

A Changing Picture: Incidents of Discrimination in Russian Football 2015 - 2017

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A Changing Picture: Incidents of discrimination in Russian Football 2015-17

Introduction

This study of discrimination, including racism, nationalism, homophobia and sexism, in Russian football covers two football seasons from June 2015 to May 2017, including the actions of Russian fans' during UEFA EURO 2016 in France. We have employed the same methodology as in previous reports (covering the periods of 2012, 2013, 2014) to analyse cases of discrimination and far right propaganda in Russian football using open and public sources, as well as closed discussion groups and online fan forums as sources for the data. All of the incidents that we list are done so on the basis that there is clear evidence of their existence.

When recording cases of far-right symbols and xenophobic slogans displayed in stadia during matches, we have deliberately limited our scope to the Russian Championship organised by the Russian Football Premier League and the Russian Football National League (FNL) championships as well as those of the Russian Professional Football League (PFL), and the Russian Cup. Our monitoring also covers fan tournaments held under the auspices of the Russian union of supporters (VOB). Fans often display neo-Nazi symbols at championships hosted by the Amateur Football League (LFL) and many other amateur competitions, but

there is little chance of making any accurate count of such displays, as these events take place in various locations across Russia and photographic evidence of what is happening is almost non-existent.

The number of cases of racism, incitement of ethnic hatred and other forms of discrimination during the two seasons covered in this report is about the same as the year before, with a minor decline in the number of incidents during the 2016-17 season. Nevertheless we note that some manifestations became more aggressive during the 2015-16 season.

Nature of far-right manifestations in Russian football

Most of the recorded cases of far-right propaganda involved displaying the Teiwaz, Odal, Sig, Algiz and Yr runes used in Nazi Germany and associated with its ideology (slogans written in runic script, but not containing these specific runes are not included in our report). We have to reiterate that although the runes themselves are not Nazi symbols, in this particular context they are clearly associated with the Third Reich, as they were used in the symbolism of various military divisions in Nazi Germany.

Football fans use other neo-Nazi symbols such as the Celtic cross, SS Totenkopf and the symbols of right-wing Slavic neo-paganism (such as the "Kolovrat"). They also display slogans on banners and clothing, such as "My honor is loyalty" (the motto of the SS) and "Jedem das Seine" ("To each what he deserves" written above the gates of the Buchenwald concentration camp).

New banners and graffiti aimed at the ISIS terrorist group, which is banned in Russia, and refugee migration into Europe were recorded during 2015-16 season. In at least one case, anti-terrorist slogans were mixed with Islamophobic rhetoric. The 2016-17 season was also marked by the appearance of banners featuring anti-Semitic stereotypes.

We also want to note the efforts that both the football community and law enforcement agencies are making to curb the presence of far-right symbolism at matches. Over the

past two years, we have not recorded a single case of a Swastika put up in the stands. In some cases, banners with the Teiwaz, Odal, Sig, Algiz and Yr runes as well as the neo-Nazi numerical code 88 were not allowed at football venues.

A few professional clubs have become more vigilant and more prepared to take action against their own supporters, an example is the stance that the Samara-based Krylya Sovietov club took against the display of a banner featuring two characters styled as the numerical code 88, at the beginning of 2015-16 season. On October 18, reports said fans tried to put up an unauthorised banner, which led to a confrontation with the police. As a result, a fan Dmitry Vakhramei, was fined in court under Art. 318 of the Criminal Code, 'Violence against a representative of the authorities'. The club's stance in the dispute with radical fans was genuinely encouraging and quite rare.

It is also worth noting that at the end of 2015-16 season the bureau of the Russian Football Union (RFU) executive committee amended its disciplinary regulations, including sanctions for clubs whose supporters display far-right symbols from a list based on the recommendations of Fare as documented in our Guide to discriminatory signs and symbols in European football.

Unfortunately, in practice, the authorisation of banners by professional clubs is often just a formality. We have repeatedly witnessed banners featuring the Odal and Teiwaz runes partly covered with duct tape during Premier

League matches. Those responsible have obviously allowed people with such banners into the venue assuming the requirements about the absence of forbidden symbols were met that way. This superficial approach has little to do with preventing the spread of neo-Nazi sentiments. As for the FNL and PFL championships, supporters quite often openly demonstrated the aforementioned runes as well as the Celtic cross and other far-right symbols.

Unfortunately the number of incidents involving the display of prohibited symbols has not decreased in the past two seasons compared to our previous reports. The use of Nazi and neo-Nazi symbols and slogans is still widespread in fans' tattoos and clothing, fan groups' stickers and other merchandise. All these symbols are then displayed at football matches. Football fans widely post stickers that are often openly xenophobic and include neo-Nazi symbolism, and even organise best sticker competitions on social media.

The scale of the problem is more serious than it might seem, considering that we are talking about small images difficult to photograph when fans sport these symbols at matches. According to our estimates, during the 2015-2016 season, football fan communities on social media have advertised more than 90 tattoo studios and shops selling clothing brands that are popular among the far right, often containing neo-Nazi symbols and slogans. In November, the Federal Security Service (FSB) cracked down on a neo-Nazi concert in Novosibirsk organized by former members of the Restrukt movement. The merchandise seized during the raid included shirts featuring slogans such as 'White Football' and the Swastika.

Discriminatory chants

Discriminatory chants from the stands are another problem still relevant for the Russian football community. During the 2015-16 season, fans sung racist, aggressively nationalist and sexist chants. However, throughout the 2016-17 season we recorded fewer anti-black racist chants which is to be regarded as a positive change.

In May the head of the RFU disciplinary committee Artur Grigoryants stated that there had been "No acts of racist manifestations" during the 2016-17 season. What in fact he meant was that there were no monkey chants. He did not mention the on-field incident with Amkar's Nigerian midfielder Fegor Ogude and numerous other incidents involving racial abuse of other players from minority backgrounds.

Violent hooligans and the far-right

The problem of violence remains a big one in Russian football, episodes of fan violence often include overtly xenophobic attacks. The number of such attacks during 2015-16 season increased significantly compared to the previous season, including a violent attack on people of Central Asian origin who were not even fans of any team, and attacks on fans from the Caucasus inside stadiums. During 2016-17 we are aware of only two similar attacks, in both cases the information was obtained from police records. The decrease in registered physical attacks on minorities is a reason for optimism but we cannot rule out the possibility that the actual number of such attacks might be significantly higher.

