

Zenit Forward Hulk Accuses Spartak Fans of Racism

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Zenit St. Petersburg forward Hulk

Zenit St. Petersburg forward Hulk has said he was the victim of racist abuse during his side's Russian Premier League encounter at Spartak Moscow on Saturday.

The 29-year-old Brazilian was seen blowing kisses toward the home fans during injury time and he later explained why he decided to make the gesture.

"Unfortunately, the same things are happening — racism in the stands," Zenit's official website quoted Hulk as saying.

"I won't pay any attention to this, as I have already talked about this.

"Therefore, I will continue to blow kisses and answer them with the way I play on the pitch. These things don't even deserve to be discussed."

It was not the first time Hulk complained of racist abuses this year.

In March, during a match with Torpedo Moscow he was racially abused by the home fans. The side from the Russian capital was sanctioned and made to play two matches behind closed doors.

Hulk had also said racist comments are made by spectators at almost every match played in Russia and he feared racism could mar the 2018 World Cup finals in the country.

In the opening match of the 2015-16 championship in July, Ufa's Emmanuel Frimpong accused a section of the Spartak supporters of shouting racial abuses in his direction.

The incident against the Ghanaian was investigated by the Russian Football Union (RFU) but they did not find any evidence to take action against the side.

Saturday's match ended in a 2-2 draw, with Hulk scoring one of the goals. It was his sixth goal of the season, which made him the leading marksman in the league.

The club from St. Petersburg is currently in third place and trails leaders CSKA Moscow by eight points. Spartak is fourth in the table, a point behind Zenit.

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