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CAUSES OF THE 2010 RUNNING BOOM: CASE STUDY OF THE RUSSIA'S LARGEST MARATHON

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Abstract. The article examines the case of the transformation of the largest marathon in Russia (in 1981–2012: Moscow International Peace Marathon, since 2013 — Moscow Marathon). From 2011 to 2016, the number of its participants increased eightfold. The extent of the changes made us talk about the fitness boom of the 2010s. The press awards the laurels of success to the emerging small business in the field of organization of mass events — but is it true? In our research we used the following methods: analysis of running statistics and documents — calendars, results and regulations of mass races; analysis of publications in the press and on the Internet; overt observation in the running. The case study revealed four leading drivers of the running boom. Firstly, it is the legacy of the 1970s and 1980s fitness boom, allowing to speak of the 2010s as the second wave. Secondly, the campaigns for popularization of mass running undertaken by the multinational brands Nike and Adidas have created an “entry point” into the mass running practice. Nike We Run Moscow campaign 2010–2015 is described in detail. Thirdly, the transformation of media made it easier for these campaigns to spread. Fourthly, the change in the local political situation that influenced the

ПРИЧИНЫ БЕГОВОГО БУМА 2010-х: КЕЙС-СТАДИ КРУПНЕЙШЕГО МАРАФОНА РОССИИ

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Аннотация. В статье изучен кейс трансформации крупнейшего марафона России (в 1981—2012 гг. Московский международный марафон мира, с 2013 г. — Московский марафон). С 2011 по 2016 г. число его участников выросло в восемь раз. Масштабность изменений заставляет говорить о фитнес-буме 2010-х годов. Пресса присуждает лавры успеха возникшему малому бизнесу по организации массовых событий — но заслуженно ли?

Методы исследования: анализ беговой статистики и документов — календарей, результатов и положений массовых забегов; анализ публикаций в прессе и интернете; включенное наблюдение в практике бега.

Результаты кейс-стади выявили четыре ведущих фактора бегового бума. Во-первых, это наследие фитнес-бума 1970—1980-х годов, позволяющее говорить о 2010-х как о второй волне. Во-вторых, кампании по популяризации массового бега транснациональных брендов Nike и Adidas, создавшие «точку входа» в практику массового бега. Подробно описана кампания Nike We Run Moscow 2010—2015. В-третьих, трансформация медиасреды, облегчившая распространение

trajectory of the boom. “Entrepreneurs from running” were the consequence of the initial growth hence also contributing to the fitness boom. Their emergence is associated with the change of lobbying groups rather than with their opening of a “new niche”. Side effects of entrepreneurship have emerged: gentrification of the run, its commercialization with an 18-fold increase in entry fees, thus reducing accessibility to participation. The study contributes to the discussion of sport models. We conclude that promoting “physical education for health” is pointless. We consider that the currently prevailing pro-Olympic model is the reason for low engagement of population into sports, and that it is dysfunctional for non-elite. We state that the introduction of an expressive model and repositioning of mass sports is needed (which in part has already happened). The process of commercialization of mass running raises the question about the discrepancy between the statements of the authorities (on the development of sports) and the real situation.

Keywords: running boom, fitness boom, marathon, mass participation sport, sociology of sport, commercialization of sport, sport policy, gentrification of sport

этих кампаний. В-четвертых, изменение локальной политической конъюнктуры, повлиявшее на траекторию бума. Следствием первоначального роста и еще одним дополнительным фактором фитнес-бума действительно стали «предприниматели от бега», но их появление связано с перераспределением административных ресурсов, а не с открытием «новой ниши». Возникли побочные эффекты предпринимательства: джентрификация бега, коммерциализация с 18-кратным ростом взносов, снижение доступности участия.

Обсуждение развивает дискуссию о моделях спорта. Мы полагаем, что пропагандировать «физкультуру ради здоровья» беспредметно, а причина низкого уровня вовлеченности — сложившаяся проолимпийская модель, дисфункциональная для неэлитного спорта. Необходимо внедрение экспрессивной модели и репозиционирование массового спорта, что отчасти уже произошло. Процесс коммерциализации массового бега позволяет задать вопрос о расхождении дискурса власти (на развитие спорта) и реальной ситуации.

Ключевые слова: беговой бум, марафон, массовый спорт, кейс-стади, социология спорта, джентрификация спорта, коммерциализация спорта, управление спортом, фитнес-бум

Fashionable hobby of youth?

“From the morning exercise of pensioners jogging has turned into a fashionable hobby of youth,” claims a recent article in the *Vedomosti*¹. Indeed, the statistics of participation in the largest Russian running race (until 2012 — the *Moscow International Peace Marathon* (MMMM), since 2013 — the *Moscow Marathon* (MM)) shows rapid growth in the first half of the 2010s, mainly happening due to the influx of young people. What are the reasons and what are the drivers of this running boom? Are the changes positive or are there social costs? Why did the young people become interested in the hobby of “pensioners”?

The reasons for running and a healthy lifestyle (HLS) coming into fashion were discussed in press publications. The growing popularity of running in 2014 was the topic of journalistic investigations. In these articles, the phenomenon of the “fashion for running” was linked to the opening of a new market niche by business. The explanation of the causes for the growth pointed out to certain entrepreneurs — initiators of the “reboot” of the Russia’s main marathon. They began working with a young audience, and created new “brighter” races of the MM series in 2013. Allegedly, this is how the fashion for running was created and the previously empty market niche was discovered². However, despite the growing interest in the HLS topic in the scientific community, the fitness boom of the 2010s was almost not studied in the Russian academic literature. Thus, our study (including its earlier versions [Adelfinsky 2016, 2018]) — is probably the first attempt to understand it.

The purpose of this article is to provide an explanation of the causes, drivers and consequences of the 2010s running boom through the case-study of the transformation of the Russia’s largest marathon. And also to understand how this transformation correlates, firstly, with the problem of contradictions between the Elite and Grassroots segments of the sports industry and, secondly, with the problem of commercialization of the European model of sports.

The article is structured according to the logic of collected materials. The results generally describe the case of the transformation of the Moscow Marathon (from MM MM to MM) and the Moscow largest series of running events. After literature review and press’ hypothesis, a description of identified factors of the running-boom of the 2010s follows. They are the legacy of the fitness-boom of the 1970s and 1980s, the global campaign to promote running by Nike, the new media, and the local political changes. The dynamics of prices and the age profile of participants are shown. Social costs were noted, including an 18-fold increase in entry fees. In conclusion, a general interpretation of the case is given.

Literature review

The running boom of the 2010s was almost not studied in the Russian academic literature. Until now, researchers have mainly analyzed the physiological parameters of runners, training methods, medical support for races, the work of volunteers, elements

¹ Makusheva M. (2020, September 23) Running for overcoming. *Vedomosti*. URL: <http://vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2020/09/22/840853-begom-preodoleniem> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

² Mamedova D. (2014) Everyone ran: Who earns money at the Moscow Marathon and how? *Kommersant the Firm’s Secret*. No. 11. P. 30. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2590706> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

of relevant advertising campaigns, etc. [Olefirenko, Buglak, Zolotareva, Lyulko, 2019; Ponomarev, 2017; Ryabkova, Kondrashova 2018; Slugin 2013; Klimkovich 2018; Mikhel, 2018]. The Moscow Marathon is mentioned only as an evidence of the interest of Generation-Y for a healthy lifestyle. [Averina, 2019].