We also note that fan groups have emerged in the North Caucasus that follow the behaviour of football hooligans and actually initiate clashes with fans from the Moscow teams. Some of these clashes have a clear racial dimension. In the past two seasons we have recorded several such attacks. In August fans of CSKA Moscow and Anzhi Makhachkala clashed in the Moscow suburb of Khimki; another clash took place in Krasnodar in October between the fans of Kuban and Anzhi. In Grozny, local fans attacked visiting Spartak fans, and judging by the available video footage, the attack was accompanied by xenophobic insults aimed at ethnic Russians. On the 1 May 2017 FC Krasnodar fans clashed with Anzhi.

Some representatives of the Moscow hooligan scene even began to recognise supporters from the Caucasus as full members of the hooligan community: on October 11, fans of Dynamo from the 3rd Rome firm attacked people from Dagestan at Veshnyaki Station in Moscow and presented this as a hooligan fight with the Moscow section of Anzhi fans from the Wild Division group.

Links between hooligans and football institutions

The growing professionalization of hooligan groups who conduct regular combat training and battles with each other has been well documented. Many violent groups include professional security guards and police officers and, at the same time, have connections with the criminal world.

Our concern is the type of far-right ideology many of these groups follow and the number of links they have within football structures,

often as official fan representatives within professional clubs.

The now notorious events involving violent Russian groups at Euro 2016 highlighted these links. According to official reports, Azamat Sadykov and Dmitry Khrisanov, employees of FC Rubin Kazan, were fired for use of pyrotechnics during the Russia vs. Slovakia match and involvement in riots in Marseille after Russia vs. England.

In Marseille, following bloody clashes in the city, the French authorities arrested and sentenced Lokomotiv Moscow supporter liaison officer Alexei Yerunov, head of the Arsenal Tula fan club Sergei Gorbachev, and a member of the Dinamo Fan club central council, Nikolai Morozov.

Several fans, including the head of the Russian supporters union (VOB) Alexander Shprygin, were expelled from the country (in Shprygins case twice).

In September 2016, the police detained the now notorious Shprygin at a Holiday Inn hotel in Moscow during a Russian Football Union conference in connection with a fight in January. The fan organisation led by Shprygin, known to be openly sympathetic to the far right, had failed to effectively keep Russian fans under control, and was righteously condemned by the RFU president Vitaly Mutko. On September 24, the RFU conference voted to expel VOB from its membership.

The number of football firm leaders detained in France that were officially employed by leading Russian clubs as staffers responsible for liaison with fans hints at the approach taken by many clubs towards the problem of

far-right and violent fans. Officials seem to appoint leaders of hooligan firms to work with fans in order to control the most troublesome ones. This approach does not work; moreover, it continuously supports and strengthens the dominance of far-right groups in the terraces.

Despite the futility of this approach the lack of any discussion about the principles of fan work or necessary changes leaves little chance that this approach will change ahead of the FIFA World Cup in 2018.

RFU actions to tackle discrimination

It is worth noting that the football authorities worried about the image of Russia ahead of the World Cup are taking some steps to tackle racism. Although it should be noted that other forms of discrimination are being overlooked.

In March 2016 the RFU adopted an Action plan against discrimination and racism. It includes seven blocks: the provision of regulatory mechanisms, the formation of a set of rules, Control and sanctions, awareness and education, the promotion of diversity in the recruitment processes, cooperation with football organisations and fans, and communication.

In February 2017 a position of ‘anti-racism inspector’ was created with the appointment of well known ex-footballer Aleksei Smertin. His public activities included meeting with FIFA representatives and presence during the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the Russian Jewish Congress and the Russian footballers’ Union to implement

the #WeAreRussia #AgainstDiscrimination campaign. After signing the memorandum, these hashtags appeared at advertising boards during Russian national team friendlies. In Spring 2017 ultras banners featuring #WelcomeToRussia2018 appeared at Lokomotiv vs. Spartak and Krasnodar vs. CSKA matches.

In 2016 the RFU also launched a mechanism to monitor the media to identify reports of racist incidents.

Action by Russian law enforcement agencies

Russian law enforcement agencies have also initiated some measures to curb the activity of organised hooligan groups.

Following incidents of violence during the Spartak vs. CSKA match on 29 October when CSKA fans tried to reach the Spartak section, the police opened criminal proceedings for “Hooliganism” and “Vandalism” art. 213 part 2 and 214 of the Russian Criminal Code. One more case on charges of “Vandalism” was opened following CSKA fans started a fire in their own stadium on 30 April 2017. Furthermore, several criminal proceedings against far-right football fans on charges related to extremism were opened.

We note that on July 4, 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law introducing ID checks when buying tickets to sports events. At the same time, the Ministry of the Interior published a blacklist of fans banned from attending any official sports competitions.

Russia also signed the Council of Europe Convention on an integrated safety, security and service approach at sports events.

In April 2017 stricter responsibility for breaching public order at sports events was introduced, including fines, administrative arrest and for Russian citizens – banning orders from attending sports events up to 7 years, and for foreign citizens – deportation.

Despite measures being taken dangers remain

It is our conclusion that despite some measures taken by the authorities, racism and other prejudices manifested through discriminatory insults and incitement of ethnic hatred, sexism and nationalism are still common in Russian football and its fan scene.

These manifestations remain potentially dangerous, especially when one considers the aggressiveness of many organised supporter groups in Russia and the continuing connections with the far-right. We remain alarmed by the significant number of radical manifestations of racism involving football fans and consider it as a serious threat to the security of Russian society as a whole.

Statistical Overview

June 2015 - May 2016

<i>Type of action</i>	<i>Count</i>
Banners, other visual displays in the stands, graffiti	86
Discriminatory Chanting Attacks	10
	5
Total	101

<i>Type of discrimination</i>	<i>Count</i>
Far right and neo-Nazi symbols and slogans	79
Against people from the North Caucasus	9
Against people from Central Asia	1
Against Albanians	1
Against Turks (Turkey)	1
Anti-black racism	5
Anti-Semitism	1
Islamophobia	1
Russophobia	1
Sexism	2
Total	101

June 2016 - May 2017

<i>Type of action</i>	<i>Count</i>
Banners, other visual displays in the stands, graffiti	84
Incidents on the pitch	1
Discriminatory Chanting	2
Attacks	2
Total	89

<i>Type of discrimination</i>	<i>Count</i>
Far right and neo-Nazi symbols and slogans	79
Against people from the North Caucasus	3
Anti-black racism	1
Against Asians	1
Anti-Semitism	4
Homophobia	1
Total	89

These statistics do not include online sales of products with Nazi symbols; fundraising to help neo-Nazi prisoners and banners in their support; anti-ISIS incidents that were not explicitly associated with Islamophobia; and banners that were not allowed to be taken to the stands.

