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Ex-Russia Football Captain Shirokov Charged With Punching Ref

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Roman Shirokov **Panoramic via ZUMA / TASS**

Roman Shirokov, the former captain of Russia's national football team, has been charged for violently attacking an amateur referee during a game.

Cameras last month captured Shirokov, 39, punching the referee in the face and kicking him after he fell to the ground curled over for not being awarded a penalty and getting a red card. The retired midfielder took to social media the next day to apologize to the referee, who had spent hours in the hospital being treated for his injuries.

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Moscow police have opened criminal charges against Shirokov of intentionally inflicting slight pain, an unnamed law enforcement source told the state-run TASS news agency.

If found guilty, Shirokov could be sentenced to one year of community service or four months

of administrative arrest.

He is at least the third well-known Russian footballer to face prosecution for acts of violence in recent months.

Alexander Kokorin and Pavel Mamayev served six months in jail last year over their involvement in a pair of violent attacks caught on surveillance cameras.

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