

**IN THE MATTER OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION INDEPENDENT
REGULATORY COMMISSION**

AND IN THE MATTER OF AN ALLEGED BREACH OF RULE E8 OF THE FA RULES

Before:

Ms Sally Clark (Chair)
Mr Andrew Adie
Mr Tony Agana

B E T W E E N:

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

- and –

MARTIN SHERIF

DECISION OF THE REGULATORY COMMISSION

Secretariat to the Regulatory Commission:

Mr Nathan Greenslade - FA Judicial Services Officer

A. Introduction

1. This matter relates to alleged breaches by Mr Martin Sherif ("Player") of Rule E8 of The Football Association's ("The FA") Rules, as set out in the FA Handbook (2024-25 and 2025-26 versions) ("Rules", with each of them being a "Rule") in respect of 61 bets ("Bets", with each being a "Bet") placed on football matches between 20 November 2024 and 12 February 2026.
2. These proceedings are conducted in accordance with the Rules.

B. The Parties

3. The FA is the governing body of English football and is responsible for the governance of all affiliated football in England.
4. Mr Sherif is a professional footballer who, during the relevant time, was a registered Player for Everton FC. In the 2025-26 season, Mr Sherif was on a loan transfer first at Rotherham United

FC and then at Port Vale FC. As a registered Player, Mr Sherif was required to comply with the The FA Handbook, including the rules prohibiting betting on football.

C. Procedural background & Facts

5. On 4 August 2026, Mr Sherif was charged by The FA with Misconduct under FA Rule E1.2 in respect of 61 bets placed on football matches between 20 November 2024 and 12 February 2026. The Notice of Charge alleged that each of the 61 bets constituted a separate and independent breach by Mr Sherif of FA Rule E8. The particulars of the Charge are set out in Appendix 1.
6. As a Player, Mr Sherif was prohibited from betting, either directly or indirectly, or instructing, permitting, causing or enabling any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in, a football match or competition; or any other matter concerning or relating to football anywhere in the world.
7. Through its enquiries, The FA identified six separate betting accounts in Mr Sherif's name, across which 61 football bets were identified. The 61 bets placed resulted in a total stake of £1,974.77, with returns of £1,539.02, equating to a net loss of £435.75.
8. Mr Sherif responded to the Notice of Charge on 21 August 2026 indicating that he admitted the charges laid. In particular, Mr Sherif's position was that he did not place any of the Bets himself and instead the Bets placed on the Betting Accounts were placed by [REDACTED], and thus he admitted permitting, causing or enabling betting on football through betting accounts he had opened and which accounts were funded by him. Mr Sherif provided a witness statement, together with other evidence in support of his position, alongside his reply form for the attention of the Regulatory Commission.
9. Following Mr Sherif's admission of the charges, on 14 September 2026 the Regulatory Commission ("Commission") was constituted, comprising Ms Sally Clark (Chair), Mr Andrew Adie and Mr Tony Agana, all of whom are independent panel members of The FA. Mr Nathan Greenslade (FA Judicial Services Officer) acted as the Secretariat to the Commission.
10. On 21 September, a meeting ("Hearing") held by video conference was convened to determine the matter on the papers.
11. Since a paper hearing was conducted, The FA and Mr Sherif were not required to attend. In advance of the hearing, the Commission was provided with a hearing bundle, which contained the Notice of Charge, Mr Sherif's response and submissions from both The FA and Mr Sherif on sanction.

D. Rules

12. FA Rule E1.1 provides:

"E1.1 *The Association may act against a Participant in respect of any Misconduct, which is defined as being a breach of the following:*

...

E1.2 the Rules and regulations of The Association and in particular Rules E3 to E28 below."

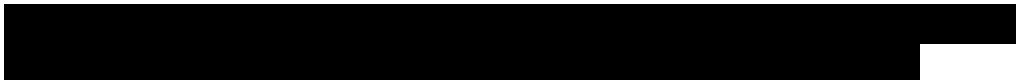
13. FA Rule E8 provides (in relevant part):

“E8.1 A Participant shall not bet, either directly or indirectly, or instruct, permit, cause or enable any person to bet on –

E8.1.1 the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in or in connection with, a football match or competition.”

E. The Parties’ Submissions

Mr Sherif’s Submissions

14. In his response to the charge, Mr Sherif made the following points for the consideration of the Commission with regards to the applicable sanction:
 - 14.1 He had apologised and expressed remorse to The FA for his actions.
 - 14.2 He had not personally placed any of the 61 Bets.
 - 14.3 He was young (18, 19) at the relevant time and was not an experienced footballer with years of professional experience behind him, even though he had spent his youth at the Everton academy.
 - 14.4 Given the circumstances of the case (i.e. that he did not place the Bets himself), no financial penalty should be imposed. In this regard, Mr Sherif did not enjoy a financial benefit as a result of what happened, instead he was considerably out of pocket as it was his bank account that funded the 61 Bets.
 - 14.5 He has spoken to young players in the Everton academy, warning them about the dangers of betting and playing casino games.
 - 14.6 
 - 14.7 He had closed all of his betting accounts and no longer has any betting accounts in his name.

