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Biathlon Win Secures Russia's 20th Gold

By The Moscow Times

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Svetlana Konovalova won the women's 12 kilometer sitting biathlon event.

KRASNAYA POLYANA — Paralympic host nation Russia on Friday claimed its 20th gold medal of the Games as Svetlana Konovalova won the women's 12 kilometer sitting biathlon event.

The Russian gold medal tally is the most for any country at a Winter Paralympics since Norway's haul of 29 at the 1994 Lillehammer Games, when there were 133 events on the program, against 72 in Sochi.

Konovalova took the lead at the first of four shooting stages and did not relinquish it again, winning in a time of 40 minutes 44 seconds, beating Germany's Anja Wicker into second place by 43.1 seconds.

The bronze medal went to Olena Iurkovska of Ukraine, almost four seconds off Wicker's time.

For Konovalova, it is her fourth medal of the Sochi Paralympics and first gold, while Wicker is on the podium for the second time following her earlier win in the 10 kilometer event.

Earlier Friday, Russia's Roman Petushkov won his fifth gold medal of the Sochi Paralympics, leading a podium sweep for the host nation in the men's sitting 15 kilometer biathlon.

The race used the system of so-called calculated time, in which an athlete's time is modified by a percentage reflecting the severity of their disability.

Five more biathlon events follow later in the day at the Laura Biathlon & Ski Complex in the mountains above Sochi.

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