

Russia Rethinks Skiathlon Medal Appeal

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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SOCHI — Russia will not appeal to sport's highest authority over the result of Sunday's skiathlon race that saw its athlete denied an Olympic bronze medal, the country's Olympic committee has said.

Elena Vyalbe, president of Russia's cross-country skiing federation, told R-Sport Tuesday that an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport would be made after the International Ski Federation, or FIS, rejected a complaint that Maxim Vylegzhanin had been impeded in a dash for the line by Norway's Martin Johnsrud Sundby.

But the Russian Olympic Committee said Wednesday that any appeal would be futile.

"A complaint to the international Court of Arbitration for Sport is possible only over conflicts that touch upon the proper application of legal norms," a statement on the organization's website said.

"Examining conflicts that occur in the course of competition in the sporting arena and that have an exclusively sporting character do not enter the jurisdiction of CAS," it concluded.

Sundby beat Vylegzhanin to the bronze by one-tenth of a second in a dash for the line of the 30-kilometer race in the mountains above Sochi. The Russian accused Sundby of blocking him, saying: "I think the Norwegian wasn't in the right. He got in my way."

Sundby suggested he had accidentally strayed out of his lane but corrected the mistake immediately when trackside officials notified him.

The FIS left the result in place but handed Sundby a "written reprimand," for moving out of his lane, the organization said in a statement.

Switzerland's Dario Cologna won gold, 2.7 seconds ahead of Sweden's Marcus Hellner, with Sundby 0.7 seconds further back.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport, based in Lausanne, has an ad hoc court set up in Sochi and has ultimate authority over all Olympic and other sporting-related matters.

International Ski Competition Rules forbid any deviation from the optimal racing line, stating: "In all competitions obstruction is not allowed. This behavior is defined as deliberately impeding, blocking (by not following best line), charging or pushing any competitor with any part of the body or ski equipment."

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