

How Russian Media Reacted to 4-Year Olympics Ban

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Lee Jin-man / AP / TASS

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) on Monday hit Russia with a four-year ban from competing or hosting major world sporting events, including the Olympic Games and World Championships.

The move comes after WADA's executive committee unanimously ruled that Moscow had tampered with doping laboratory data. Russian athletes will only be able to compete in these sporting events under a neutral flag and without their national anthem.

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Here's a look at how Russian media reacted to the news:

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— The WADA executive committee aimed to inflict a harsh blow, primarily on sports officials, and save ‘clean’ athletes who had not stained themselves with doping — however, the final decision will make their lives difficult as well.

— The state's inability to fulfill its obligations ... may result in the loss of promising young athletes who may decide to change their passports in order to pursue an honest sports career.

— It seems that in Russian sports, there is a general belief in the impunity of illegal actions, as well as a belief that the status of a large influential country allows manmade problems to be solved again and again with unofficial talks or the simple denial of facts.

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— It is unlikely that our side will agree with the sanctions. Most likely, the next stage is an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

— The new sanctions generally look like the suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) in December 2017. But the difference is that now WADA has no doubts about ROC as an organization.

— There are chances to appeal WADA's decision, with positive examples from the recent past. But will anything change in Russian sport if the guilty ones aren't punished?

— We [live](#) in a country that mercilessly sacrifices the present and the future for the sake of blurring spots from the past. A country that is clearly determined in the choice between a terrible end and endless horror. And where politics are more important than people.

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— The [WADA] executive committee's final verdict can be considered the most painful blow ever inflicted on Russian sport. It was this verdict that has become the real peak of the Russian doping crisis, which erupted at the end of 2015 and by 2019 had seemingly come to nothing.

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— Everything was quite expected and ... stamped in advance. And yet, the verdict still sounds extremely harsh.

— It was the athletes who turned out to be the losers, the vast majority of whom are absolutely innocent. But they turned into hostages of some sports officials who made the wrong decisions.

[Novaya Gazeta](#)

— The country — that is, all of us for whom sport is an important part of life — was punished. But the people for whom sport is life were punished even more terribly.

— Russia was one or two steps from ending its doping nightmare in 2019 and continuing to

work calmly on expanding the cleanup process. But the country, represented by influential defenders, was caught in something elementary and threw a noose on itself — and all that remained was to slightly tighten it. Maybe this happened because there was no other option for salvation but to cheat.

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