

Pussy Riot Activists Detained at World Cup Final

December 19, 2022



Pussy Riot members at the Nov. 29 match between the United States and Iran, where they wore T-shirts in support of Iranian women's rights. **Ciaran Fahey / AP / TASS**

Members of the anti-Kremlin activist group Pussy Riot were detained at the football World Cup final in Qatar after they tried to storm the pitch to protest issues including the war in Ukraine, Reuters and German media [reported](#) Monday, citing activists.

Pussy Riot associate Pyotr Verzilov, member Veronika Nikulshina and an unnamed Ukrainian member were stopped seconds before entering the pitch at Sunday's match, a charity that spoke with the band members told Reuters.

They had planned to storm the field to protest Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the imprisonment of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny and the oppression of women in Iran, the Berlin-based Cinema for Peace Foundation was cited as saying.

"When I texted with Pyotr he was in police detention," Cinema for Peace founder Jaka Bizilj was quoted as saying.

Security officers [detained](#) the three activists near the Argentina national team's bench, the German daily Die Welt reported.

Verzilov [told](#) the independent Mediazona news website, where he is publisher, that the group was released from detention later Sunday night.

At the Nov. 29 match between the United States and Iran, Pussy Riot members [appeared](#) in the stands wearing T-shirts reading "Woman Life Freedom" and the names of Iranian women.

Sunday's unsuccessful protest echoed Pussy Riot's pitch invasion at the 2018 World Cup in Russia, where four members including Verzilov and Nikulshina ran onto the field at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium wearing police uniforms to protest police brutality.

Russian authorities sentenced the group members to 15 days of arrest for the act.

Cinema for Peace evacuated Verzilov from Russia after the 2018 World Cup to be treated for suspected poisoning.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/12/19/pussy-riot-activists-detained-at-world-cup-final-a79732>