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'Fake' Flying Donkey Sold to British Tabloid

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A British tabloid that paid 70,000 rubles ($2,000) for the much-publicized "parasailing donkey" might have bought the wrong animal, Komsomolskaya Pravda reported Monday.

Vasily Gorobets, who sent the female donkey flying over the Sea of Azov for 30 minutes in July, sparking international outrage, told the daily that he still had the animal, and that The Sun newspaper had been cheated.

He said the real donkey was gray — as evidenced by video footage of the flight — and not brown, like the animal sold to The Sun.

Gorobets added that the only reason he sent the animal flying was to "enliven its life."

Anapa resident Vasily Umaraliyev, who sold the donkey to The Sun, denied accusations of fraud, KP said.

The Sun, which spent 14 times the average price to buy the donkey, had no immediate

comment on Gorobets' claim. It plans to bring the donkey to a shelter in Hampshire, England, after a stint at the Kremlin stables in the Moscow region.

A representative of film star-turned-animal activist Brigitte Bardot confirmed to KP that the donkey in the Kremlin stables is not the same animal that went parasailing in the Krasnodar region.

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