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Veteran Russian Football Defender Sergei Ignashevich to Retire

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Cristian Hartman / Reuters

Russia's most-capped player, Sergei Ignashevich, announced his retirement from football on Saturday after his team's loss against Croatia in the World Cup.

The 38-year-old defender was called out of retirement in June as an emergency replacement after a slate of injuries hit the Russia team. He became the oldest player to compete for the country and appeared in all five of its games at the tournament.

"If it wasn't for the World Cup, I would have retired earlier," the veteran defender said in a video address posted on Instagram.

"I'm ending on a good note: Playing in the quarterfinals of the World Cup, in a great team with a great coach," he added.

Ignashevich, who is turning 39 next Saturday, played in a total of 127 games for the Russia team. He plans to become a coach.

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