



## IN THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE GHANA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

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Protest Case: No. D-27 – 2024

### **CORAM**

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|-------------------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. Mr. Osei Kwadwo Adow, Esq.       | - | Chairman |
| 2. Mrs. Lorraine Crabbe Ababio, Esq | - | Member   |
| 3.. Mr. Emmanuel Nikoi, Esq.        | - | Member   |
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**BASAKE HOLY STARS FC vrs SEFWI ALL STARS FC  
&  
SEFWI ALL STARS FC vrs BASAKE HOLY STARS FC**

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**CROSS PROTESTS IN RESPECT OF THE DIVISION ONE LEAGUE  
MATCHDAY 26 MATCH PLAYED AT SEFWI ASAFO RAMOS PARK**

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### **CONSOLIDATION OF THE TWO PROTEST CASES**

The two clubs, Basake Holy Stars FC and Sefwi All Stars FC protested against each other in relation to the same match (the Matchday 26 Division One League match). The Disciplinary Committee has therefore consolidated the two Protest cases and hereby provides its decision in respect of the two Protests as follows:

### **PROCEEDINGS**

In accordance with Article 56 of the GFA statutes (2019) and Articles 35(9) of the GFA Division One League Regulations, this Disciplinary Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) considered

(a) the depositions from Basake Holy Stars FC (Petitioner) and Sefwi All Stars (Respondent) in respect of the Protest filed by Basake Holy Stars FC against Sefwi All Stars;

(b) the depositions of Sefwi All Stars (Cross-Petitioner) and Basake Holy Stars FC (the Cross-Respondent) in respect of Protest filed by Sefwi All Stars C;

with their supporting attachments, the reports of the match officials and the video of the match.

## **SUMMARY OF FACTS**

### **A. PROTEST BY BASAKE HOLY STARS FC**

#### **CASE OF BASAKE HOLY STARS FC**

The Petitioner filed a protest against the Respondent for causing the abrupt end of the Division One League Day 26 match between the two clubs played at the Sefwi Asafo Ramos park. It is the case of the Petitioner that during the match, Officials and supporters of the home team (Respondent) invaded the field of play on many occasions causing insecurity for the match officials and players.

According to the Petitioner, the Match Commissioner and the security personnel tried to stop the invasions, but they failed. . It is the case of the Petitioner that the invasions in the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 31<sup>st</sup> minute led to temporary halt of the game for over 12 minutes. The Petitioner also added that various objects, sachet water, sticks, can drinks were thrown at the assistant referees.

The Petitioner stated that the Referees and his assistants were unable to continue the match as a result of the actions of the Officials and supporters of the home team. The Petitioner is therefore calling on the GFA Disciplinary Committee to declare Basake Holy Stars FC as winners of the said match accordingly.

#### **DEFENCE OF SEFWI ALL STARS**

According to the Respondent, the match did not end abruptly as stated by the Petitioner. The Respondent insists that the Match Officials handled the match smoothly till the end of the first half. The Respondent added that the Match Officials walked to their dressing room peacefully. The Respondent, however, added that the Match Officials refused to return to the field of play for the second half to commence.

The Respondent stated that they were informed by the security personnel present that the Match Officials had requested for additional security presence though the first half was supervised with 10 uniformed police officers. The Respondent added that the police requested additional personnel following which 10 police personnel joined their colleagues for the match. The Respondent further explained that despite the efforts, the match officials failed to show up to continue the game.

The Respondent also stated that when the match officials finally agreed to continue the match, there was a bad weather and they opted to replay the match as provided in Article 12(2) of the GFA Division One League Regulations and there was an agreement between the Match officials, the technical heads of the two clubs and security to act according to Article 12(2) of the GFA Division One League Regulations.

The Respondent added an audio recording between the Match Officials, captains and technical heads of the two teams, the venue media officer, the GFA Cameraman and the security for the match to continue on 13/05/2024 at exactly 8:00am.

## **B. CROSS PROTEST BY SEFWI ALL STARS FC**

### **CASE OF SEFWI ALL STARS FC**

The Cross-Petitioner, Sefwi All Stars FC protested against the Cross-Respondent for failing to honour the continuation of the Matchday 26 game between the two clubs at the Sefwi Asafo Ramos Park on May 13, 2024 as agreed between the two teams and the Match Officials.