International studies of the socio-economic aspects of the mass participation running are mainly focused on their own countries and do not concern Russia. We judge by a recent review by Western European authors [Scheerder, Breedveld, Borgers, 2015a] and a list of papers quoting it. Several articles report the renewal of growth in the number of mass runs and their finishers after the stagnation of the 1990s. It is seen as evidence of the second wave of the running boom in the 2000s. [Bezold, 2006; van Bottenburg, Hover, Scheerder, 2010; Scheerder, Breedveld, Borgers, 2015b; Hover, van der Werff, Breedveld, 2015; Nilson et al., 2021]. In these works, the characteristics of the running audience were mainly studied. Thus, it was more about consequences, rather than causes of the boom. In turn, an earlier study on the New York Marathon's development by Pamela Cooper is based on the "visible hand" concept by Alfred Chandler, Jr. [Cooper, 1992, 1998]. We intend to follow the same approach. That is, to look for specific causes and actors of change.

Research design and methods

The object of our study is the MMMM/MM, and not as a single marathon, but as the largest series of mass participation running events in the Moscow's sports calendar in the 2000s and 2010s. The research is based on the case study strategy. The authors of several reviews emphasized the flexibility of this strategy, its holism, contextuality, multiparadigmality, multimethodicity, fragmentation and diversity of the empirical base, as well as the narrative form of presenting the results. [Polukhina, 2013; Kozina, Serezhkina, 2015].

To collect empirical data, we used a number of methods. Firstly, the overt participant observation in a cyclic kind of sports, and since 2003 in mass participation running races. This allowed us to collect facts and informally communicate with the stakeholders of the running "field". Secondly, we collected and analyzed running statistics and documents — calendars, protocols and regulations of races, available on the Internet resource "*ProBEG in Russia and in the world*"³. We were looking for: the number of participants, their profile by age and finish time, the amount of entry fees, the organizers and locations of running events. Third, we analyzed already published academic and journalistic articles. In particular, the query "Moscow marathon" to the *Integrum* federal press database (<http://integrum.ru/>) for 2010—2016, it identifies 122 articles; to the *RSCI* database (<http://elibrary.ru/>) — 10 academic articles. Thus, the possible subjectivity of the participant observation is compensated by the fact that the second and third methods provide us with verifiable information with the possibility of its quantitative assessment.

Version of the press

³ The "ProBEG in Russia and in the world" web-site was founded in 2003 by a group of non-elite amateur runners as a guide to running life in the CIS and is de-facto the only source of statistics on mass running in the Russia. For more information, see: URL: <http://probeg.org> (accessed: 06.08.2021)

In 2014, the journalists of the editions *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*⁴, *ProSport*⁵ and *Ogonyok*⁶ described the causes for the running boom in the same way. “Running has become a fashionable phenomenon in the Moscow, and entrepreneur Dmitry Tarasov is the most successful organizer of commercial races,” — claimed *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*⁷. Finding out the causes for the growth, the journalistic investigation of Dinara Mamedova pointed to the opening of a new market niche by the business: “Until recently, < ... > the races were organized by < ... > municipalities or sports associations. Everything changed when entrepreneurs noticed a new niche”⁸. The article’s protagonist, the director of MM and the agency “New Athletics” Dmitry Tarasov claimed that he was inspired by the “Blue Ocean” business strategy⁹. “In the winter of 2010, < ... > I came to the conclusion that the commercial races are the “Blue Ocean”. At that time, no one in Russia considered running as a business.”¹⁰ Already in the spring of 2010, as reported by *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*, “not a novice in sports management <...> established [his agency] and met with the marketing director of Nike in Russia. Tarasov was lucky: [Nike’s] strategy provided for the expenses for the promotion of running products and the involvement of new participants in this sport.”¹¹ The business success of MM was evidenced by the analysis of the project economy, and the confirmation of the overall success was a new All-Russian record of mass participation in MM against MMMM¹².

The future “production know-how” of the MM project was voiced at its announcement in 2013. “Similar events are already being held in London, Paris, Tokyo, New York. In Russia, this race is the first,” the press reported in 2013, claiming that for amateur-runners it is “an opportunity to take part in a high-quality event, which is so lacking in Russia”¹³. Another publication clarified: “The first Moscow Marathon is a replacement for MMMM. The Moscow government is still organizing everything, only now they are being helped by new people who know a lot about marathons”¹⁴. The novelties of MM were emphasized: “For the first time, five preparatory [races] will be held”, online

⁴ Mamedova D. (2014) Everyone ran: Who earns money at the Moscow Marathon and how? *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*. No. 11. P. 30. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2590706> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵ Kalinina N. (2014) Beauty among the running. *PROsport*. No. 11. P. 134—137.

⁶ Belyaev A. (2014) Running is back in fashion. *Ogonek*. No. 36. P. 44. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2562549> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁷ Mamedova D. (2014) Everyone ran: Who earns money at the Moscow Marathon and how? *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*. No. 11. P. 30. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2590706> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁸ Ibid

⁹ The marketing strategy described in: Kim W.C., Mauborgne R. (2004) *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make the Competition Irrelevant*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

¹⁰ Mamedova D. (2014) Everyone ran: Who earns money at the Moscow Marathon and how? *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*. No. 11. P. 30. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2590706> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Kogan V. (2013, April 4) Running day and night. The Moscow Marathon will take place along the main streets and boulevards of the capital. *Novye Izvestia*. No. 60. URL: <http://newizv.ru/news/society/04-04-2013/180502-beg-dnem-i-nochju> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

¹⁴ Vyakhoreva V. (2013, April 4) Running in Moscow. What will the new Moscow Marathon be like. *Afisha Daily*. URL: <https://daily.afisha.ru/archive/gorod/archive/kakim-budet-novij-moskovskij-marafon> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

timing, a unique course¹⁵. The disadvantages of the replaced MMMM were actively noted. Journalists wrote about the annual decline in its popularity: “There were about 300 runners, mostly old people 50—60-years and older. The youth stubbornly ignored the marathon”¹⁶. In addition to Dmitry Tarasov, the MM creative director Alexandra Boyarskaya actively commented on the replacement of MMMM. “The Moscow Peace Marathon was held for 32 years and was a wonderful tradition that we absolutely did not want to break. But there were problems with the organization — the shade of Soviet culture with its not best edges”¹⁷. Identical position was stated by Boyarskaya during an interview in 2016. To the question “Did you ever <...> meet with the Soviet system of running clubs?” she answers: “The main difference is that Soviet sports are very much result-oriented. If you run differently, not the sake of the records, then you are not with us <...>. There was an International Peace Marathon in Moscow with a hellish design and a terrible organization. It was a pitiful sight: several hundred people were running around the embankment in circles... But at the same time, all the adherents of the old school were convinced that everything was fine with them and nothing needed to be changed <...>. As a result, Tarasov and I <...>”¹⁸.

So, the press version is briefly as follows: the entrepreneur has created a new product that is attractive to a young audience, participation in events of some “new quality” — thanks to this, a “fashion for running” has arisen and a new market niche has opened. We will take this version as a hypothesis and conduct the case study, where the starting point will be the “reboot” of the Russia’s largest running series in and the appearance of the “first” Moscow Marathon. The presented version about the entrepreneur raises a number of questions — about the accuracy of the facts and the completeness of their presentation; about the presence of a broader context of the actions that took place; about the clarification of a “new quality” of running races; about the concretization of “shades of Soviet culture”. We will discuss those single articles that contradict this version below. Now we will begin the analysis by studying the question of the “system of Soviet running clubs”, raised in the interview quoted above.

