

Moscow Football Club Faces Punishment for Putin T-Shirt Stunt

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Lokomotiv Moscow's Dmitry Tarasov features an inner shirt with a picture of Russian President Vladimir Putin and the slogan "The most polite President," after football match against Fenerbahce in Istanbul, Feb. 16, 2016.

A Moscow football club could face sanctions after a player brandished a t-shirt with an image of Russian President Vladimir Putin during a Champions League game in Turkey.

After the final whistle against Istanbul's Fenerbahçe on Tuesday, Lokomotiv Moscow midfielder Dmitry Tarasov removed his top to reveal an under-shirt adorned with a portrait of Putin in a military beret and the words 'the most polite president.'

The slogan refers to soldiers in unmarked uniforms who were nicknamed "polite people" after they seized Crimea from Ukraine in a bloodless operation in 2014.

Tarasov's stunt in Istanbul's Şükrü Saracoğlu stadium comes as tensions between Russia and

Turkey remain high following the shooting down of a Russian warplane over the border with Syria last year.

The footballer said later it was a patriotic act. 'He [Putin] is my president. I respect him and wanted to show that I'm with him everywhere and ready to support him. Everything I want to say is written on the shirt,' he told the R-Sport news agency.

But the rule book of UEFA, football's European governing body, forbids "all forms of ideological, political or religious propaganda" in its matches. Tarasov could be banned from at least 10 games if found guilty of violating the rule.

The Kremlin on Wednesday refused to comment on the incident to reporters. Lokomotiv Moscow lost to Fenerbahçe by two goals to zero.

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