

Biathletes Iourieva and Starykh Test Positive for EPO

By [The Moscow Times](#)

March 10, 2014

The  Moscow Times

Biathletes Irina Starykh and Yekaterina Iourieva tested positive for the banned substance EPO, the International Biathlon Union, or IBU, said in a statement Saturday.

The 'B' samples for both athletes tested positive for erythropoietin, which boosts the body's red blood cell count, at a competition in Slovenia on Dec. 23.

Starykh, who was seen as a medal hope for hosts Russia at the Sochi Olympics, was withdrawn from the team on the eve of the Games. The 26-year-old faces a two-year ban from the sport.

After being informed that her 'A' sample had tested positive, Starykh said in January: "I received a notification from the IBU, which stated one of my samples had come back positive."

"This news was very surprising for me. Believe me, I am sincerely sorry that this piece of news

has been associated with my name."

Iourieva was not selected for the Russian Olympic team and has since announced her retirement from the sport.

She faces a life ban after being suspended earlier in her career following a positive test in 2008.

Both athletes will have a disciplinary hearing with the IBU in Salzburg in the next few weeks.

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