Legacy of the fitness-boom of the 1970s and 1980s

The result-oriented Soviet sport as an industry and the “system” of Soviet running clubs in reality had a different genesis and were essentially antagonists. By the end of the Soviet era, the functional meaning of the Soviet branch of physical culture and sports (FKiS) — sports committees, federations, voluntary sports societies, sections and sports schools — was really reduced only to ensuring the highest achievements and results at the Olympic Games. “Everything, the formation of sports sections even in the smallest cities, is brought to the solution of the main task: top achievements, gold medals”, wrote Yuri Vlasov about the institutional organization of the FKIS industry

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ Bessrebrenikov A. (2013, September 4—11) New marathon. *Petrovka*, 38. No. 33—34. URL: <http://petrovka-38.com/arkhiv/item/novij-marafon> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

¹⁷ Vyakhoreva V. (2013, April 4) Running in Moscow. What will the new Moscow Marathon be like. *Afisha Daily*. URL: <https://daily.afisha.ru/archive/gorod/archive/kakim-budet-novij-moskovskij-marafon> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

¹⁸ Mironov F. (2016, August 3) Moscow — a city that drinks or runs? *Afisha Daily*. URL: <http://daily.afisha.ru/cities/2499-kuda-pribezhala-moskvy-aktivisty-podvodyat-itogi-sportivnogo-buma> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

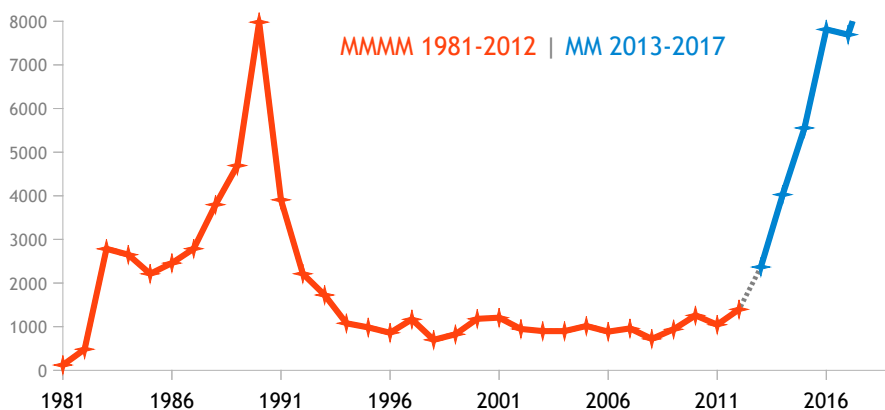
that had formed by the end of the 1970s¹⁹. But the primary reason was seen not an abstract Soviet culture, but the real practice of the international Olympic movement. With its *Top-achievements (Traditionally competitive, pro-Olympic, Recordistic)* model. In this model the goal of individual participation in sports is to win, to defeat an opponent. And the sport itself is a “pyramid” of qualifying events with the Olympics on the top. According to this model, the FKIS industry developed in the 1950s and 1960s after the Olympic U-turn in the Soviet sports policy. This led to the loss of the original attitude to mass participation development that took place in the 1920s and 1930s. Anatoly Isaev noted that although the problem of the *real Olympism* negative impact has become the most acute for grassroots sports in Russia, it is also characteristic of Western countries. [Isaev, 2002].

The Soviet amateurs’ clubs of running and Nordic skiing (KLB and LK) have already emerged as part of a new global phenomenon that did not fit into the pro-Olympic model. The phenomenon received different names: *Sport for All* program, healthy lifestyle, fitness- and running- boom, etc. In fact, it was about a different, the *Expressive model* of sports. In the 1970s and 1980s, this Sport for All took the form of open races in running, skiing, cycling, triathlon, etc. A distinctive feature of these races was open entry without selection by skill or age, as well as democratic time limits. If in the Traditionally competitive model the goal of individual participation is to defeat an opponent, then in the Expressive model victory can be interpreted differently — as your own result, your own achievement, victory over yourself, over the distance or circumstances. It creates a goal of participation for ordinary athletes (that is, for everyone). Their sports “career” does not develop “from a youth badge to the Olympic medal”, but rather from 5 km runs to marathons, Iron distance triathlons, and multi-day races based on the calendar of such events. Experts recommended to those who engaged in exercises to build a calendar of 24 starts per year, which gives a tangible meaning to regular training. The sports calendar is filled individually: experienced amateurs are able to run half-marathons weekly, beginners are offered to prepare for 5 km for at least two months. [Adelfinsky 2014, 2021].

The first Soviet KLB appeared in the 1970s. Basically, it was an unofficial voluntary activity of enthusiasts of running, skiing, etc., who created such open races for themselves. Rapid growth began in the 1980s: the KLB and LK movement gained modest support from the authorities — such clubs began to be created at various enterprises. In the newspaper “Soviet Sport” and the magazine “Athletics”, the headings of the KLB/HLS appeared, a number of mass participation events were established. The “Trud” run was transformed from an elite stayer’s competition into an open event. In 1981, the Moscow International Peace Marathon was founded, which became the leading Soviet running event. By the early 1990s, the KLB movement had grown noticeably. But for the FKIS industry, this phenomenon remained a peripheral element, with a pejorative attitude as “extras” on the part of sports workers. Experts advocated the independent systematic development of “Sport for All” as a new form. However, this did not happen. [Chernov, Kuznetsov, Kashirtsev, 1992].

¹⁹ Vlasov Yu.P. (1988, April 23) Why do we need sports? *Soviet culture*. P. 8.

Figure 1. The number of finishers of the largest run in Russia, MMMM/MM 42 km



We believe that the reasons for the decline of the Soviet fitness boom are caused by the costs of economic transformation in the 1990s. At the same time, the FKIS system has remained essentially unchanged, having a budget binding. On the contrary, most of the KLBs ceased to exist following the reform of enterprises and the sequestration of social programs. Few clubs have managed to survive on the enthusiasm of their members mainly as small groups. Also, a number of mass participation events that have the city authorities' support have been preserved. In particular, in Moscow, these are the largest running series — MMMM and “Trud-Luzhniki”. The number of MMMM finishers at the 42.195 km distance reflects well the dynamics of the running boom of the USSR and Russia as a whole — an increase in the 1980s, and then a sharp decline in 1991—1993 to a certain level that remained stable (see Figure 1). Why was it possible to achieve the involvement of new participants only in the 2010s? We believe that the key reason was a successful advertising campaign to promote running, and not at all the “Blue Ocean” discovery by entrepreneurs.

International campaign to promote running in the 2000s and 2010s by Nike

“Amazing activities began to happen in the running world of Moscow,” — the co-founder of the Probeg.org Wladimir Metelkin wrote in his diary. — At first, Nike began to move towards runners, having given birth to... a series! But now the great sports monster Adidas has moved from its place! On September 25, 2010, on Saturday, the Adidas Challenge is a day ahead of the Nike Run. Will something happen?”²⁰ The activities described is the start of the Moscow campaign to promote the running subculture, previously launched by Nike in developed markets. In 2003—2005, the campaign was held in a number of North America cities as *Nike Run Hit Wonder*. In 2008—2009 — already in 27 cities around the world as *Nike+ Human Race*. And since

²⁰ Metelkin W. (2010, September 25) Adidas Challenge, 4.1 km~19.50. *Blog of optional sports activities*. URL: <http://wld-archiv2007-2013.blogspot.com> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

2010 — in growing markets as *Nike We Run*²¹. Its key elements were a typical event program and a kind of creative solution with some hero as a role model.