Incidents included in the following text of the report are a selection of the most illustrative cases and examples.

Banners

2015 - 16 Season

On August 1 in the Moscow suburb of Khimki, "CSKA" Moscow fans displayed a banner reading "Animal Planet" with a rooster's head instead of an eagle (the emblem of Anzhi) during the "CSKA" vs. "Anzhi" match. The Control and Disciplinary Committee of the Russian Football Union fined "CSKA" 500,000 rubles for displaying an insulting banner. Later it became known that an "Incitement of ethnic hatred" case was initiated under Article 282 of the Criminal Code following that incident.



On August 8 in Ekaterinburg, far-right fans of Ural displayed a banner featuring a Celtic cross at the "Ural" vs. "Lokomotiv" match.



On August 3, "Chertanovo" fans displayed a banner with a Celtic cross at the "Ryazan" vs. "Chertanovo" match in Moscow.



On September 23, a banner reading 'Prisoners of conscience, you are not forgotten,' in support of imprisoned far-right activists, was displayed by at the "Volga" vs. "Spartak" Russian Cup fixture.



On September 27, during the "Torpedo" Vladimir vs. "Solyaris" Moscow match (second division, West zone), supporters of the visiting team tried to bring in a banner reading 'Ultras' featuring the Sig rune, but were not allowed to do so by the police.



On September 27, fans of “Chertanovo” displayed a banner featuring a Celtic cross and an inscription in Gothic font at the “Dinamo” Bryansk vs. “Chertanovo” Moscow match (second division, Center zone).



On October 4, fans of “Chertanovo” displayed a large banner with the neo-Nazi slogan ‘My honor is called loyalty’ and the neo-Nazi numerical code 14/88 using the Teiwaz and Odal runes at the “Chertanovo” vs. “Arsenal-2” Tula match in Moscow.



On October 4, “Spartak” fans displayed a flag reading ‘Red and white east of the capital’ featuring the Teiwaz and Yr runes (and also Odal rune partially covered with duct tape) at the “Mordovia” vs. “Spartak” match.



On October 18, during “Spartak” vs. “Lokomotiv” Moscow fixture, home team fans displayed a far-right banner reading ‘Europe, awake. Support white resistance’ featuring a Celtic cross instead of the letter “O”.



Ahead of the “Gazovik” Orenburg vs. “Luch-Energia” Vladivostok match, held on October 4, the home team supporters prepared a banner reading ‘88 days to the New Year’ featuring an SS Totenkopf symbol and a flag with a solar symbol; however, the police did not allow them to bring the banners into the stadium.



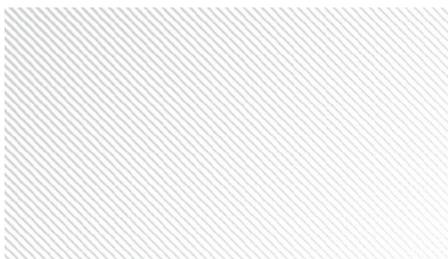
On November 1, fans of the home team displayed a banner reading ‘Krasnogorskiye’ using a partially covered Odal rune at the “Spartak” Moscow vs. “Ural” match.



On November 1, home fans displayed a flag with a Celtic cross at the “Dinamo” Bryansk vs. “Metallurg” Lipetsk match.



On March 10 the RFU disciplinary fined “Spartak” Moscow with a 250 000 RUB fine for “public display of Nazi symbols” during the fixture against CSKA on 6 March.



On March 20, a single fan from Khabarovsk unfurled a large banner reading ‘Far East Center’ with a Celtic cross during the “Fakel” Voronezh vs. “SKA” Khabarovsk match.



On April 17, a Russian imperial flag featuring the name of the city ‘Tambov’ written with Teivaz and Odal runes was witnessed on display at the “Tambov” vs. “Kaluga” match (second division, Center zone).



On April 10, Bryansk fans displayed a large two-handed banner with a Celtic cross and the inscription ‘The old school of Bryansk hardcore’ at the “Dinamo” Bryansk vs. “Oryol” match.



On April 23, the home team supporters at “Dynamo” Bryansk vs. “Torpedo” Moscow fixture displayed the banner with the Celtic cross reading ‘The Old School of Bryansk Hardcore’ again.



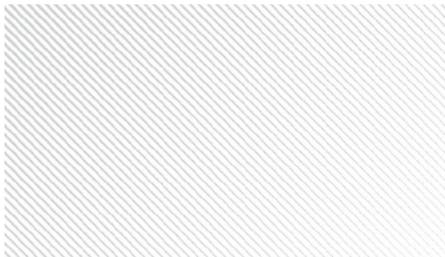
On April 23, at the “Avangard” Kursk vs. “Chertanovo” match fans of the home team displayed a two-handed banner with a Celtic cross.



On May 1, at the “Krasnodar” vs. “Anzhi” match home fans displayed a banner reading ‘No Banana No Party. Onzhi’. On May 5, the RFU Disciplinary fined “Krasnodar” 25,000 rubles for “displaying an unauthorised banner”.



On May 2, after the “CSKA” vs. “Zenit” match, the Novo-Savinovsky district court of Kazan warranted an administrative arrest of a “Zenit” fan for five days for public demonstration of Nazi symbols (article 20.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses).



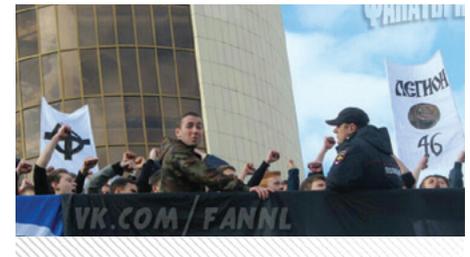
On May 4, at the “Kaluga” vs. “Avangard” match home fans displayed a banner featuring the Nazi SS motto, ‘My honor is called loyalty.’