The FA’s Submissions

15. In its submissions to the Commission, The FA asked the Commission to take into account the Betting Sanction Guidelines which suggest a financial penalty in cases where no Bets were placed on the Player’s own club. Considering the Guidelines, The FA asked the Regulatory Commission to consider the following matters:
 - 15.1 The overall perception of impact of the Bets on game integrity, namely the fact that Mr Sherif, a professional player, had multiple betting accounts in his name, which were connected to bank accounts also in his name, through which football bets were placed on competitions in which he or his club was involved.
 - 15.2 The perspective of public confidence in the integrity of the game, namely that a professional player allowed betting activity to take place through accounts under his control, creating an objective association between him and betting on competitions connected to his professional environment.

- 15.3 The fact that Mr Sherif, while contending that he was not aware of the football bets, did have access to the betting accounts through which the football bets were placed, and admitted accessing those accounts in order to ensure that they were adequately funded. His suggestion that he was not aware of the football bets is therefore difficult to accept.
- 15.4 While acknowledging that he was young at the relevant time, he was a professional player operating in environments in which betting integrity obligations were repeatedly emphasised. He also accepted having attended education sessions and being aware that as a professional footballer he was not allowed to place Bets on football anywhere in the world.
- 15.5 Mr Sherif's full cooperation with The FA's investigation and his acceptance of the charge at the first opportunity.

F. The FA's Sanctioning Guidelines

16. The Commission took into account The FA's Sanctioning Guidelines on Betting cases under Rule E8, which state:

SANCTION GUIDELINES – BETTING CASES CHARGED UNDER FA RULE E8 (b)

	Bet placed on any aspect of any football match anywhere in the world, but not involving Participant's Club competitions.	Bet placed on Participant's competition but not involving his Club (including spot bet).	Bet placed on own team to win.	Bet placed on own team to lose.	Bet placed on particular occurrence(s) not involving the player who bet (spot bet).	Bet placed on particular occurrence(s) involving the player who bet (spot bet).
Financial Entry Point – Any fine to include, as a minimum, any financial gain made from the bet(s)	Warning / Fine	Fine	Fine	Fine	Fine	Fine
Sports sanction range	Suspension n/a	Suspension n/a where Participant has no connection with the Club bet on*	0-6 months to be determined by factors below	6 months - life to be determined by factors below	0 – 12 months	6 months - life
Factors to be considered in relation to any increase/decrease from entry point	Factors to be considered when determining appropriate sanctions will include the following: • Overall perception of impact of bet(s) on fixture/game integrity; • Player played or did not play; • Number of Bets; • Size of Bets; • Fact and circumstances surrounding pattern of betting; • Actual stake and amount possible to win; • Personal Circumstances; • Previous record – (any previous breach of betting Rules will be considered as a highly aggravating factor); • Experience of the participant; • Assistance to the process and acceptance of the charge.					

G. Decision

17. Having carefully considered the parties' submissions and the facts of the case, together with the Sanctioning Guidelines which provided that no sporting sanction was required in this case, the Commission considered that the following mitigating factors were relevant in Mr Sherif's case:
- 17.1 his early admission of guilt and his co-operation with The FA's investigation and disciplinary process;

- 17.2 his youth at the relevant time; and
- 17.3 his genuine remorse for his actions.
- 18. The Commission also considered that the following aggravating factors needed to be taken into account when determining the appropriate sanction:
 - 18.1 the fact that he appears to have enabled others who were not able themselves to open betting accounts, to bet through his own account;
 - 18.2 the fact that he was funding the betting accounts that were being used by the third parties to place football bets, and had continuous access to the accounts.
- 19. Finally, the Commission noted that this was Mr Sherif's first offence in relation to the betting rules.
- 20. Having considered all of the above factors, the Commission considered that a fine of £5,000, represents a fair and proportionate sanction for Mr Sherif's conduct. The Commission considered that Mr Sherif's conduct did not warrant a sporting sanction.

H. Costs

- 21. The FA did not seek costs against Mr Sherif.
- 22. In the circumstances, the Commission was satisfied that each Party shall bear its own costs incurred in bringing or defending the Charges, as the case may be. The costs of convening the Commission shall be borne in their entirety by The FA.

I. Conclusion

- 23. Mr Sherif has admitted the Charges.
- 24. Mr Sherif is ordered to pay a fine of £5,000.
- 25. Each party shall bear its own costs in this matter. The costs of convening the Commission shall be borne in their entirety by The FA.
- 26. This decision is subject to the relevant FA Appeal Regulations.

Sally Clark (Chair)

Andrew Adie

Tony Agana

29 September 2026

Appendix 1

Particulars of Charge

2024/25 Season

1. Mr Sherif bet, either directly or indirectly, or instructed, permitted, caused or enabled any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in or connection with, a football match or competition on 42 occasions between 20 November 2024 and 31 May 2025 whilst he was a participant at Everton FC.

2025/26 Season

2. Mr Sherif bet, either directly or indirectly, or instructed, permitted, caused or enabled any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in or connection with, a football match or competition on 19 occasions between 1 July 2025 and 12 February 2026 whilst he was a participant at Everton FC.