The Nike Run campaign's hero in Toronto in 2003 was a novice runner, a young man not in the best shape, but determined to finish in the Nike Run, even if he dies. For 9 weeks, he talked about his preparation for the 10-kilometer run, inviting everyone to join. The morning radio show, a column in a free newspaper and outdoor advertising were used as media. The campaign's goal was to inspire an average citizen to get up from the couch, to encourage the urban community to talk about runners, current and future. And also, of course, to bring them all to the company's website or points of sale to register for the Nike Run, creating a close connection between Nike products and the event. The campaign was crowned with success, gathering more than 7,500 runners, and also making the hero an urban celebrity²².

The event program is the second, more typical part of Nike's running promotional campaigns, which is obviously provided by the established contractor agencies. For example, the *Lulu Live* agency was created to organize Nike Run Hit Wonder events in 2003 in the Northwestern of United States in order to present running to a new audience by a fresh way, creating advantages for the Nike brand. This goal was realized by organizing 7-week free training programs with a culmination in the form of 5- and 10-kilometer mass runs with a final concert. The agency's role was to control and manage subcontractors, plan and implement all elements of activities, operating for this purpose with the event program budget²³. The de-facto agency was a project manager, registered as an independent company.

Russian adaptation of the campaign: Nike Run Moscow in 2010—2015

The Nike We Run campaign in Moscow was launched in the spring of 2010. Advertising posters in universities offered to join the "I'm running" movement by registration in the relevant group on the *Vkontakte* social network. The group informed about the trainings, routes and races of the project. Twice a week in ten parks, everyone was engaged "under the guidance of professional coaches"²⁴. The information is confirmed by Wladimir Metelkin's diary: "I discovered with positive emotions <...> that Nike decided to invest money in the development of amateur running <...> by producing the project "I run", hiring a dozen yesterday's students as instructors <...> [who] began to perform classes among beginners"²⁵. The event program was managed by the newly established contractor agency "New Athletics" (that is, Dmitry Tarasov), its

²¹ For more information, see: (2005, June 7) Nike Run Hit Wonder Race Returns for 2005 National Tour. *Nike.com*. URL: <http://news.nike.com/news/nike-run-hit-wonder-race-returns-for-2005-national-tour> (accessed: 10.08.2021); (2009, October 24) Runners Unite for Nike+ Human Race 2009. *Nike.com*. URL: <http://news.nike.com/news/runners-unite-for-nike-human-race-2009> (accessed: 10.08.2021); (2012, August 13) We Run Photo Gallery. *Nike.com*. URL: <http://news.nike.com/news/we-run-2011-photo-gallery> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²² Billiam J. (2007) Nike's «Running Guy» Comes to Life on Radio. *JamesGang.com*. URL: <http://jamesgang.com/billiam/nikerunning2007.pdf> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²³ Stevens G. L. (2008) Nike Run Hit Wonder 2004. *LuLuLive.net*. URL: <http://lululive.net/experience/detail.php?c=2410899> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²⁴ (2010, August 16) The campaign for Nike continued with a "breakaway race". *Sostav.ru*. URL: <http://sostav.ru/news/2010/08/16/cod4/> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²⁵ Metelkin W. (2012, August 28) Day Run (Nike), 5 km = 17.43 SB. *Blog of facultative sports activities*. URL: <http://wld-archiv2007-2013.blogspot.com> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

website *NewRunners.ru* published press releases of races. There are a lot of reports about the main event of Nike Run Moscow 2010: “The task of the participants is <...> to run <...> 5 km <...>. After the award ceremony, everyone <...> was waiting for the main prize — a festive concert <...> *Cheese People, Run-Run-Run* and < ... > *Sophie Ellis-Bextor*”²⁶.

The Nike campaign’s hero in Moscow in 2011 became 25-year-old journalist, model and actress Aleksandra Boyarskaya-Waitt, author of a blog about life in London. Not been previously engaged in running, in June 2011 she began her first regular jogs. The campaign’s media were a new NikeMarathon blog²⁷, groups in social networks, a number of press editions. A month before *Nike Run Moscow 2011*, one article invited everyone to run it together with Boyarskaya, telling about a girl who for two months has been “surprising a friends-page <...> not only with notes about < ... > London life, but also with reports on running training”, preparing to run 21.1 km at the Nike Women’s Marathon in San Francisco, “sincerely telling about the joys and difficulties on the way”²⁸. The article’s preface emphasizes the advertising message: “Rather, running appears in the texts as a way to look at the city in a fresh way, at relationships with others <...> and oneself”²⁹. In the article, you can also see a role model: “The average runner in London is a girl or a young man of 30—35 years old, runs two or three times a week in the park in the evening <...> for 4—5 miles; sometimes takes part in competitions for 5, 10 or half-marathon distances [21.1 km] ...”³⁰.

“A fundamentally new type of running club will open in Gorky Park,”³¹ the press reported in April 2012. The club created by Nike had a place for changing clothes and storing things and was free of charge. As before, it was proposed to participate in training for the final 10 km race. Already in May, insiders told about the obvious success of the club and the project as a whole: “More than fifty people gathered [for training], although seven or ten started the first season.”³² Identical clubs appeared in Fili and Sokolniki parks.

The Nike We Run campaign in Moscow lasted from 2010 to 2015, being modified as it develops. It meant organizing not just one start, but regular training and participation in a series of races. For example, in 2012, the series began on July 15 with a 3 km run (*Level 1: Run for likes*), on August 12 — already for 5 km (*Level 2: Greatness in everyone*), on August 26 — for 7 km (*Level 3: Get ready*), and then on September 16 — the final 10 km run (certainly, *Nike Run Moscow*). Such regular participation constitutes the practice of running, but the feature of Nike’s scheme was the focus on beginners. Active advertising and PR support was observed in 2010—2012 under different names: “Run into the break” in 2010, “Less words, more running” in 2011,

²⁶ Voronina A. (2010) MSTU MAMI at Run Moscow 2010. *Automechanic*. No. 68(8). P. 5.

²⁷ Waitt A. *Ready, Steady, Go!* blog. URL: <http://nikemarathon-blog.tumblr.com> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²⁸ (2011, August 18) Less words, more running: Alexandra Boyarskaya-Waitt about running. *Look At Me*. URL: <http://lookatme.ru/flow/posts/nike/133739-menshe-slov-bolshe-bega-aleksandra-boyarskaya-ueytt-o-bege> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ Ragoza D. (2012, April 18) A running club of a fundamentally new type will open in Gorky Park. *Moscow-online*. URL: http://molnet.ru/mos/ru/culture/o_46190 (accessed: 10.08.2021).

³² *ibid*

“You against yourself” in 2012. Nike’s expenses for outdoor advertising alone in these years are estimated at a total of 13.8 million rubles, or \$480 thousand, according to ESPAR monitoring (<http://espar.ru>). As we can see, the Nike campaign in Moscow was just a local adaptation of the global campaign. It should be noted that in the press publications about the MM’s success story, its background (that is, Western and Russia’s Nike campaigns) is almost not mentioned. At best, it is referred indirectly, in a line or a couple of words, as part of the MM’s director biography, describing him as an expert (as if his knowledge enlightened the Nike corporation).

Changes of the media

The transformation of the media environment is the next significant factor of the running boom. In the 1980s, an important role for the promotion of mass running and for non-elite runners themselves was played by the KLB/HLS heading of the *Soviet Sport* newspaper. A similar heading was maintained in the journal *Athletics*, the official edition of the USSR Sports Committee and the Track and Field Federation. However, already in the 1990s, the number of clubs and active amateur athletes significantly decreased. The purchasing power of the population and the circulation of leading editions has fallen. *Soviet Sport* and *Athletics* narrowed the topics coverage, moving away from mass participation to top-performance sports. Since the mid-1990s, the *Running and We* magazine by Boris Prokopyev began to regularly cover the topic of mass running. In particular, to publish a calendar of marathons and runs. However, despite the value of this edition for the target audience, its impact is difficult to compare with the broadcast effect of *Soviet Sport*, one of the USSR leading newspapers with a circulation of more than four million copies. The running subculture is partly closed inside itself.

