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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Sets up Website to Let Men Watch Football Without Wives

By Kevin O'Flynn

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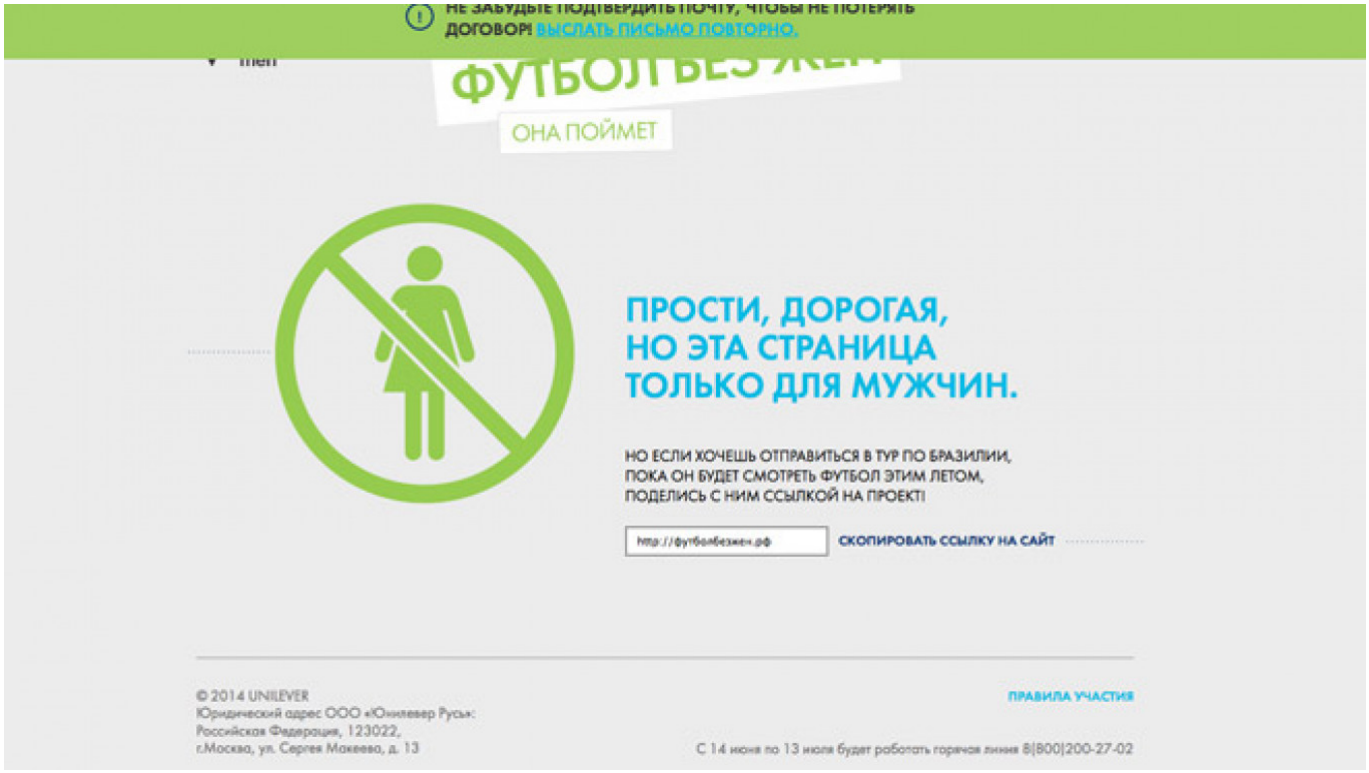

39,473 men had signed up for “Football Without Wives” as of Wednesday. Women can only be invited by men.

Mikhail Sindeyev watched 50 games of football on television this year but that wasn't enough. He needed to watch all of the World Cup too so he set up a web site, футболбезжен.рф, or footballwithoutwives.rf, so that he and other fans could hand over their wives to a third party and watch the games.

The idea came after Sindeyev, he said in a phone interview, wrote a series of blogs for sports.ru about problems he has with his wife over watching football.

Sindeyev has an agreement with his wife that allowing him to watch every Manchester United game during the a season — they played 54 matches — but the problem came when he wanted to watch games in other leagues: Russian, Spanish, Champions League and then the World Cup.

He got around the situation by buying his wife spa trips and an internet seminar, but then the idea came to set up a separate website. Sindeyev put the idea on a crowdfunding website and thousands donated — the target was 1.5 million rubles — only for a world-famous deodorant to step in at the last moment and give all the money towards the idea. If you want to know what deodorant, go to the website as it will hit you in the face on every page.

Men join the site — 39,743 so far as of Wednesday afternoon — and then get their other half to sign a contract where the man agrees to hand over his wife to a *khranitel,* or guardian, who promises to entertain said wife and return her unharmed at the end of the contract — at the end of the World Cup.

Women who agree to have the guardian take charge of them during the World Cup can watch television series during games, learn Portuguese and win a trip to Brazil for them and their husband.

The contract speaks of an agreement between man and wife and then lists the various names that the wife could also be known under such as, "hare, other half, beloved, sunshine, little one, doll, baby, lioness ... little penguin" and a few which are pretty untranslatable such as *shmusik, lyalyabrik* and *chvyrchik*.

Women cannot actually sign themselves up for "Football Without Wives." If you do list your sex as female when you sign up, the site goes to a webpage with the message: "Sorry dear, but this page is only for men."

Money donated before the deodorant company stepped in is being given back to all those who contributed, Sindeyev said.

"If there is such a situation in the family," wrote Yekatarina, a CSKA fan, "then it is an excellent suggestion for both. He watches football and she is entertained elsewhere."

A female Lokomotiv fan was less enthusiastic. "What a disgrace," she said after watching a promo video for the site.

In the video the words "For 12 years the Russian national team could not make it to the World Cup," come up, "Nobody can interfere with you enjoying the moment... ."

An excited football fan is then shown sitting down to watch the game until a voice off screen is heard saying, "Dear, take out the rubbish."

Readers of his blog and friends were not so enamored of his idea, not because they considered it sexist but because it was not sexist enough.

"Childless macho bachelors were surprised at the complicated maneuverings when you could just say, 'Man, football, watch, beer,'" wrote Sindeyev in one of his blogs. "The rest complained about how much it costs for a wife to go to a Spa."

"It is better to tie the hands and legs, put scotch over the mouth and stick in the cupboard / bathroom / balcony — you can choose. The main thing is to then get through the hysterics once freed," wrote user "anti-hero taxman" in the comments section.

"A wife needs to be educated," wrote another.

"Go back to the U.S. with your equal rights and democracy," wrote one for whom equal rights may not be a clear concept.

"Everyone is glad," said Sindeyev of the website. He said there have been no complaints from his wife or other football widows.

His wife was unavailable for comment.

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