



Tottenham Transfers 2026: How Roberto De Zerbi Is Building a Title Contender

Description

The **Tottenham Hotspur transfers 2026** summer window has been a statement of intent under head coach Roberto De Zerbi. Spurs have invested over Â£185 million to reshape a squad that finished sixth last season, and with the Premier League opener against Brentford on 22 August now imminent, the pieces of De Zerbi's ambitious project are falling into place.

The Marquee Signings: Tonali and Fernandes Lead the Way

The headline move of Tottenham's summer has been the Â£100 million acquisition of Sandro Tonali from Newcastle United. The Italian midfielder brings exactly the kind of combative, box-to-box energy that De Zerbi loves to build his teams around. Tonali's ability to win possession quickly and then distribute with purpose makes him the archetypal De Zerbi midfielder - industrious, technically gifted, and tactically intelligent. His signing signals clearly that Spurs are not content to merely compete; they are building to win.

Equally significant is the arrival of Mateus Fernandes from West Ham United for a reported Â£85 million. The Portuguese international provides creativity and directness in wide areas, giving De Zerbi a dynamic option in what is shaping up to be a fluid, high-intensity 4-3-3 system. Fernandes' ability to drive at defenders, cut inside, and deliver in the final third adds a dimension that Tottenham have lacked for several seasons.



Tottenham Hotspur in pre-season action, July 2026 (Image: Tottenham Hotspur FC)

Together, Tonali and Fernandes represent the core of De Zerbi's vision: a pressing, possession-oriented side capable of competing for the top four. Critics have pointed to the scale of the spending, but few doubt the quality of the players brought in. The challenge now is integration – turning expensive individual talent into a cohesive unit that reflects De Zerbi's demanding style of play.

Pre-Season Results: Spurs Deliver Under the Sydney Sun

The proof is in the pudding – and Tottenham's pre-season tour has offered encouraging signs. The standout result came on 1 August in Sydney, where Spurs defeated a Chelsea side that has itself undergone a significant rebuild this summer. A 2-1 victory, with Richarlison netting the decisive goal, suggested that De Zerbi's ideas are already taking shape on the training pitch.



Tottenham take on Chelsea in their Sydney pre-season clash, 1 August 2026 (Image: Tottenham Hotspur FC)

The Sydney victory was particularly satisfying for supporters who have endured years of near-misses. Chelsea â?? whose own busy window we examined in our [Chelsea Transfers 2026 feature](#) â?? were expected to be a stern test, making the result all the more meaningful. De Zerbi was characteristically direct in his assessment: pleased with the mentality shown, but clear that there is considerable work still to do before competitive football returns.

The Road Ahead: Can Spurs Break Into the Top Four?

The 2026/27 Premier League campaign begins with a home fixture against Brentford on 22 August. On paper, it is a manageable opener, but De Zerbi will know that his side must hit the ground running. Arsenal, Liverpool, Manchester City, and Chelsea are all expected to contend â?? as our [EPL 2026/27 season preview](#) detailed â?? and the margin for error at the top of the English game remains vanishingly small.

For Tottenham, Champions League qualification is the non-negotiable ambition. The club has been absent from Europeâ??s premier competition for two seasons, and the financial and reputational cost is mounting. De Zerbiâ??s track record at Brighton â?? where he consistently over-performed relative to resources â?? suggests he has the coaching quality to extract maximum value from his squad.

Squad depth will be critical. Over 38 Premier League matches, the ability to rotate without losing quality is what separates genuine title contenders from those who fade in February. Tottenhamâ??s summer business has improved their starting eleven considerably, but whether De Zerbi has sufficient depth across all positions remains to be seen as the season progresses.

For now, the mood at Spurs is one of genuine optimism. If De Zerbi can harness the quality of Tonali, Fernandes, and a reinvigorated supporting cast while maintaining defensive discipline, this could be the season Tottenham finally deliver on their long-held promise.

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Author

jadeyeo