On May 10, during the “Ryazan” vs. “Oryol” match (second division, Center zone)s upporters of “Ryazan” displayed a text banner with a version of the Nazi SS motto, ‘Our Honor is loyalty,’.



On May 10, at the “Avangard” Kursk vs. “Vityaz” match the home team supporters displayed a two-handed banner with a Celtic cross, and banners with inscriptions made in runic script featuring various solar symbols.



Banners

2016 - 17 Season

On May 17, during the “Chernomorets” Novorossiysk vs. “Terek-2” match supporters of the home team displayed a banner reading ‘White-blue novoross’ with the letters ‘SS’ styled as the lightning bolts, and a ‘Chernomorets Novoross’ banner written in runic letters featuring the Odal rune.



On May 23, at the “Avangard” Kursk vs. “Arsenal-2” match the home fans again managed to display a two-handed banner with a Celtic cross.



On May 26, during the “Karelia” Petrozavodsk vs. “Pskov-747” match the home fans displayed a banner reading ‘Karelian Legion’ featuring the Odal rune and a Nazi SS Totenkopf emblem.



On July 11, during “Volgar” (Astrakhan) – “Fakel” (Voronezh) the away fans displayed a banner reading ‘Kursk, Saratov, Oskol’ at the background of a rainbow flag. The banner targeting their traditional rival cities implying they are gay should be regarded as a homophobic display.



On July 16, during “Fakel” (Voronezh) – “Spartak-Nalchik” fixture the home fans were joined on the terraces by the “Fakel” goalkeeper Vitaly Melnichenko whose shirt number is “88” and was photographed in front of the banner “Youth of Voronezh” featuring Odal and Teiwaz runes.



Additionally at this match the home fans displayed a large portrait of actor Sergei Bodrov with a quote from the cult Russian movie “Brat” where Bodrov’s character is saying to a black person ‘You’re not a brother to me, black bastard’. “Fakel” fans’ banner featured the first part of the quote ‘You’re not a brother to me...’ Given the context of the fixture displayed against a team from the North Caucasus, this banner should be regarded as xenophobic.



On July 27 ahead of the “Shinnik” Yaroslavl – “Spartak-Nalchik” fixture the home fans prepare a large text banner celebrating far-right activists in prison reading ‘Prisoners of conscience you are not forgotten’, but the police did not authorise the banner and this it was only displayed outside the stadium.



On July 31 during “Tosno” – “Fakel” fixture the away fans displayed a banner reading ‘Meteor-Voronezh’ featuring the Sig runes.



On August 12 during “Kaluga” – “Ryazan” fixture and on August 24 during “Kaluga” – “Tambov” match the home fans displayed a banner featuring a Nazi SS motto ‘My honour is loyalty’.



On August 13 at “Rubin” (Kazan) – “Spartak” (Moscow) fixture, away team fans displayed a banner reading « Gopota on tour » with a Celtic cross replacing the letter “O”.



During the same match Spartak fans also displayed a banner reading “Sakta” featuring Teiwaz rune.

On August 29 during “Anzhi” – “Spartak” match, visiting fans displayed a text banner celebrating the head coach Massimo Carrera reading “A tutti, avanti, Massimo Carrera!”. The slogan is styled after a popular chant of the Rome SS Lazio far-right fans celebrating Benito Mussolini.



On September 21 during the Russian Cup fixture between “Fakel” (Voronezh) and “Terek” (Grozny), the “Fakel” fans displayed a banner reading ‘Heroes never die. Yuri Budanov’. Colonel Yuri Budanov was convicted in 2003 to 10 years in prison for kidnapping and torture of a Chechen girl Elza Kungaeva.



On September 25 a video ad inviting for a Jewish new year celebration was released by the Jewish center “Zhukovka”. The video featured “CSKA” Moscow head coach Leonid Slutsky and several shots of the “CSKA” bench. Slutsky’s participation in this video and especially featuring CSKA emblem and symbols sparked outrage among CSKA fans on the internet as well as led to a wave of anti-Semitic comments. On October 14 during “CSKA” – “Ufa” fixture the home fans displayed a banner targeting Slutsky and team’s bad results reading ‘2 October – shofar or Rostov – CSKA 2:0? Listen to shofar in your free time, you lousy coach’.



On October 29 during “Spartak” – “CSKA” derby Spartak fans displayed several anti-Semitic banners: an image of a hasidic jew reading ‘100% CSKA’, a banner reading ‘Your star is missing an angle’ featuring a Star of David and ‘You are a team of condoms. You are a synagogue.’



At the same fixture “Spartak” fans also displayed a banner featuring Teiwaz rune partly covered by duct tape.



On December 1 during “Krylya Sovetov” (Samara) – “Spartak” fixture, visiting Spartak fans displayed a banner styled after NSDAP flag with a Celtic cross instead of a swastika.



On December 1 during “Lokomotiv” – “Terek” match, the home fans displayed a text banner addressing their own player Alexander Samedov who was switching to “Spartak”. The banner featured a watermelon with his shirt number as a reference to a xenophobic stereotype about Samedov’s ethnic background.



On March 18 during “Lokomotiv” – “Spartak” fixture the home fans displayed a banner featuring Odal runes.



On May 6 during “Spartak” – “Tom” fixture the home fans displayed a large text banner targeting St. Petersburg singer Sergei Shnurov for his latest statement that he would be performing at Spartak stadium and include songs about FC “Zenit”. A caricature representing Sergei Shnurov as stereotypic Jew was displayed. According to the fans who prepared this display, they aimed at ridiculing Sergei Shnurov portraying him as a “cunning, cheesy kike”.



Other visual acts at matches

2015 - 16 Season

On July 11-12, Tula hosted a fan tournament entitled “Holy Russia”, organised by the Russian supporters union (VOB) with the support of the Ministry of Sport and the Russian National Football League. During the tournament, Tosno supporters wore T-shirts featuring the Odal runes.



On December 4, during the “Spartak” vs. “Krylya Sovietov” match supporters of the home team burned Turkish flags. The head of the RFU CDC Artur Grigoryants said the burning of flags was not in the match delegate’s report, therefore the fact will have to be individually verified by the CDC. On December 9, the CDC considered the photo and video footage from the December 4 match and fined Spartak 100,000 rubles and issued a warning to the club about burning the flags in the stands. These actions were qualified as inciting hatred.



