FC Zenit Fan Ends Match By Punching Dynamo Goaltender in Head

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Zenit St. Petersburg's Russian championship clash with Dynamo Moscow was abandoned in the 87th minute on Sunday after Zenit fans invaded the pitch and Dynamo defender Vladimir Granat was punched in the head.

Zenit were losing 4-2 in a match that threatened to dent their title challenge when fans ran on to the field and tried to confront the players.

One managed to get near enough to Granat to swing a punch that connected, despite the Dynamo captain trying to defuse the situation.

Speaking to the television channel NTV Plus minutes after the incident, Dynamo head coach Stanislav Cherchesov said: "I would not want to play. If I was hit, would you force me to go back on to the field?

"I would not want to do that. The player was hit in the face a few times and he says I don't want to go back out there. What can you do?"

The referee led the teams off the field and after a meeting with the match delegate, the decision was made to abandon the encounter.

Zenit, who have been managed since March by former Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea boss Andre Villas-Boas, currently lead the standings with 60 points from 28 matches, one point clear of Lokomotiv Moscow in second.

Their opponents Dynamo Moscow, in fourth place with 49 points, are likely to be awarded a 3-0 victory.

Zenit could also be punished by having to play between one and five matches at a neutral venue without their own fans.

In 2012, a Zenit fan threw a flare, which hit Dynamo goalkeeper Anton Shunin. The match was halted immediately and Zenit's opponents later awarded a 3-0 victory.

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