According to the Cross-Petitioner, after the first half of the match, the Match Officials failed to continue the second half claiming that the 10 uniformed police personnel present at the venue could not guarantee their safety. The Cross-Petitioner indicated that though calls were placed for 10 additional police to join their colleagues, the Match Officials failed to continue the match.

It is the case of the Cross- Petitioner that the officials had meeting with the two captains and technical heads where it was agreed that the match should be continued on Monday, 13/05/2024. The Cross- Petitioner stated that on the said date, the home team was present for the continuation of the match as agreed. The Cross-Petitioner added that contrary to the agreement, the away team failed to honour the continuation of the match contrary to Article 83(1)(f) of the GFA Division One League Regulations. The Cross-Petitioner added pictures of its players and security personnel who were present at the match venue for the continuation of the match. The Cross- Petitioner therefore called on the GFA Disciplinary Committee to award three points and three goals to Sefwi All Stars in accordance with Article 33(3) of the Division One League Regulations.

### **DEFENCE TO PROTEST BY BASAKE HOLY STARS FC**

The Cross-Respondent described the content of the protest as an untruth and not an actual narration of the incidents that happened during the said match. The Cross-Respondent stated that the game was characterized by invasions onto the field of play by Officials and Supporters of the home team. The Cross-Respondent added that various objects such as bottled water, canned drinks and stones etc. were thrown at the Match Officials by supporters of the home team.

The Cross- Respondent referred the Committee to its protest on the same match. The Cross-Respondent also called on the Committee to ascertain the true happenings at the match venue from the reports of the Match Officials.

## **FINDINGS AND GROUNDS OF THE DECISION**

It is very clear from the foregoing that the two protests are the opposite of each other in terms of the contents of the Statement of Case and the Statement of Defence vice versa in both protests. The Committee finds as follows from the match reports and the video of the match:

### **REFEREES REPORT**

1. The Referee stated in his report that Supporters of the home team threw sachets of water, yoghurt and stones at the referee and assistants which resulted in a halt during the game for 5mins before the intervention of the police to restore calm.
2. The Referee added that the throwing of objects continued in the 31st minute of play after supporters of the home team entered into the inner perimeter and attacked the assistant 2 (one Afful Augustine) and it took the intervention of the police to restore calm which brought the game to a standstill for 12minutes. The Referee indicated that at that point the stadium was very unsafe.
3. According to the Referee, looking at how unsafe the match officials were, they asked for reinforcement from the police.
4. The Referee added that the reinforcement arrived at 4:46pm, yet the police officials were divided and strongly arguing amongst themselves with some ready to protect the match officials while others were not ready to guarantee their safety.
5. The Referee added that after the Match Officials realized that their safety could not be guaranteed they abandoned the match.
6. The Referee revealed that in order to escape the crowd and officials of the home team who were banging on the doors of the dressing room, they told both captains that the match will continue the following day.
7. The Referee added that at 5:26pm, a Police vehicle picked them up and took a different route after they realised that the Police pick-up vehicle was being trailed by some supporters in a taxi.

### **MATCH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

1. The Match Commissioner stated in his report that when they arrived at the Pre-match Technical meeting a group of supporters led by a certain Alex (Operations Manager of Sefwi All Stars FC) gathered in front of the dressing room and threatened to kill the match officials if the away team wins the match.
2. The Match Commissioner indicated that 22 minutes into the game, the supporters of the home team started throwing missiles (stones, caked yoghurt, sachets of water etc) onto the pitch targeting the match officials.
3. According to the Match Commissioner, the security present managed to restore peace after a few minutes and the game resumed.

