

Russian Social Media Laughs, Canonizes After Stunning World Cup Win

July 02, 2018



Twitter

The outpouring of joy following Russia's victory over Spain may have [reminded](#) the Kremlin of Soviet-era celebrations after World War II, but the age of social media gave the scenes a 21st-century makeover.

Russia defied the odds by beating Spain on Sunday to advance to the World Cup quarterfinals, sending thousands of ecstatic Russians in the tournament host country to the [streets](#), where they [celebrated well into the night](#).

Goalkeeper Igor Akinfeev gained the immediate status of [national hero](#) after making a crucial save with the [tip of his toe](#) during penalty shootouts.

In fact, Akinfeev's foot was [put on a pedestal](#) within minutes of Russia's victory, earning it the nickname "[Foot of God](#)" among Russian Twitter users.

Embed: https://www.instagram.com/p/Bkslz_5lM8H/?taken-by=innubis

Photoshop artists [picked up](#) the [religious](#) theme and [ran with it](#). “Russia just officially canonized Akinfeev’s left foot,” Reuters correspondent Polina Ivanova [tweeted](#).

Embed: https://twitter.com/dan_kidane/status/1013594789844045824

The social media spotlight also [turned](#) on three [unsuspecting](#) hot dog eating fans in traditional Russian headdresses during the game’s extra time, [inspiring](#) a [variety](#) of [memes](#).

Embed: <https://twitter.com/Durevestnik/status/1013719772155006976>

Embed: https://twitter.com/martin_camera/status/1013484500322521089

Cartoonist Sergei Elkin made a mashup of the two memes, depicting the three fans [carrying](#) Akinfeev’s foot on their shoulders.

Later, TV reporters [discovered](#) the identity of two of the fans: a fashion designer and an employee of a state contractor that runs Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin’s re-election campaign.

“It’s very strange: we [just] came to cheer for the team [and] had a bite of hot dogs,” the fans told Russia’s Dozhd TV news channel. “Sausages, by the way, lead to victory.”

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<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/07/02/russian-social-media-laughs-prays-after-stunning-world-cup-win-a62088>