In the 2000s, a new communication environment, the Internet, began to gain more and more importance. In 1998, the number of its Russian users was only 1.5 million people. In 2004, Internet penetration increased to 15% of the Russia’s population, and by 2013—to 60%. Thus, a simple way of spreading information appeared, thanks to which in 2004 only one volunteer (the author of this article) managed to launch a successful campaign to promote triathlon with a zero budget³³. The establishment of the *Probeg.org* was an important point for Russia’s mass running in 2003. This web-resource began to publish a calendar of runs in Russia and the CIS, and keep statistics of running. In the 2000s, this site was maintained on a volunteer basis by a group of only five recreational runners.

In the 2010s, the growth in the number of smartphones and social networks changed the interaction of the audience with the media environment. If earlier a novice recreational runner was proactive (that is, he/she was looking for information him/herself), now the opportunity to participate was “opened” through the news feeds of social networks. A new generation of runners in 2012 told us similar stories: “I accidentally saw on a social network, that a mate was running”; “I was looking through VKontakte feed, I found out that a friend was already involved”; “Flipping through

³³ Shakhmatov A. (2011) Veteran and amateur movement. *Triathlon*. No. 1. P. 50—54. URL: <http://federalbook.ru/files/ARHIV/Triation/triathlon-magazin.pdf> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

Facebook, I came across an article”³⁴. Brand Director of Nike Russia Massimo Giunco said that the success of Nike Run Moscow 2012 was achieved “largely thanks to social networks and word of mouth”³⁵.

Figure 2. Participants of the Nike Run Moscow 2012 after the start³⁶



In parallel, the Adidas company implemented its own running promotion program. This brand held the Adidas Challenge 2010 (distance of 3 km and 5 km; 292 finishers), Adidas Moscow Half Marathon 2011 (10 km and 21.1 km; 916 finishers), Adidas Energy Run 2013 and Adidas Run High! 2015. The first Adidas running club appeared in 2013 at the Luzhniki venue, and then in a number of parks. In 2015, the “Wake up the District” campaign was held³⁷.

The effectiveness of campaigns to engage a new audience in running can be assessed by the number of Nike Run Moscow finishers. And the quality of engagement can be assessed by details from Wladimir Metelkin’s notes. If in 2011, 1,526 people “reached the finish line on any trajectory” for 10 km and 4,890 people for 5 km; then in 2012, 9,125 people “finished without cheating” 10 km distance by all³⁸. For comparison: in the 2000s, the largest annual 10 km run (the MMMM’s satellite race) gathered

³⁴ For details of the participant observation see: [Adelfinsky, 2021].

³⁵ (2012, November 15) Foreign speakers: Massimo Giunco, Director of Brand Development at Nike Russia. See: [Lecture within the framework of the RMA Management in Game Sports program]. *RMA.ru*. URL: http://rma.ru/sport/foreign_speakers.php/15718/ (accessed: 10.08.2021).

³⁶ Source: *ProBEG.org*. URL: http://probeg.org/new/img/1347872633_1.jpeg (accessed: 10.08.2021).

³⁷ (2015, December 1) “Wake up your sleeping area”: how Adidas and TBWA-Moscow changed the views of Muscovites on running. *ADVERTology. The science of advertising*. URL: <http://advertology.ru/article134434.htm> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

³⁸ Metelkin W. (2012, September 16) III Nike Run Moscow, 10km = 35.24 PB. *Blog of facultative sports activities*. URL: <http://wild-archiv2007-2013.blogspot.com> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

about 1.2—1.6 thousand people (see Table 1). It can be stated, that success was achieved by 2012, even before the “entrepreneur Tarasov” with his idea of “commercial races” (see Figure 1). We emphasize, that Nike and Adidas races in 2010—2015, as well as training to prepare for them, were free of charge.

Table 1. Nike Run Moscow³⁹ and MMMM/MM runs, 2007—2014

Num. of Finishers / Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nike Run Moscow 10 km	—	—	—	—	1526	9125	8947	8328
Nike Run Moscow 5 km	—	—	—	n. a. *	4890	—	—	—
Nike Run Moscow, accepted entries	—	—	—	12000	17000	22000	n. a.	n. a.
MMMM MM 10 km	1161	1025	1569	1459	1398	1743	2412	5302
MMMM MM 42 km	778	719	854	1136	981	1214	2367	4031

* There is no data on the number of entries or finishers.

Political changes and the metamorphosis of the largest runs in Moscow

Changes in the political situation also turned out to be a significant factor for campaigns to promote running, and for the allegedly “first in Russia” marathon’s birth. In March-April 2011, the top management in the Moscow Government and affiliated structures was reappointed. The Department of Culture was headed by Sergey Kapkov (instead of Sergey Khudyakov), the Department of Physical Culture and Sports — by Alexey Vorobyov (instead of Mikhail Stepanyants), the Luzhniki Sports Complex — by Alexander Pronin (instead of Wladimir Alyoshin). The renovation of the Moscow largest parks and the introduction of free entry turned them into elements of the leisure culture of the 2010s. Part of the parks’ reform was the appearance of Nike running clubs, where training on prime days already gathered up to 200 athletes. This link is directly indicated by Alexandra Boyarskaya: “Katya Kibovskaya from the directorate < ... > saw [my blog] <...> and invited <...> to make a running club <...> Kapkov played the role of a reformer <...> [they] are the reason that the tourist center of Moscow has shifted <...> to the Park of Culture”⁴⁰.

Another obvious consequence of political changes was the change of the Moscow running races “field”⁴¹ in 2012—2013. Two organizers of city’s largest series of runs, Valery Shikhanov (born in 1939) and Boris Fadeev (born in 1933), are consistently replaced by one, Dmitry Tarasov (born in 1977). Initially, in 2012, Tarasov with his agency “New Athletics” became the organizer of the “Trud-Luzhniki” races series⁴², replacing the NPO “Luzhniki Olymp” director V. Shikhanov. The secret of personnel rejuvenation is disclosed in the “Kommersant’s” article: “Alexander Pronin < ... > wanted to revive the Luzhniki Marathon. Tarasov < ... > convinced <...> that it makes

³⁹ Source: Materials of Metelkin W., also: Radkevich A. (2015, May 7) Statistics of running movement in Russia. *Personal blog of A. Radkevich*. URL: <http://akmych.org/blog/753> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁴⁰ Mironov F. (2016, August 3) Moscow — a city that drinks or runs? *Afisha Daily*. URL: <http://daily.afisha.ru/cities/2499-kuda-pribezhala-moskvy-aktivisty-podvodyat-itogi-sportivnogo-buma> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁴¹ We are talking about a sum of running races, where the term “field” is more suitable than “market”.

⁴² The series “Trud-Luzhniki” consisted of “Luzhniki Marathon”, “Trud Run”, “Russia Run”, “Run and Smile”.

no sense to block the city center for the sake of 300 grandfathers who perceive the marathon as a Soviet tradition of a healthy lifestyle”⁴³. Tarasov proposed the new director of the Luzhniki Complex to involve young people and make a show event, “organized an online registration <...> and started working with social networks”⁴⁴. The total number of participants of the Luzhniki Marathon increased from 600 people in 2011 to 1,041 in 2012. We guess, that the task of attracting a new audience was solved thanks to the “overflow” of the Nike Run Moscow customer base, which ensured further administrative success for Tarasov.