On September 12, at the “CSKA” vs. “Zenit” match in Khimki a home team fan was photographed wearing a sweatshirt with a large ‘88’, a neo-Nazi numerical code.



On September 20, in Saransk at the “Mordovia” vs. “CSKA” match stewards thwarted a fan trying to invade the pitch. The man, stripped to the waist, demonstrated his tattoos of the SS Totenkopf and a hand grenade, the neo-Nazi numeric code ‘14/88’ and the inscription ‘I’m Russian,’ written in runic letters.



On March 19, one of the visiting team’s supporters at the Ufa vs. Dynamo Moscow match showed a scarf reading ‘White Power.’



On March 20, two local supporters were photographed in the stands at the “Arsenal” Tula vs. “Yenisei” Krasnoyarsk match (FNL), possibly a father and son. The man was wearing a T-shirt and trousers of the Rusultras and Beloyar brands popular among the far-right, and the boy had a T-shirt with a Nazi proverb: ‘No Justice, No Peace, 1312, Jedem das Seine.’



On April 17, Kaluga fans posted stickers with a Celtic cross and SS Totenkopf at the stadium during the “Tambov” vs. “Kaluga” match. They also pasted stickers with the SS slogan ‘Our honor is called loyalty’ around the city.



On April 25, at the “Solaris” Moscow vs. “Khimki” match, a drum with stickers from Khimki fans was photographed featuring stickers with the SS Totenkopf skull that read ‘FC Khimki. Only for Whites.’



On June 11, during the Russia vs. England match of the 2016 UEFA European Championship, supporters of the Russian national team displayed banners featuring a Celtic cross reading 'Tula,' and with a styled Celtic cross and the Sig rune that read 'Uralmash supporters.'

The UEFA Disciplinary Committee fined the RFU 150,000 euros.



Other visual acts at matches

2016-17 Season

On August 22 during “Dinamo” (Moscow) – “Spartak-2” (Moscow) fixture in Khimki, the home fans displayed a player t-shirt with “88” prominently at their terrace.



On October 22 during “Dinamo” Moscow – “Sokol” and November 6 during “Dinamo” Moscow – “Enisei” a Dinamo fan was photographed displaying a scarf featuring Celtic cross.



On April 19 during “Krasnodar” – “CSKA” Moscow fixture a CSKA away fan was photographed sporting a “Red-Blue Warriors” t-shirt featuring a Celtic cross and SS Totenkopf skull.



Football chants

2015-17 Seasons

2015-16 Season

On July 17, Ufa midfielder Emmanuel Frimpong was targeted with racist chants from Spartak fans during the Premier League first round match Spartak vs. Ufa. In response, the player showed the middle finger in the direction of the stands. The referee sent Frimpong off, the player was subsequently disqualified for two matches by the RFU CDC. The Spartak supporters were not sanctioned.

On August 1, CSKA fans chanted xenophobic and aggressive slogans at the CSKA vs. Anzhi match in Khimki. The RFU CDC closed two CSKA fans' stands for one match for the insulting chants.

On August 1, CSKA fans chanted xenophobic and aggressive slogans at the CSKA vs. Anzhi match in Khimki. The RFU CDC closed two CSKA fans' stands for one match for the insulting chants.

On September 3 the RFU disciplinary fined 20 000 RUB the women football club "Zorkiy" for racially abusing "Rossiyanka" player during the fixture played on 29 August.

On September 23, at the "Sokol" Saratov vs. "Anzhi" match the home fans chanted xenophobic slogans addressed to visiting team from Dagestan.



On September 26, the visiting team's forward, Hulk, became the target of racist chants from the stands at the Spartak vs. Zenit match in Moscow; in response, he sent the fans an air kiss. The match delegate did not record the fact of the chants in the protocol. The RFU president Vitaly Mutko called to react against racist statements if they can be "proven" to be racist. He went on to say that racism was not the "number one problem" in the Russian football.

On October 1, Moscow fans shouted the Serbian chant "Ubij šiptara" ("Kill the Albanian") and "Kosovo – Serbia" during the Lokomotiv vs. Skenderbeu match (UEFA Europa League) in Moscow.

Although Lokomotiv Head Coach Igor Cherevchenko admitted after the match that he did not understand the meaning of the chants, the next day the Moscow club issued a formal statement describing the incident with regrets, apologies and assurances of commitment to zero tolerance for any form of discrimination.

Skenderbeu also issued a statement noting that the referee had to stop the match, because "the insults were shouted by the whole fan-base, not just a small section of the fans," and that apologies and explanations could hardly ease the situation.

Following an investigation into the anti-Albanian slogans, UEFA ordered Lokomotiv to partially close the southern stands for the next home match of the Europa League, put out a 'No to Racism' banner, and a pay fine of 20,000 euros.

On May 1, Spartak fans performed a sexist chant about the wife of Lokomotiv midfielder Dmitry Tarasov, Olga Buzova, at the Lokomotiv vs. Spartak match: “The prostitute Olga Buzova, Olga Buzova, Olga Buzova.” As a result, Spartak was fined; in particular, the club paid 100,000 rubles for using profanity, but it remained unclear whether the abovementioned chant was actually the reason for the fine.

On May 2, after CSKA's Nigerian striker was injured during the CSKA vs. Zenit match (Russian Cup final, Kazan), fans of the St. Petersburg club sang the chorus of ‘They Killed a Negro,’ the “Forbidden Drummers” band's song.

On May 21, during the Lokomotiv vs. Mordovia match (Premier League) the home fans chanted a sexist chant against their own club president Olga Smorodskaya: “Lay off the woman from the club!” That was not the first performance of this chant.

2016-17 Season

Several times during the season, in particular on November 20 during “Spartak” – “Amkar” and “Spartak” – “Terek” fixtures, Spartak fans chanted a chant celebrating their head coach Massimo Carrera “A tutti, avanti, Massimo Carrera!” The slogan is styled after a popular chant of the Rome SS Lazio far-right fans celebrating Benito Mussolini

On August 10 the RFU disciplinary fined FC “Mashuk - KMV” 20 000 RUB for chanting neo-Nazi slogans during their fixture with “Chernomorets” on August 4.

On August 18 RFU disciplinary fined FC “Khimki” 50 000 RUB for chanting neo-Nazi slogans during their fixture with “Kuban” on August 13.

