

Russian Athletes Won't Be Allowed to Carry Flag at Olympic Closing Ceremony

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Russia's Olympic figure skating team dressed in neutral gear **Valery Sharifulin/TASS**

The International Olympic Committee has decided not to reinstate Russia's Olympic status ahead of the closing ceremony in Pyeongchang on Sunday.

Russia's Olympic team was barred last December from the Pyeongchang Games following allegations of a state-run doping program, but 168 clean athletes were cleared to participate under a neutral flag.

Two of those athletes — Russian curler Alexander Krushelnitsky and bobsledder Nadezhda Sergeyeva — were suspended last week over doping allegations.

"This was hugely disappointing and, in addition to other considerations, prevented the IOC from even considering lifting the suspension for the closing ceremony," the IOC [said](#) in an online statement.

The news came hours before Russia's male hockey team beat Germany 4-3, bringing in the

first Olympic hockey gold since 1992.

The IOC statement added Russia would have its Olympic status automatically restored if no other Russian athletes were shown to have violated doping rules at the Winter Games.

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