In 2013, when the press announced “the first marathon in Russia” and that “for the first five preparatory races will be held”⁴⁵, — in fact, there were no new running events at all. De facto, Dmitry Tarasov, already managing the whole “Trud-Luzhniki” series, including the Luzhniki Marathon, only replaced a competitor for an administrative resource — the NPO “MMMM Foundation” head, Boris Fadeev⁴⁶. We suppose, that the contractor created by Nike decided to become the single contractor for organizing the largest races for the city of Moscow, “displacing” the previous players (see Table 2). However, this led to the termination of work with Nike for Tarasov. Details are important: the Luzhniki Complex being a venue for the Nike Run Moscow in 2011—2012; and in April 2013, the first MM was presented by Alexandra Boyarskaya, the Nike ambassador. However, in the summer of 2013, Adidas (a direct competitor of Nike) was announced as a sponsor of MM. In September, the allegedly “first in Russia” marathon started from the Luzhniki venue to the city center, and Nike Run Moscow moved to the peripheral territory of VDNH.

Table 2. Transformation of the largest running series in Moscow: 2011 vs 2013—2014

MMMM and “Luzhniki” series, 2011	MM series of “New Athletics”, 2013	MM series of “New Athletics”, 2014
XIX MMpM 10/21 km (May 14)	I First Run 5 km (April 7)	II First Run 5 km (April 6)
XV Luzhniki Marathon 10/42 km (May 22)	III Spring Grom 10/21 km (May 12)	I Moscow half-marathon 10/21 km (May 18)
LXI Trud Run 5/21 km (June 25)	I Night Run 10 km (22 июня)	II Night Run 10 km (July 26)
XVI Russia Run 15 km (August 6)	IV Autumn Grom 10/21 km (4 августа)	I Music half-marathon 10/21 km (August 17)
XVII Run and Smile 6 km (September 3)	I Colorful Run 6 km (August 25)	II Colorful Run 6 km (June 21)
XXXI MMMM 10/42 km (September 18)	I MM 10/42 km (September 15)	II MM 10/42 km (September 21)

⁴³ Mamedova D. (2014) Everyone ran: Who earns money at the Moscow Marathon and how? *Kommersant the Firm's Secret*. No. 11. P. 30. URL: <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2590706> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁴⁴ *ibid*

⁴⁵ Vyakhoreva V. (2013, April 4) Running in Moscow. What will the new Moscow Marathon be like. *Afisha Daily*. URL: <https://daily.afisha.ru/archive/gorod/archive/kakim-budet-novij-moskovskij-marafon> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁴⁶ The core of the NPO “MMMM Foundation” series were MMMM and MMhM (Moscow International Peace half-Marathon).

Running statistics: age composition and cost of participation

The redistribution of administrative resources transformed the entire running “field”. In 2011, two series (“Trud-Luzhniki” and MMMM) provided 41% of all people-participations in mass runs of the Moscow. In 2016, only one MM series—65%⁴⁷. Moreover, the statements about “300 grandfathers” and “focus on the top-performance” for previous runs are clearly incorrect (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). In 2011, 2650 athletes aged from 15 to 85 years started at two MMMM distances; the average age and finish time at the marathon was 40 years and 3 hours 59 minutes, the time limit was 6 hours. Similar numbers are typical for Western marathons.

Figure 3. Growth and rejuvenation of the largest run in Russia, MMMM/MM 42 km

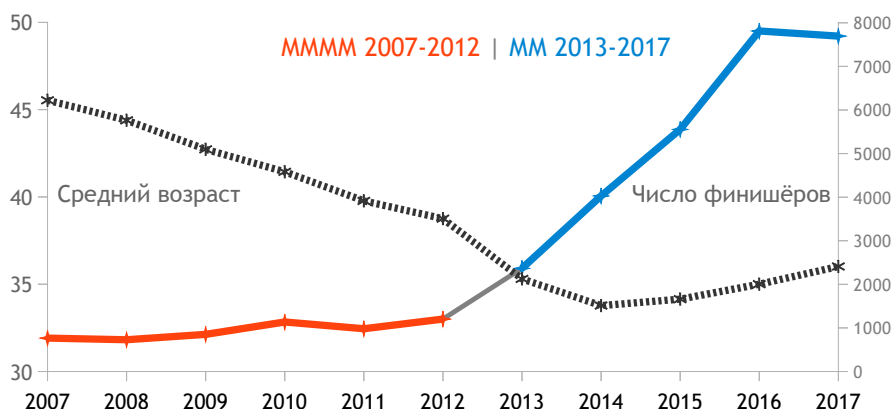
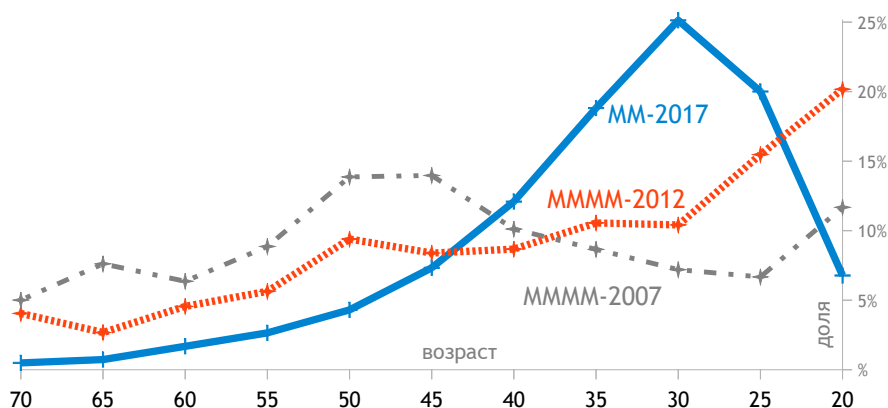


Figure 4. Change in the MMMM/MM's age profile, 42 km: 2007 vs 2012 vs 2017



⁴⁷ We take into account the runs with 100 finishers or more at distances from 6 to 42 km, mentioned by Probeg.org. In 2011, 10,596 people-finishes took place, in 2016—53,063.

As for the age profile, MMMM 2007 is also similar to Western marathons, with the correction that the peak of participation is shifted by five years to an older audience. (As an example, we can take the Berlin Marathon.) However, at MMMM 2012, the peak of participation already falls on 20—29-year-olds.

Over time, not only the number of runners has increased, but also the entry fees. In 2011—2012, the MMMM series fees for the distances of 10 km and 21.1 km were 100 rubles and 150 rubles, respectively, for the marathon — 250—300 rubles, depending on the time of payment. The MM series of “New Athletics” raised the price range initially to 500—2000 rubles, and then, in 2016, to 1000—4000 rubles (see Table 3). Since non-elite runners do not start once per season, but often weekly, it is possible to estimate the cost of regular participation. The largest running series’ transformation affected the entire running “field”, where entry fees increased to the level of MM. This allows you to use MM prices to calculate the total cost of the regular participation in runs. The estimate of the cost of 24 starts per year (according to the plan of 15 × 10 km, 7 × 21 km and 2 × 42 km)⁴⁸ shows an increase from 2950—3050 rubles to 29500—55500 rubles. Thus, the cost of running has increased 10—18 times in five years. At the same time, the minimum wage of Moscow as an indicator of the cost of living has increased only 1.6 times.