Football Chants

Incidents on the pitch

On November 26 after “Amkar” (Perm) – “Arsenal” (Tula) fixture, Amkar player Sekou Conde mentioned to the press that “Arsenal” player Dmitry Aidov made a racist comment towards his teammate Fegor Ogude. Nevertheless, Conde said they shook hands after the game. Aidov denied the allegations. Fegor Ogude himself stated that he didn't hear the racist comment during the game because he doesn't speak Russian and only learned about it from his teammates after the game.

Neither the referee nor match delegate mentioned the incident in their reports. “Amkar” didn't lodge a formal complaint either.

Large images and inscriptions in urban areas

2015-16 Season

In the summer of 2015, fans of “Tom” from the GWF (Green-White Force) firm made a graffiti featuring an SS Totenkopf symbol.



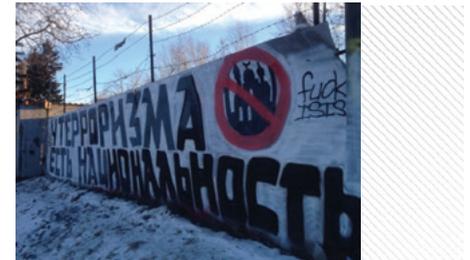
On September 18, the day before the “Rostov” vs. “Anzhi” match, the local fans drew a picture near the stadium – sort of a mixture of a banana and a penis, and signed it ‘E5 Anzhi.’ (in Russian sounding similar to ‘fuck Anzhi’). The image was almost immediately erased by the stadium staff.



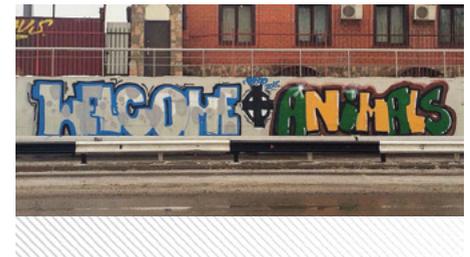
In the early hours of October 12, the office of the Dynamo Moscow fan club was vandalised. Obscene inscriptions were painted on the wall of the building, along with the Star of David – obviously hinting that the addressees of the message were Jews, in a derogative sense.



In November, an unnamed group of Spartak fans painted graffiti, “Terrorism has a nationality,” with a crossed mosque and the words “Fuck ISIS.”



Before the “Dynamo” Moscow – “Anzhi” match on December 4, the home team supporters drew graffiti with a Celtic cross and the text “Welcome, animals” on the fence.



Large images and inscriptions in urban areas

2016-17 Season

On June 1, a photo of a new graffiti made by CSKA fans appeared online, while on June 3 it turned out it was changed by "Spartak" fans. Both the original and the changed versions of the graffiti contained xenophobic elements. The inscription "Armyemen of the capital" was turned by "Spartak" fans into "Jews of the capital", while the original image of the Ku Klux Klan members and burning bonfires made by CSKA was turned into the stars of David.



On September 1 a new graffiti celebrating 15 years of CSKA Moscow firm "Einfach Jugend" appeared in Moscow. The logo featured a Teiwaz rune.



On October 14, a new graffiti by "Lokomotiv" Moscow group "Trains Team" appeared in Moscow featuring a Celtic cross.



In November the image of the new graffiti featuring a Celtic cross by Khabarovsk group "Fans of SKA" appeared online.



Attacks

2015 - 16 Season

On September 23, after the “Sokol” Saratov vs. “Anzhi” Russian Cup fixture, the home team supporters attacked fans from Dagestan.

On October 11, 20 fans of Dinamo from the “Third Rome” firm attacked 15 people from Dagestan at Veshnyaki railway station in Moscow. The latter’s affiliation with any Anzhi fan group is questionable.

On November 7, after the “Terek” Grozny vs. “Spartak” match, there was a clash between fans. According to various sources, 15 to 30 local fans attacked 25 “Spartak” fans who arrived to Chechnya. After the fight, a video was published, allegedly depicting the incident, containing an audible chanting of xenophobic slogans against the ethnic Russians.

On March 27, before the “MITOS” Novocherkassk vs. “Spartak-Nalchik” match (second division) in Bataysk, about 40 members of the Rostov far-right firm Jungschultz attacked about 30 fans of Spartak Nalchik at the stands, and took away their banners and the drum. Several fans of “Spartak-Nalchik” received minor injuries. Three suspects were detained. In August, it became known that a criminal case had been opened concerning the attack, and the investigation took into account the fact that the attack was accompanied by xenophobic insults aimed at the Spartak-Nalchik fans.

On April 18, several Dinamo Moscow fans aged between 15 and 21 attacked two citizens of one of the Central Asian republics (according to different sources, Tajikistan or Kyrgyzstan) in a Moscow subway car between the stations Ulitsa Starokachalovskaya and Bitsevsky Park. Victims were beaten, and one of them got pepper sprayed in the face. A criminal case was opened under Part 2 of Art. 213 of the Criminal Code (“Hooliganism committed by a group of persons”); four people were detained and are facing charges.

Attacks

2016 - 17 Season

In June 2016 in Samara a group of football fans assaulted a man in a local café – according to the Investigative Committee data, driven by hate motives. In April 2017 a criminal case was opened against the leader of the fan group according to Art. 282 part 1 of the Russian Criminal Code (creating an extremist group). The prosecutors alleged that no less than 10 people are members of the group who were also spreading xenophobic materials online. According to unofficial sources, the incident in question is the fight which happened at “Karambol” café with the victim identified as a migrant from the Caucasus.

On February 2 in Tula the local court convicted two football fans on charges of hate crime assault – art. 116 of the Russian Criminal Code. On 18 November 2016 after “Arsenal” – “CSKA” fixture the suspects assaulted a 39 year old North Korea citizen. The assault was stopped by the police. The assailants admitted their guilt fully.

Assistance to ultra-right politicians and football supporters injured in fights

2015-16 Season

In May, fans of “Torpedo” Moscow announced a fundraising campaign for the treatment of their friend Mikhail, who was seriously injured in a fight with Caucasus natives.

On September 15, another campaign got underway in the right-wing community on the Russian Internet, a fundraising effort to hire lawyers for Igor “Zigor” and Alexei “Dog,” who “fell into the clutches of the system.” The announcement was published on a number of online football fan resources.

