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The Sport Buzz

Plea deal coming in fatal punch of referee

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DETROIT (AP) — A lawyer for a soccer player charged in the one-punch killing of a referee during a game says his client has agreed to a plea deal with prosecutors in which he would serve 8-15 years in prison.

Attorney Cyril Hall told The Associated Press he expects Bassel Saad to plead guilty to involuntary manslaughter during a hearing Friday in Detroit. A message was left Friday with the prosecutor.

Saad's trial had been scheduled to begin Monday. The 36-year-old auto mechanic from Dearborn is charged with second-degree murder.

Authorities say Saad struck John Bieniewicz (BEN'-uh-wits) once in the head during a match at a Livonia park last summer. The 44-year-old Bieniewicz died two days later.

Bieniewicz's wife, Kris, said earlier this week she hoped Saad "never sees the light of day."