

Case	FIFA provision	Sanction
Party: Joseph Odartei Lamptey Position: FIFA referee Affiliation: Ghana Football Association	Art. 69 par. 1 FDC (2017)	Sanction by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee Ban for life: 15 March 2017 FIFA Appeal Committee decision: 27 April 2017 CAS award: 4 December 2017

The case of Joseph Odartei Lamptey, FIFA referee, Ghana Football Association

Match: preliminary competition for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™: 12 November 2016, South Africa v. Senegal, final score 2-1

FIFA proceedings

Shortly after the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ qualifying match between South Africa and Senegal on 12 November 2016, several betting operators (among them, in particular, FIFA's current integrity service provider, Sportradar) made FIFA aware that the result of the match may have been influenced due to irregular and suspicious live betting activities that had occurred.

All reports reached the conclusion that during the first half of the match, there had been movements of betting activities for the "overs" betting market on the so-called "totals" live betting market that significantly deviated from the usual, mathematically calculated market developments. Therefore, all five betting operators deemed the betting activities witnessed during the match to be highly irregular and indicative of match manipulation, concluding that bettors had held prior knowledge of the total number of goals that would be scored during the match (at least two goals to be scored in total).

Following the reports highlighting the irregular betting activities, a sporting analysis of the match was also conducted. The analysis confirmed that the referee had clearly taken two wrong decisions, which ultimately had led to two goals being scored by South Africa.

FIFA Integrity carried out a thorough preliminary investigation, resulting in the opening of disciplinary proceedings against the referee, Mr Lamptey. On 15 March 2017, the FIFA Disciplinary Committee imposed a lifetime ban on Mr Lamptey for having breached art. 69 par. 1 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (unlawfully influencing match results). This decision was confirmed by the FIFA Appeal Committee on 27 April 2017, and the matter was then appealed before CAS which, on 2 August 2017, confirmed in full the decision passed by the FIFA Appeal Committee. CAS's motivated arbitral award was notified to the parties on 4 December 2017.

CAS – considerations

- Irregular betting activity

When ruling on the case, CAS took into particular consideration the fact that shortly after the match, five different and internationally renowned betting monitoring companies (among them, in particular, FIFA's current integrity partner, Sportradar) had spontaneously, independently and simultaneously reported to FIFA that irregular betting activities had taken place during the match, all of which were indicative of match manipulation.

All reports concluded – and this was never disputed by Mr Lamptey – that during the first half of the match, there had been movements of betting activities for the “overs” (a given total number of goals being scored) on the so-called “totals” live market that had significantly deviated from the usual, mathematically calculated market developments. Therefore, all five betting operators deemed the betting activities witnessed during the match to be highly irregular and indicative of match manipulation, concluding that bettors had held prior knowledge of the total number of goals that would be scored during the match.

In this regard, CAS found that the deviation witnessed during the match from the expected and ordinary movement of the odds in the “totals” live market – which contradicted the mathematically calculated odds models – clearly demonstrated that bettors had been in possession of information that the mathematical model did not have, and had been confident that at least two goals would be scored in the match, irrespective of the time that had elapsed.

- Sporting analysis

In addition to the suspicious betting activities, a sporting analysis of the match was conducted. From a refereeing point of view, the analysis confirmed that Mr Lamptey had clearly taken two wrong decisions, which had led to two goals being scored by South Africa at the end of the first half. In this regard, CAS concluded that it was clear that the wrong on-field decisions had been directly taken by Mr Lamptey.

The sporting analysis of the technical performance of the teams found that the match had generally been uneventful (only one goalscoring opportunity before the first goal), which had led the FIFA judicial bodies to conclude that neither team had been involved in the manipulation of the result of the match.

- Connection between the irregular betting activity and the sporting analysis

The suspicious betting activities reached their climax precisely when Mr Lamptey took the incorrect refereeing decisions between the 40th minute and the end of the first half. CAS found it significant that the match had been uneventful up to the moment when Mr Lamptey took the wrong decisions, that the deviation from the ordinary betting pattern had occurred prior to those decisions, and that when the second goal of the match was scored, the market had appeared to be satisfied, causing the live betting odds to return to the expected figures as the expectations of at least two goals had been fully met.

As a result, it was concluded that Mr Lamptey had intentionally taken two wrong decisions with the sole purpose of enabling a specific number of goals to be scored that would make the pertinent bets successful. CAS concluded that there had been an obvious link between the wrong decisions and the deviation from the expected betting pattern, and consequently found Mr Lamptey guilty of having unlawfully influenced the result of the match.

CAS had no doubt that the infringement at stake was a serious one, and considered it essential that sporting regulators demonstrate zero tolerance for all kinds of activities intended to influence the result of a match in a manner contrary to sporting ethics, and to impose sanctions sufficient to serve as an effective deterrent to people who might be tempted to consider involvement in such activities. Therefore, CAS found a lifetime ban from any football-related activity for the referee to be proportionate.

Conclusion

Mr Lamptey was not sanctioned due to an innocent mistake in his refereeing decisions or due to a poor performance. He was sanctioned because he was found guilty of taking intentional decisions with the sole purpose of facilitating a minimum number of goals in order to make certain bets successful, which was a direct and clear violation of art. 69 par. 1 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.