On October 27, it became known that a two-year sentence was issued to Dinamo Kirov fan Alexander Zamyatin – a nationalist, pagan, and ex-singer of a neo-Nazi music band “Nuchtern Reich” (the Dinamo Kirov fan club was shut down in 2013 as extremist by the authorities). An announcement concerning crowd funding for the convict’s family was circulated on fan resources. The announcement said Zamyatin was persecuted for his pro-Ukrainian and anti-Kremlin political views, and a documentary about him was later posted in the fan communities.

In November 2015, a request was circulated in fan communities to help the mother of “Torpedo” fan Vladimir Gubanov, convicted in 2011 as a member of the White Storm neo-Nazi group for a racially motivated murder.

On January 23-24, a paintball tournament was organized by a group of “Spartak” fans called ‘The Sect.’ The event, “In the name of the fallen,” was dedicated to the memory of the fans Anton Feoktistov, Sergei Kashkovskiy and Alexei Kitayev who died in 2015. The tournament gathered more than 150 participants and fans from different cities of Russia; the participants collected humanitarian aid and handed it over to the families of the victims.

Assistance to ultra-right politicians and football supporters injured in fights

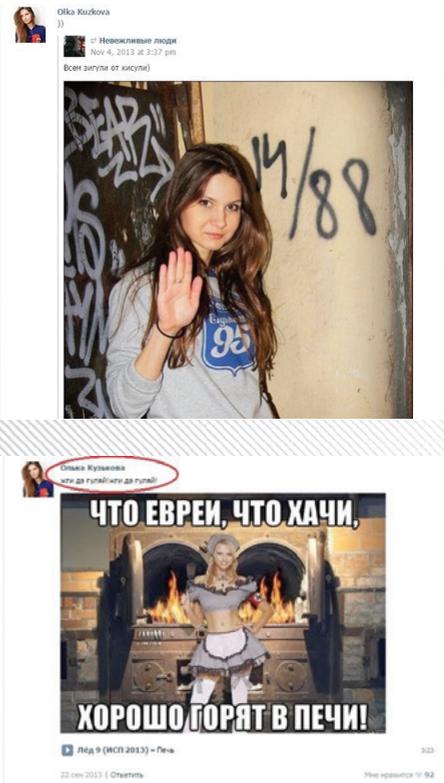
2016-17 Season

In August 2016 online fan communities were spreading a fundraising call to pay for the funeral of Alexander Buriak and treatment of his friend who sustained injuries during the fight with Eduard Chepurny and two unknown persons. It was specifically emphasised that Chepurny had a Roma background.

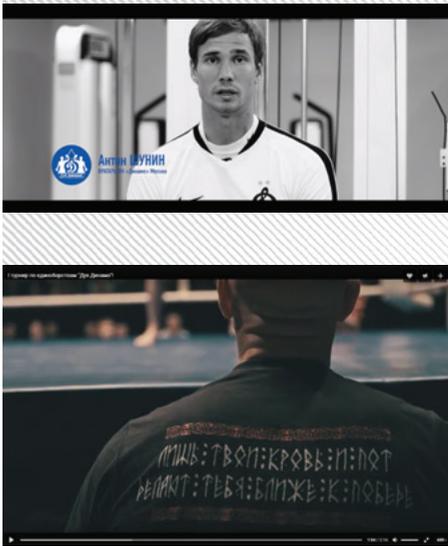
Other examples of neo-Nazi and xenophobic acts in football

2015-16 Season

In July 2015, at the "Miss RFPL-2015" beauty pageant organised by the Russian Premier League, the title "Miss charm" was given to "CSKA" Moscow fan Olga Kuzkova. After the contest, it turned out that Kuzkova distributed neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic posts on her pages in social networks, including a photo with a hand raised in the Nazi salute against a graffiti with a neo-Nazi code "14/88", as well as images reading "Jews and gooks burn well in the oven".



Dynamo Moscow goalkeeper Anton Shunin starred in the promo of the first martial arts tournament "Spirit of Dynamo." The video report published after the tournament held on March 13, 2016, shows a man with an inscription, "Only your blood and sweat make you closer to victory," made in the German runic script using the Teivaz and Odal runes.



In March, a conflict flared up involving the players and their relatives at a youth league match in St. Petersburg; it was accompanied by ethnically motivated insults. According to one side of the conflict, football player Akaky Dzhelia shouted to an opponent: "You monkey, go get the ball for me." According to a representative from the opposing side, rivals responded to Dzhelia's request with "Churka [gook], go get it yourself!" and later: "Hey, black, come to the locker rooms," and "Bugger off to your Churlyandiya [Gook-land]."

Other examples of neo-Nazi and xenophobic acts in football

2016-17 Season

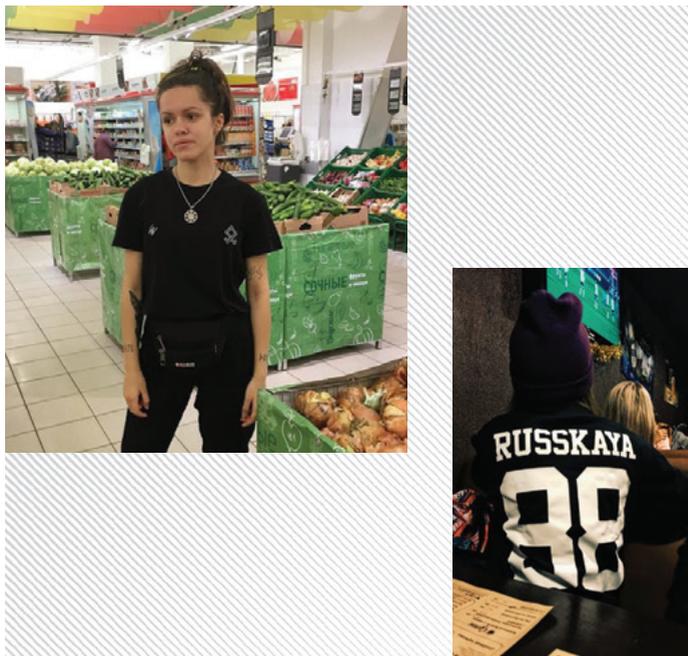
On September 24, during the conference of the RFU, the head of the Russian supporters union (VOB), Alexander Shprygin, was detained in connection to the criminal case about the mass fight of the "Spartak" and "CSKA" fans which took place on January 31, 2016 in Moscow. On the same day, the conference of the RFU voted VOB out of its membership. The media referring to a source in the center for countering extremism of the Russian Interior Ministry reported that Shprygin was checked for involvement in the organization of a fight with the purpose of subsequently receiving money from the RFU to facilitate work with fans. At the same time during the searches at his home and in the office of the VOB, books on Nazi skinheads and objects with an image of swastika were seized.

