

Muscovites Take the Plunge in the first ever Winter Peace Road

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January 19, 2017



Moscow, Russia—Immersion in ice water was one of the challenges of Moscow’s first-ever “Winter Peace Road.”

On the morning of January 19, 2017, a day when many Russians mark the Orthodox holiday Epiphany with a winter swim, a group of enthusiasts gathered in southeastern Moscow.

Their activities started with a friendly football match in Lyublino District between two teams that supported the "Peace Road" project. Among the participants were old-timers of football battles and young enthusiasts who decided to warm up before the Epiphany outdoor bathing. Newcomers joined the team, and together, holding “Peace Road” flags, they jogged through Lyublinsky Park and Kuzminki Park to finish at the ice hole near Shibayevsky Pond.

The ice hole had been prepared by the staff of the "Moscow Nature" natural territory management with the support of the district prefecture, the district council, and the administration of Moscow’s South-Eastern Administrative Okrug (district). The rector of the Our Lady of Vlachern church in Kuzminki District consecrated the ice hole on the eve of the Epiphany.

Nobody backed out of the ice-water challenge, even those who were doing it for the first time. In addition, the 4-kilometer (nearly 2.5-mile) jog helped the group of Young Ambassadors for Peace to warm up beforehand.

On such a special day, when millions were dipping themselves enthusiastically in holy water in various places throughout Russia, the activists of the Peace Road project were glad to join this sacrament in the desire to gain a charge of vivacity for the whole year!