

Novatek to Sponsor Russian Football Union

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The heavily indebted Russian Football Union said Wednesday it has struck a sponsorship deal with the country's leading independent natural gas producer, Novatek.

Although the union is thought to have significantly reduced the \$25 million worth of debt that had accumulated under previous chief Sergei Fursenko, incumbent Nikolai Tolstykh had been seeking a financial backer to avoid sinking back to that level.

Now, it appears, the body's short-term future is secure, likely providing the Russian national team with all the funding necessary to ensure preparations for its first World Cup in 12 years in Brazil next summer can run smoothly.

The value of the deal was not revealed but was earlier reported to be about 250 million rubles, or about \$8 million.

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