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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Shovels Fly at Siberia's Annual Speed Grave-Digging Contest

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The team from Omsk took home the first-place prize, setting a new record by digging a grave in under 38 minutes. **Instagram / sashakryazhev**

Siberia's hardiest diggers put their shovels to work Friday — by testing their grave-digging prowess at a crematorium in Russia's third-largest city of Novosibirsk.

The morbid competition, held every year, says its aim is to raise the prestige of the profession, improve grave-diggers' work performance and attract younger generations to careers in the funeral industry, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

Embed:

> Сегодня в Новосибирске при местном крематории проходят соревнования по копке могил на скорость. Для победы участникам необходимо также соблюсти два критерия: размер ямы и ее аккуратность.

> Видео: инстаграм Александра Кряжева. https://t.co/ng2QLfijrm pic.twitter.com/U0H4NqVD1N
>
> — SOTA (@SotaVision) May 14, 2021

The team from Omsk took home the first-place prize of 30,000 rubles ($400) after setting a new record by digging a grave in under 38 minutes, TASS reported, citing the crematorium's director. Diggers from the Tomsk and Novosibirsk regions as well as the republic of Altai were also represented at the event.

Each two-man team had to dig a coffin-sized hole with exact dimensions of 200 centimeters long, 80 centimeters wide and 160 centimeters deep. In addition to size and speed, diggers were judged on technique and accuracy.

Last year's competition was held in the Siberian city of Tomsk, where the winner dug a grave in under 52 minutes.

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