



Chelsea clear to make January signings after transfer ban overturned

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NIGERIA: -

Chelsea's transfer ban has been reduced following an appeal by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), clearing them to make signings in January.

The premier league side was handed a penalty of two transfer windows by FIFA for breaching rules on signing young players: last summer and the one next month. Chelsea's fine of 600,000 Swiss francs fine (£460,000) has also been halved by CAS.

According to the judgement published by FIFA earlier in April, Chelsea was given a transfer ban after 150 rule breaches involving 69 academy players over several seasons. The club went to CAS after FIFA's appeals committee rejected their case.

Chelsea reluctantly accepted that they had been in breach of serious breaches of the governing body's regulations, but they have always maintained their innocence in relation to what was found to be a less serious violation.

CAS found that the Blues "did violate" rules "related to the international transfer of minors" and "to the first registration of minors" but "for a significantly smaller number of players" amounting to "about a third of the

violations found by FIFA”.

The CAS verdict added: “In addition, the violations of other RSTP (Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) rules were found to be less serious than those attributed to Chelsea by Fifa.”

Details of the case which published on FIFA official website showed that Chelsea claimed many academy players were only triallists and did not play in organised matches.

FIFA bans the transfer of under-18s to different countries unless the moves meet strict criteria, such as the parents moving to the country for non-footballing reasons.

The rules were introduced to help protect children from trafficking and exploitation, FIFA declared.

CAS’s statement reads in part: “A CAS arbitration procedure was initiated in June 2019, following the receipt of CFC’s appeal, and conducted by a Sole Arbitrator (Prof. Massimo Coccia (Italy)). The club did not file any application for provisional measures but requested that a final decision be rendered before the end of 2019. A hearing was held at the CAS headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 20 November 2019.

“The Sole Arbitrator found that CFC did violate Articles 19.1 (related to the international transfer of minors) and 19.3 (related to the first registration of minors) of the RSTP, but for a significantly smaller number of players (about 1/3 of the violations found by FIFA). In addition, the violations of other RSTP rules were found to be less serious than those attributed to Chelsea FC by FIFA.

“Accordingly, the Sole Arbitrator reduced the sanction to one single transfer ban (which Chelsea FC already served during the 2019 summer registration period) and halved the monetary sanction. In view of the upcoming transfer window, the Sole Arbitrator issued his decision without the grounds. The reasoned award is being prepared and is

expected to be notified to the parties in early 2020.”