4. The Match Commissioner, however, added that the throwing of objects intensified in 31<sup>st</sup> minute after which some supporters entered the field of play and attacked Assistant Referee 2.
5. The Match Commissioner stated that the situation continued even after the home team scored from a penalty kick and also continued before the half time recess.
6. According to the Match Commissioner, they requested for reinforcement from the security amidst death threats from the supporters of the home team.
7. The Match Commissioner added that the first batch of reinforcement arrived at 4.49 pm and they were only 5 before the second batch arrived at 5.20pm including the District Commander and 2 armed Police Officers.
8. According to the Match Commissioner, the Match Officials devised a strategy that the match will continue the following day at 8.00am and invited captains and coaches of the two teams and relayed the information.
9. The Match Commissioner said after communicating this information to the captains and coaches, the situation was calmed after which the Police managed to bring their pick-up into the safety zone around 5.35pm to sneak the match officials out of the stadium under very heavy police escort.
10. The Match Commissioner added that the Police pick-up dropped them off at the next town where they picked buses to their various destinations.

### **EVIDENCE FROM OFFICIAL VIDEO**

1. From the video recording of the match, it was observed that supporters of the home team invaded the inner perimeter at will on two occasions.
2. It was also observed that supporters attacked the Assistant referee 2 leading to a hold up for minutes.
3. That during the halftime break some supporters further heckled the match officials while they were walking to the dressing room.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE FINDINGS**

This matter raises the issue of forfeiture for a violation of Article 33(1)(b) of the GFA Division One League Regulations.

The relevant articles state that:

*A team commits an offence punishable by forfeiture of a match where that team positions itself in such a way as to render the progress of the game impossible or the player(s) or supporter(s) of the team initiate(s) an act responsible for the abrupt end of the match.*

After examining the **match video**, reports of the Match Officials, the police report, the Committee finds that by attacking the Referees in the 22<sup>nd</sup> minute, 31<sup>st</sup> minute, after the penalty was awarded, and on their way to the dressing room, supporters of Sefwi All Stars FC **initiated the acts** that led to the abrupt end of the match.

Though the Referee continued the game till the first half ended, it was observed that the Referees were unable to return to the field of play for the second half due to the hostile environment which was caused by supporters of the home team.

Without a doubt, the supporters of Sefwi All Stars FC **initiated the acts with intent to cause bodily harm to the match officials. These acts and the unsporting behavior of the home team** led to the abrupt end of the match.

From the Report of the Match Officials, the Committee found that the Referee's decision to reschedule for the next day was merely a ploy to cause tensions to go down, the only way to preserve their lives, as well as enable the fans to allow the Match Officials to exit from the stadium. If that had not been done, the chaos would have continued.

That this Committee finds that the assertion by Sefwi All Stars FC that "Match Officials handled the match smoothly till end of the first half" is false and not supported by the video recording of the match. The video recording shows a number of invasions into the inner perimeter by supporters to attack the match officials which was unsporting and a violation of the regulations.

Sefwi All Stars FC were, thus, caught in the web of Article 33(1)(b) of the GFA Division One League Regulations. The second part of the regulation is very instructive on the subject matter.

It simply punishes the club, the official(s) or the player(s) or the supporter(s) who **initiates the act responsible** for the abrupt end of the match.

Therefore, in the instant circumstances, it is the position of the Committee that the conduct of the supporters of the home team, Sefwi All Stars FC, led to the abrupt end of the match.

## **DECISIONS**

**The Committee therefore makes the following decisions:**

- 1. That the Protest of Basake Holy Stars FC shall succeed.**
- 2. That the Protest of Sefwi All Stars FC is dismissed.**
- 3. That, Sefwi All Stars FC initiated the acts that led to the abrupt end of the match, Sefwi All Stars FC shall forfeit the match in accordance with Article 33(1)(b) of the Division One League Regulations.**
- 4. That having forfeited the match, Sefwi All Stars FC shall be considered as having lost the match in accordance with Articles 33(2) and 34(12) and accordingly, three points and three (3) goals are hereby awarded in favour of Basake Holy Stars FC.**

5. That in addition, being the defaulting club, Sefwi All Stars FC shall lose three (3) points from the club's accumulated points from their previous matches pursuant to Article 33(5)(a) of the Division One League Regulations.
  
6. That should any party be dissatisfied with or aggrieved by this Decision, the party has within one (1) day of being notified of this Ruling to appeal to the Appeals Committee of the Ghana Football Association.



**Osei Kwadwo Adow, Esq.**  
**Chairman, Disciplinary Committee**  
**Monday, June 3, 2024**