

Court Rejects All of Russia's Last-Ditch Olympic Appeals

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An international sports court has rejected the last-minute appeals of all 45 Russian athletes and two coaches who applied for permission to compete in the Winter Olympics, which kick off later on Friday.

A total of 168 Russian athletes have been approved to compete in South Korea since the International Olympic Committee (IOC) imposed a blanket ban on the national team over doping claims in December.

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The Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) announced on Friday that it had dismissed all of the last-minute Russians' applications in the three days since they had been filed. They include six-time gold medalist speed skater Viktor Ahn and cross-country skiing world champion Sergei Ustyugov.

The CAS panel [ruled](#) that the IOC decision to bar the Russian athletes was not 'carried out in a discriminatory, arbitrary or unfair manner.'

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), whose investigation concluded that Russia ran a state-run doping scheme, leading to the Olympic team's ban, [said](#) it welcomed the sport court's decision.

The head of Russia's Skating Union, Irina Slautina, has announced that a separate competition would be organized for Ahn and other disqualified Russian athletes.

The 'alternative' games are scheduled to be held in St. Petersburg from Feb. 16 to Feb. 18, she [told](#) the state-run RIA Novosti news agency after the CAS ruling was handed down.

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