On October 15 at the match "Fakel" (Voronezh) - "Dinamo" a mass fight broke out between fans including gunfire shooting. Law enforcement agencies opened a criminal case on charges of hooliganism, conducted searches at 22 addresses, detaining two leaders of the "Youth" fan group under home arrest: 30-year-old Igor Chernyaev and 31-year-old Maxim Kornev. It was reported that during searches at a number of members of "Youth" group, "seven pistols, baseball bats, masks, penknives with swastikas, two bags of drugs, and extremist books" were seized. The books seized included "The skinheads are marching" five CDs with neo-Nazi materials and "Nasilie.Ru" book as well as "Mein Kampf" by Adolf Hitler. The group "Youth" was formed in June 2006 as a youth group of the Voronezh far-right firm "White Crows".

On December 4, a fan of "Lokomotiv", a former member of the "BHZ firm", became a suspect in a criminal case initiated under part 1 of Art. 282 of the Criminal Code (incitement of hatred using the Internet).

On February 4 in Kazan, the Sovietsky District Court heard two cases under Part 1 of Art. 20.3 of the Administrative Code (public demonstration of Nazi symbols, symbols of the banned organization) against the leaders of the FC "Rubin" fan club Denis Bulatov and Marat Abdullin. The case of Bulatov who shared a video at his social network page "VKontakte" called "When you overdid it with a Halloween costume" was terminated, but Abdullin was fined 1500 rubles for publishing an image of Hitler with the inscription "The main thing is not victory, but participation."

In February, a 27-year-old fan of "Kuban", Rudolf Korotkov, was sentenced to 1 year and 2 months in a general-regime penal colony with a two-year deprivation of the right to engage in activities related to the media. Korotkov was charged under part 2 of Art. 280 of the Criminal Code (public incitement to extremist activities), Part 1 of Art. 282 of the Criminal Code (incitement of hatred or enmity, as well as humiliation of human dignity) for the publication of audio and video clips on the Internet.



On April 24 the final of the “Miss Spartak - 2017” beauty pageant took place. The winner Yana Bondarchuk, judging by the contents of her instagram, is propagating neo-Nazi views. In her photographs, she can be seen showing tattoos with runes (including the “Odal” rune), wearing clothes with inscriptions in runic script and a neo-Nazi numeric code “88”, as well as a medallion with a “Kolovrat”.

On May 17, ahead of “Rubin” – “CSKA” fixture in Kazan police detained three fans under Art. 20.3 of the Administrative Code of the Russian Federation (public demonstration of Nazi symbols). The fans were arrested for 5-7 days by the court.

On May 25, ahead of the “Yenisei” - “Arsenal” promotion fixture, the “Enisei” fan page in the social network “Vkontakte” published the rules for the passage to the home section for fans, including that only persons of “Slavic appearance” are allowed to enter the section.

In the comments to the “Prospect Mira” online portal, the representative of the “Yenisei” fans Artem Kirillov said that such an unspoken rule in the city has been in place for a long time, as in other cities and countries. He explains that during the season the requirements for “selection” to the fan club were not published, but this time they were emphasised in public, as this game was very important and high attendance was expected.

According to him, the fan club is a closed community, which admits only trusted people. He explains that he would not want to see representatives of “non-Slavic” nationalities in the photos from the match among fans of the “Yenisei”.

About SOVA Center for Information and Analysis

SOVA Center was created in October 2002. Information about its activities can be found on <http://sova-center.ru>, with daily updated sections. The general principles of the web-site functioning are: news, resumes of public debates, and our own articles and reports structured thematically, with links given to the maximum of useful sources.

On the site, you can see statistics of hate crimes as well as the statistics of criminal law enforcement – both legitimate and illegitimate in the sphere of application of anti-extremist legislation.

Subject-Specific Sections of the website:

“Racism and Xenophobia”

– hate crimes and manifestations of nationalism and xenophobia, attempts by government and civil society to counteract it, and public discussions on this subject.

“Religion in Secular Society”

– news and discussions relating to interfaith relations, and the varied conflicts between secular institutions and religious confessions.

“Misuse of Anti-Extremism”

– a misuse of anti-extremism legislation in order to unjustly limit civic freedom.

You can also sign up to a daily newsletter for the entire site or for any individual section.

Since 2008, SOVA has published about 30 books, including collections of annual reports “Xenophobia, Freedom of Consciousness and Anti-Extremism in Russia”, in Russian and English; two issues of methodological recommendations “Aggressive Xenophobia Monitoring”; collections on Russian nationalism, the last one – “Russia is not Ukraine: contemporary accents of nationalism” (2014); a reference book “Radical Russian Nationalism: Structures, Ideas, Faces” (2009), a collection of translations “Racism: Modern Western Approaches” (2010), monographs “Political Orthodoxy” (2003), “Ethnicity and Equality in Russia: Specific Perception” (2012), “What Is Ethnic Discrimination and What can Be Done About It?” (2012), “State Policy regarding National-radical associations. 1991–2002” (2013), “Criminal Law in OSCE countries against hate crimes, incitement of hatred and hate speech” (2014).

About Fare

The Fare network is an umbrella organisation of 130 members from 30 countries. The members are NGO's, fan groups, ethnic minority groups, LGBT groups and others.

At the heart of our work is tackling discrimination, including racism, far-right nationalism, sexism, trans- and homophobia and discrimination against disabled people and work on social inclusion initiatives using football.

We work across football to advance the social inclusion of marginalised and disenfranchised groups and to engage policy makers, governing bodies and the public.

The annual Football People action weeks, with more than 2000 activities, is one of the largest social initiatives in sport taking place in more than 45 countries, with activities in the United States, South Africa, St. Lucia, Mexico, Vietnam and Brazil.

In 2013 Fare developed and implemented an observer scheme at European level matches as part of our work to tackle and educate against discrimination and challenge far-right extremism inside football stadiums.

Fare has been working to promote the message of diversity at footballing mega events including UEFA Euro 2004, FIFA World Cup 2006, UEFA Euro 2008, Euro 2012, Euro 2016 and FIFA Confederations Cup 2017.

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