

Russia's World Cup: Fan Racism Could Lead to Matches Being Abandoned

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Vitaliy Belousov / TASS

The 2018 World Cup in Russia will mark the first time in football history that referees will have the power to stop matches if they notice racial incidents.

Referees at the 2018 World Cup, which Russia hosts from June 14 to July 15, will be able to halt a game if they notice spectators insulting one of the players, or stop the game completely and schedule a rematch for the following day.

“This is a very high priority and we’ll make sure that no incidents will happen,” FIFA president Gianni Infantino said in a video announcement [published](#) by the world governing body on Monday.

“This is absolutely not tolerable and we will be very, very firm on that so we can expect fair play in Russia.”

Related article: [FIFA Finds 'No Proof' of Doping Violations Among Russian Footballers](#)

FIFA is also taking a hard stance against possible doping at the 2018 World Cup. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) will carry out extensive testing on athletes since the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) remains suspended for a series of violations of the international anti-doping code.

Infantino's video address comes just days after [reports](#) that whistleblower Grigory Rodchenkov promised to supply FIFA with evidence of doping within Russian football.

The former director of Moscow's anti-doping lab claims that 34 football players were part of a state-sponsored doping program, including some players who participated in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

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