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Medvedev Girls Take on Putin's Army

By Alexander Winning

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The Medvedev Girls, a group of the president's female fans, posing on Pushkin Square. They donned "school" outfits Thursday, the start of the school year, to test young male passers-by on their knowle
Vladimir Filonov

A battle between young female fans of President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin went to school Thursday.

Celebrating the first day of the school year, young women in tight white blouses, short plaid miniskirts and stiletto heels strutted around Pushkin Square and tested bystanders on their knowledge of Medvedev's life and policies.

The attractive young women from the informal Medvedev Girls group, dressed in risque versions of school outfits, focused on young men, asking them questions that ranged from Medvedev's anti-beer legislation to where he met his wife.

While the stated goal of the event was to raise awareness about Medvedev, the women also handed out strawberries to those who answered correctly, adding to the event's erotic slant.

"Strawberry" is an informal blanket term in Russian for anything related to sex.

"Since today's a public holiday, we wanted to find out the level of people's knowledge [about the president] and give out good vibes," said one of the young women, Maria Bykova, 23.

For another, Anna Sirotkina, 18, the event "seemed fun — beautiful girls in school outfits giving out strawberries, it's just a good idea."

Young male passersby gawked at the attractive young women. At one point, a handful of young schoolboys engaged in giddy conversation with one of the women, who towered over them in her high heels.

The Medvedev Girls — seen as an answer to Putin's Army, a group of women who stage pro-Putin events — have organized similar events before. They met on Pushkin Square on Aug. 1 to support Medvedev's initiative to ban beer drinking in public places.

Medvedev enthusiast Alexander Golokhmatov, the organizer of Thursday's event, said the playful format was effective. "Even in this format it is possible to teach a lot," he said in an interview. "Today people have seen the girls and taken an interest."

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