



MEDIA RELEASE

FOOTBALL - GREEK SUPER LEAGUE

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) ANNULS THE SEVEN-POINT DEDUCTION IMPOSED ON PAOK FC AND REFERS THE MATTER BACK TO THE HELLENIC FOOTBALL FEDERATION APPEALS COMMITTEE FOR ADJUDICATION

Lausanne, 10 July 2020 - The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has issued its decision in relation to the appeals filed by the Greek football clubs Olympiacos FC (Olympiacos) and PAOK Thessaloniki FC (PAOK) against the decision taken by the Hellenic Football Federation Appeal Committee (HFF AC) on 14 April 2020, which confirmed the decision taken by the Disciplinary Body of First Instance to impose a seven-point deduction on both PAOK and Xanthi FC for infringing the applicable laws prohibiting the multiple ownership of clubs.

Both Olympiacos and PAOK requested the annulment of the HFF AC decision, Olympiacos asking for harsher sanctions to be imposed on PAOK and Xanthi FC, and PAOK requesting that no sanction be imposed on it. The CAS appeals were consolidated and referred to the same Panel of arbitrators: Mr Manfred Nan (Netherlands), President; Prof. Ulrich Haas (Germany) and Prof. Luigi Fumagalli (Italy). The CAS initiated proceedings at the beginning of May 2020 and the Panel held a hearing in the presence of the parties on 6 July 2020.

The CAS Panel has ordered that the seven-point deduction imposed on PAOK be set aside and that the matter be referred back to the HFF AC for adjudication. Since Xanthi FC did not appeal the seven-point deduction imposed on it, this sanction is not set aside. The HFF judicial bodies incorrectly assumed that the Report prepared by the Committee on Professional Sports (CPS) in Greece dated 27 January 2020 was binding and therefore did not analyse it. Absent such analysis and without a proper endorsement of the conclusions of the CPS Report, such Report cannot be used by the HFF judicial bodies as a direct basis to sanction PAOK.

The CAS Panel found that, notwithstanding its power to decide the case itself, it was not appropriate to render a final and binding decision in such circumstances, with major consequences for Greek football. The Panel emphasized that the judicial bodies of the HFF should not be deprived of their duty to assess the complex elements contained in the CPS report, the substance of which had not been fully assessed in either the first instance or appeal proceedings conducted by the HFF. Furthermore, the Panel considered that PAOK should not be deprived of the internal scrutiny at the HFF level. As a consequence, both appeals have been partially upheld and the matter is referred back to the previous instance, i.e. the HFF AC.