaccination said: 'Vaccinated footballers do NOT lose their strength after being vaccinated against COVID-19!

'From a medical and scientific point of view, there are no studies that would support a singularity like

the one recently promoted on Facebook accounts in Romania.

‘Vaccination against COVID-19 does not affect the performance of football players. In contrast, there are enough studies showing that going through SARS CoV-2 infection leaves long-term sequelae (Long COVID), and these can influence athletes’ performance.



Becali singled out 36-year-old winger Ciprian Deac (left) as an example of the vaccine affecting older players



Becali also recently said Claudiu Keseru (right) can no longer play at a high level because he was vaccinated

‘The bottom line is simple: to stay healthy, to enjoy football, to look at those who trust science and medicine. Please inform yourself **ONLY** from credible, official sources!’

Journalist Grigore Cartianu meanwhile [added via sport.ro](#): ‘From my point of view, if I were to make a top 10 of the stupid and vile statements of the century – I’m not saying that man is like that, but the statements... the statement is stupid, incorrect, miserable and discriminatory.’

Romania are one of eight countries with a vaccination rate below 60 per cent [according to The Local](#), with the other consisting of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and Russia.

However, their current rate of 86.52 doses per 100 population means they have the second lowest in Europe, ahead of only Bulgaria, [according to Statista](#).

Earlier this month, the coordinator of the Romanian national vaccination campaign, Valeriu Gheorghita, confirmed nearly one million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, had expired and would therefore be destroyed.

'We have received a total of 4,478,000 doses, and 852,356 doses have been administered. Some 3.3, entered the resale or donation mechanism, including the 917,800 that have expired,' Gheorghita explained.



Valeriu Gheorghita (right) said one million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine had to be destroyed earlier this month

Becali's comments are just the latest in what has been a career in the game littered with controversial statements.

In 2018, he triggered a sexism row after revealing Steaua Bucharest will never have a women's team as long as he is in charge, claiming female football is 'against human nature' and aligns 'to Satan's ideas'.

Asked on Romanian TV channel Pro X whether he would consider launching a women's side, Becali answered 'you can't do things against God's will' before adding 'I'll quit football'.

'How can a woman play football?' he added.

'She isn't built for playing football. Her body isn't made for football. It's dangerous. The female was created to be beautiful, to attract the opposite sex.'

'We are affecting women by letting them play football or by allowing them to box. They should play handball, volleyball, basketball, but not aggressive sports.'



Becali has been a controversial figure for a while, claiming in 2018 Steaua Bucharest will never have a women's team as long as he's in charge



Becali received less than two per cent of the vote when he ran for president in 2004 and 2009

Other previous controversies include promising to oppose sexual minorities when running for president in 2004, before another go five years later. However, he received just 1.77 and 1.91 per cent of the votes cast respectively.

The former member of the Romanian Parliament was also heavily criticised in 2006 for saying: 'Why [are there] so many homosexuals (in Romania)? I'll give \$2m or \$5m (for a referendum), so we can finish off all homosexuals in the country.'

He also refused to sign ex-Liverpool striker Florent Sinama-Pongolle because he was black, and also stated in 2010 the club will never sign a gay footballer.

The madcap owner also blamed a poor run of form for Steaua Bucharest in early 2020 on his players having sex with their girlfriends too often.

'My players are making love with their girlfriends too often, that's why they aren't playing football so well lately,' [he said](#).

'CFR players have sex only once a week. They meet with women only once a week.'

Becali has been owner of Steaua Bucharest since 2003, obtaining 51 per cent of the club's shares in February that year before buying another 15 per cent toward the end of the year.



He also refused to sign ex-Liverpool striker Florent Sinama-Pongolle (left) because he was black



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By Kishan Vaghela

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