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Russia's Adelina Sotnikova Legitimate Winner of Sochi Olympics, Union Says

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's Adelina Sotnikova won the Sochi Olympic gold medal.

SEOUL — The International Skating Union, or ISU, has dismissed South Korea's complaint over the figure skating judging panel used at the Sochi Games that awarded Russia's Adelina Sotnikova the gold medal ahead of defending Olympic champion Kim Yuna.

At the Sochi Games, held in Febuary, 23-year-old Kim was beaten by 5.48 points by Sotnikova, who secured Russia's first ladies singles gold despite a flawless performance from South Korea's most popular athlete.

Fueled by widespread national outrage, the South Korean Olympic Committee, or KOC, and the Korea Skating Union, KSU, filed a complaint, asking the ISU to look into the composition of the

judging panel and whether the awarding of points was fair.

One judge was identified as having served a one-year suspension for trying to fix an event at the 1998 Olympics, while another, Alla Shekhovtseva, the wife of the general director of the Russian figure skating federation, was seen on camera hugging Sotnikova moments after the win.

The ISU Disciplinary Commission ruled that the Russian judge's relationship with her husband did not create a foundation for bias and there was no conflict of interest."

"During the ladies' competition, both in the short program and free program, the judging of the alleged offender was within the acceptable range of scores," the governing body said in a statement on its website.

"Congratulating a champion and winner of the gold medal in the opinion of the alleged offender is not a violation of rules but a normal gesture and an appreciation of the skater's hard work."

"She responded reflexively when the skater raised her arms for an embrace."

South Korea's national sports governing body expressed regret over the decision.

"It is regrettable to hear the news," an official at the KOC said, adding that they were discussing with the KSU about the next measure, including an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

See also:

South Korea in Official Complaint Over Sotnikova's Sochi Skating Gold

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