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# Russia Confirms List of Clean 'Olympic Athletes' for Winter Games

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The Russian national curling team, leaving for the 2018 Winter Olympic Games **Sergei Savostyanov / TASS**

Russia will send 169 athletes to the Winter Olympics next month, missing dozens of top athletes following doping bans from the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The Russian Olympic team was banned from the 2018 games in South Korea following an investigation into state-sponsored doping at Sochi 2014. However, individual athletes who pass an IOC doping panel will be allowed to participate in the coming games in neutral uniforms as "Olympic Athletes from Russia."

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"The roster has been finalized, it includes 169 athletes," Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) vice president Stanislav Pozdnyakov was cited as saying by Interfax Thursday.

“Sadly, our leading athletes didn’t make the roster. We worked with the IOC for two days, but unfortunately they weren’t included in the list,” Pozdnyakov said.

Notable absentees include six-time short-track speedskating gold medalist Viktor Ahn and cross-country skiing world champion Sergei Ustyugov, as well as five hockey players, a figure skater, an ice dancer and several speedskaters, the Associated Press reported.

On Thursday, the IOC review panel issued a list of criteria that it used to issue invitations for Russian athletes. It included data gathered from winter sports federations and whistleblowers, as well as a “reconstructed” Moscow-based doping database.

The IOC panel said that the head of the Russian delegation will officially confirm the final list of accepted athletes on Saturday, Jan. 27, in South Korea.

Russian legislators are reportedly drafting retaliatory sanctions against international anti-doping officials to be introduced after the games in February.

Meanwhile, the ROC vice president ruled out the possibility of Russia boycotting the 2018 Winter Olympics.

“I’m confident that, despite the fact that our team is thinned out, every athlete will perform not only for themselves but also for those who we think were unfairly cut from the Olympic Games,” he said.

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