Table 3. **Growth of the participation cost in the MMMM/MM from 2011 to 2016 (entry fees, rubles)**

Distance	MMMM 2011—2012	MM 2013—2014	MM 2015	MM 2016
10 km	100	1000/750/500	1500/1100/700	2000/1500/1000
21 km	150	1000/750/500	1500/1100	2500/2000/1500
42 km	250/200	2000/1300/1000	3000/1800/1200	4000/3000/2000
For 24 races	2950/3050			29500/55500

Discussion about the “new quality”

Was the running boom generated by some “new quality” of the Moscow Marathon? We believe that the qualitative changes affected only the method of pre-registration, the entry fees transfer, and the timing technology. Thanks to the introduction of IT solutions, the preliminary races results began to appear online faster. Also, the finisher’s medals became slightly larger. At the same time, the form of payment and the increase in the entry fees have reduced the consumer and economic accessibility of running.

Have the impressions of the process of participation in the “new races” changed qualitatively? We believe not. Both old and new runs offered the opportunity to participate out of connection with skill, practiced democratic time limits and presented results by age groups. An objective study of the issue has some complexity. Both “new” and “old” runners are heterogeneous in terms of experience, solvency, involvement in the fitness services sector, etc. For “new” runners, the attitude to “old races” is based not on experience, but rather on some speculation. The stereotypes about the running movement of the 2000s as a “morning exercise of pensioners”⁴⁹, that “only pensioners

⁴⁸ The estimate made by the author, see also: [Adelfinsky, 2021].

⁴⁹ Makusheva M. (2020, September 23) Running for overcoming. *Vedomosti*. URL: <http://vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2020/09/22/840853-begom-preodoleniem> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

in shabby old-style trousers liked to run”⁵⁰, seem to be generated by the beneficiaries of the largest running series’ transformation. The attitude of “old” runners to new runs can be influenced by the economic unavailability that has arisen.

It is easy to show that the “hellish design” and “terrible organization”, according to the MM’s creators peculiar to MMM⁵¹, can actually be attributed to new runs. Among the press publications, there are also those few that contradict the general picture about “new people with much better expertise”. The BBC Russian Service responded to the “first high-quality” run in Russia with the article “The first Moscow Marathon is always troublesome”, where gross errors were noted. Such as: the length of both distances (instead of 10 km and 42,195 km — 11.7 km and 43.5 km, respectively), the lack of food and kilometer marks, the start confusion, a week-long delay with the results publishing, the lack of finishers medals stuck at customs⁵². These mistakes were admitted by Dmitry Tarasov himself: “We are a young team that does not have much experience <...>. Of course, a lot of things didn’t work out for us”⁵³. Claims against the “New Athletics” and MM were actively voiced by runners as well. They complained about the noticeably increased fee (which was also mentioned in the press), the inconvenience of registration, the inflexibility of the service, the feeling of a decrease in quality, the requirements of medical certificates: “Food for three out of five, almost one water, rarely juice and isotonic <...> the good old sugar tea and bread disappeared” (2012); “MMMM did not require medical certificates, now they have established a burden. Hucksters are already sitting nearby, selling...” (2015); “You have to pay in advance and come once again — but before you could get a bib number even before the start” (2014); “The girl came for one day from Siberia — they sent her home” (2013)⁵⁴. Gross defects of the debut MM (for example, the length of the distance) were then corrected. However, journalists and bloggers continued to note unpleasant moments of MM. In 2015, 10 km runners were denied a drink, the race leader was mistakenly stopped just before the finish line — “you are forbidden to go there!”⁵⁵. In 2016, two hours of standing in the rain while issuing starting packages and forty minutes waiting for the start, a chronic problem with the quality of the final results⁵⁶, etc. The voiced points can be considered subjective, however, as well as sharp criticism of MMM from the MM’s founders.

⁵⁰ Korneeva Yu. (2015, May 25) Jogging is a fashionable hobby of urban residents. *BFM.ru*. URL: <http://bfm.ru/news/293773> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵¹ Mironov F. (2016, August 3) Moscow — a city that drinks or runs? *Afisha Daily*. URL: <http://daily.afisha.ru/cities/2499-kuda-pribezhal-moskvy-aktivisty-podvodyat-itogi-sportivnogo-buma> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵² Nekhezin V. (2013, September 27) The first pancake of the Moscow Marathon. *BBC Russian Service*. URL: http://bbc.com/russian/russia/2013/09/130927_first_moscow_marathon (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵³ *ibid*

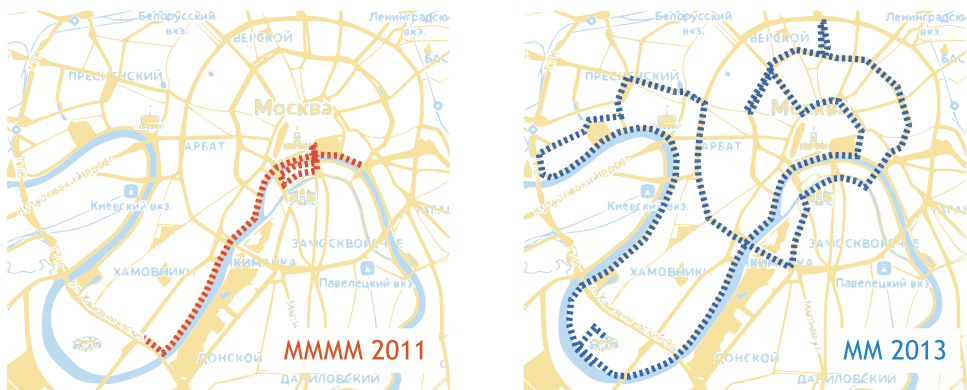
⁵⁴ For details of the participant observation see: [Adelfinsky, 2021].

⁵⁵ Huseynova M., Parnyakov V. (2015, September 20) There are problems again at the Moscow Marathon 2015: the police, the water, a mess on the course and, as always, the results. *SkiRun.ru*. URL: <http://skirun.ru/2015/09/20/moscow-marathon-2015-itogi> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵⁶ Huseynova M. (2016, October 12) A Russian record was set at MM-2016! Why you should not be happy about this. *SkiRun.ru*. URL: <http://skirun.ru/articles/20459-moscow-marathon-2016-ustanovlen-rokord-rossii-pochemu-etomu-nestoit-radovatsa> (accessed: 10.08.2021); Huseynova M. (2016, October 3) Strange statistics of results at the Moscow Marathon 2016. *SkiRun.ru*. URL: <http://skirun.ru/articles/20378-strannaya-statistika-resultatov-na-moscow-marathon-2016> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

However, there are points where we can look for objective evaluation criteria. This is the course design, as well as a historical representation of the Russia's major marathon. The new course has become slower. The average finisher time per MM versus MMMM is 15 minutes worse with a similar standard deviation. We believe that the reason is not the “new” runners' skill, but the wrong design of the new MM with hilly course. The MMMM flat course provided the best personal time desired by most participants. The citizens' antipathy to the new MM course with “the half-Moscow blocking” is revealed by the Yandex.Traffic. We can observe a stream of complaints in the style: “Burn in hell, a wonderful Sports Committee!”, “They run so lazily. Let's hurry up!”, “We're tired of you, idiots...”, “Is it impossible to run in the forest, or what???”, “Or maybe runners to the stadium?”^{57,58}. And until 2013, this was not observed due the largest running races. The reason is that MMMM and the Luzhniki Marathon used courses along the city center embankments, usually in two laps with a pendulum design, which had little effect on traffic. The MM's creators insisted on a ring course in one lap with maximum coverage of touristic attractions. This requires much more resources from the city services, and also paralyzes traffic inside the Garden Ring and nearby areas. Moreover, to call the “hellish design” specifically MMMM-2012 (the one that was criticized by Alexandra Boyarskaya) in that time can be regarded as an insult to the feelings of believers. The Russian Orthodox Church in 2012 celebrated the 200th anniversary of the salvation of Moscow from Napoleon. Since part of the MMMM traditional course was occupied by the procession to the miraculous Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God, the number of marathon laps was increased.

