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FIFA Inspection Fails to Notice Missing Column at Newly Built Russian Stadium, Deputy Claims

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Mikhail Solunin / TASS

A deputy in one of Russia's 2018 FIFA World Cup host cities has claimed that a latest inspection by the world's footballing body has neglected a missing column at a newly built stadium.

Nizhny Novgorod, a city of 1.3 million people on the Volga River, is one of 11 Russian cities preparing to host the football championship this summer. After a FIFA inspection last month, local officials announced that the city's new stadium would be ready to host test matches in mid-April, the RBC business portal reported.

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“If FIFA representatives counted the columns around the perimeter of the stadium, they would see that there is one column less than in the building plan,” the MBKh news website cited Nizhny Novgorod legislative assembly deputy Vladimir Bulanov as saying Wednesday.

“They started out on the right track, but nobody knows where the column has gone [...] This is simply ridiculous,” Bulanov, a member of the Communist Party, said.

The local lawmaker added that Nizhny Novgorod Stadium “wouldn’t last a month” after federal authorities hand it over to the city after the end of the World Cup.

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