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Russia Beats Finland to Win Ice Hockey World Championship

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's players and officials celebrate with the trophy after winning their men's ice hockey World Championship final game against Finland at Minsk Arena in Minsk.

Russia have claimed their fourth world ice hockey championship in seven years with a 5-2 win over Finland in the final in Minsk, partly making up for their Sochi Olympic disappointment.

Finland dumped Russia out of the Games in February at the quarter-final stage and just as in the Olympics, the Finns found themselves a goal down early on during Sunday's game when Sergei Shirokov gave Russia the lead on 10 minutes on the powerplay.

Roared on by a partizan crowd who were firmly behind the Russians, it took time for the Finns, who had only just scraped into the knockout stages, to find their form.

They tied up the game with only three seconds remaining in the first period through Iiro Pakarinen and six minutes into the second period Erkka Westerlund's side took the lead

through Olli Palola.

Russia's reply was instant, however, with Alexander Ovechkin tying up the game at 2-2 less than a minute later.

Russia were desperately looking for the all-important go-ahead goal and they had a great opportunity with a powerplay late in the second period, Yevgeny Malkin sending a fine wrist shot past Pekka Rinne's stick side to put his side 3-2 in front.

Danis Zaripov helped ease home nerves with an excellently taken goal after good interplay with Shirokov to give Russia a two-goal lead with his 13th point of the competition.

With five minutes to go, the tournament's leading scorer Viktor Tikhonov added his eighth goal and 16th point overall with a strike on the powerplay as Russia cruised to victory.

Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko and Russian president Vladimir Putin both attended the final.

Sweden, the former world champions, gained some consolation as they picked up the bronze medal after beating the Czech Republic 3-0.

It was Jaromir Jagr's last game for the Czechs but the 42-year-old did not end his international career on a high note as Joakim Lindstrom opened the scoring after four minutes from Simon Hjalmarsson.

Sweden wrapped up the victory midway through the third period, Erik Gustafsson orchestrating a lightning counter-attack and feeding Mikael Backlund who sent a wrist shot high into the net.

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