Figure 5. The courses of the MMMM 2011 and MM 2013 marathons



The representation of the running movement history is another oddity of MM. Foreign capitals are proud of the chronicles of their marathons. In Moscow, the history of the

⁵⁷ Makarevich P. (2014, September 21) Wanted to write a post... that the organizers of MM — well done... And then I remembered about these screenshots... Fb.com. URL: <http://facebook.com/pavel.makarevich.5/posts/812676668772611> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁵⁸ Revinsky D. (2013, September 22) Moscow marathon — organization through the eyes of a participant. *Diesell.livejournal.com*. URL: <http://diesell.livejournal.com/444816.html> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

oldest races has been nominally abolished — the allegedly “first” races “similar to the Western ones” have been announced. However, we are talking about the events that have continuity; and the fitness-boom in both the West and the USSR developed simultaneously. The zeroing of the marathons’ history in Russia upset experts and former participants, who compared it to the “explosion of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior” and the “demolition of the Ipatievsky House”⁵⁹. The obvious reason for the unpatriotic historical representation and the wrong design is the lack of experience among the founders of the allegedly “first in Russia” marathon. In the 2000s, Dmitry Tarasov was neither an organizer of runs, nor a runner. Sometimes he was presented as “the 2007 European champion and the bronze medalist of the Olympic Games in Beijing”⁶⁰ — and he really was the manager of the women’s basketball team. We believe that “new people who know a lot about marathons” got familiarized with the running subculture only as a result of hiring for the Nike We Run project.

Conclusion. Running boom as the fall of the information curtain?

So, why did the hobby of running become popular in the 2010s, covering the younger generation? We believe that a number of factors influenced the running boom. First, the driver was the campaigns to promote the distance running in 2010—2015, launched by major sports equipment brands in the Moscow region.

The leading role was played by the Nike Run Moscow events and their campaigns “Run to the break”, “Less words, more running”, “You against yourself”. In addition, we should mention the Adidas events and their “Wake up the District” campaign. Aimed at a young audience, Nike and Adidas campaigns offered regular group training and participation in running events, and for free.

Secondly, the legacy of the running boom of the 1980s, which survived until the 2000s and continued to develop, became an obvious basis for the running boom of the 2010s. This allows us to argue about the latter as the second wave. In the Moscow region, we are talking about the running events of the MMMM series, “Trud-Luzhniki”, “Kosmos Marathon”, “Seven Hills”, etc., running clubs “Parsek”, “Muravey”, “Alpha-Bitza”, etc., as well as media resources like “Run and we”, “Run with us”, Probeg.org — thus, the practice of distance running already existed in its modern form.

Third, the transformation of the media environment, the use of smartphones and social networks have facilitated the dissemination of information.

Fourth, the political conjuncture had an important influence on the trajectory of the running boom. Namely, the change in 2011 of a number of Moscow officials, including the heads of departments of culture, of sports, and of the Luzhniki Complex. The new balance of power has radically changed access to administrative resources that are important for the mass running.

The above allows us to discuss the reasons for the modest popularity of running in the 2000s. Based on sociological studies, K. Chernov, V. Kuznetsov and Yu. Kashirtsev [1992] noted that up to 80 % of young people and up to 55 % of adults under 45 years old feel the need for personal achievements when playing sports. The motive “for the

⁵⁹ Arustamov A. (2013, September 14) The first year without MMMM. *XCSPORT.RU*. URL: http://xcsport.ru/blogs/messeges/messeges_2987.html (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁶⁰ Convention 3start 2016. March 11—13. Official brochure. Moscow: RTE-group. P. 7.

sake of health” was not significant for them, and the EVSK⁶¹ as the official system of motivations of the FKis industry did not offer feasible achievements [ibid.]. At the same time, the modern practice of long-distance running and similar sports in general is based on the idea of “finish as an achievement”. This creates a line of goals and a potential motive for everyone. These ideas are shared by the organizers of the mass races and the majority of their participants, corresponding to the so-called Expressive model of sports. [Adelfinsky, 2021]. In turn, P.A. Vinogradov [1991, 2013], studying the issues of promoting healthy lifestyle and mass sports, pointed out the potential of the media, as well as the fact that they were almost not used. About 95 % of press publications on the Fitness and Sports topic both in 1990 and in 2009 told only about the elite competitions [ibid.]. This supported the *Top-achievement* image about sports in general, and the practice of mass running continued to be presented as a kind of “physical education and culture”. In fact, it was necessary to open the information curtain over the practice of running, created by the media and the official FKis system focused on elite sports only. Hence the conclusion: it is ineffective to promote healthy lifestyle to young people for the sake of health, it requires the introduction of an *Expressive model* for mass sports in general — which partly happened. We believe that our article also contributes to the refutation of the “evangelical myth” about the inspiring role of elite sports [Grix, Carmichael 2012, De Cocq et al., 2018]. In view of the obvious “visible hand”, there is no reason to look for the “invisible hand” of the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup.

The question is logical: were entrepreneurs another, fifth factor? We believe that the activity of small businesses in the “field” of cycling king of sports was the result of the initial growth of participation, and only then — a new driver of the fitness boom. We are talking about two directions. Firstly, these are commercial schools that teach running, cycling, skiing, triathlon, swimming, etc. Secondly, these are commercial races and event service providers (including “New Athletics”). The running boom involved two parallel processes. The first is the growing popularity of running. Brand campaigns involved young people, creating an “entry point” into the existing practice. The contribution was also made by the emerging businesses “on the run”. The result was an 8-fold increase in running participation over five years against the background of the previous stable period. The second process is the commercialization of running that has begun. The effect of the activity of small businesses was the *gentrification*⁶² of practice (“running has become an attribute of a modern successful person”⁶³) with an 18-fold increase in entry fees. The question arises about the reasons for the fees increase, since the “new quality” races appeared already in 2012. Probably, the involved “gentry” created a new demand, which allowed to increase the entry fees. This leads to the problem of commercialization of the so-called *European model of sports*⁶⁴. However, a detailed consideration of the phenomenon requires a separate study.

⁶¹ Unified Sports Classification System of the USSR/Russia, i. e. the official sports titles and ranks.

⁶² Gentrification in the Russian lexicon is still associated with urbanism, but it is used much more widely, including sports studies [Halnon, Cohen, 2006; Cox, 2008, Fawbert, 2010; Fürtjes, 2013]. In particular, in the book by P. Cooper, an entire chapter is entitled: Gentrification of the Marathon [Cooper, 1998].

⁶³ (2016, June 19) Andrey Krichmara: “Running is an attribute of a successful person”. *Yarsport.ru*. URL: <http://yarsport.ru/other/legkaya-atletika/andrey-krichmara-beg-atribut-preuspevayuschego-cheloveka> (accessed: 10.08.2021).

⁶⁴ See: [Andreff, Staudohar, 2000; Nafziger, 2008; Andreff, 2011; Adelfinsky, 2014, 2016].

Nevertheless, already now the 18-fold increase in the cost of participation in the potentially most accessible sport allows us to ask the question — does what happened correspond to the declared goals of the state policy? We can also ask — how the zeroing of the history of the oldest runs in Moscow and the announcement of “new” ones, “similar to the Western ones”, correlates with the declared patriotic education? Who did not allow to continue the history of Moscow marathons since 1981, and even more so the “Trud Run”, since 1951? We believe that these questions can be asked not only to the Russian sports executives. But also to many representatives of the Russian managerial elite, who have also been caught up by the fitness boom.

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