

FIFA Probes 3 Russian Players Over Suspected Doping Violations

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FIFA has opened disciplinary cases against three Russian football players suspected of violating anti-doping rules in 2013. **Valery Sharifulin/TASS**

FIFA has opened disciplinary cases against three Russian football players suspected of violating anti-doping rules in 2013, Interfax [reported](#) Monday, citing the Russian Football Union's press service.

The players, two of whom are men and the other a woman, do not play on the Russian national teams, Interfax cited the RFU as saying in a statement.

The football union said it would provide legal assistance to the players and that it is in "constant contact" with FIFA.

Former FC Torpedo Moscow player Vladimir Obukhov, who now plays for FC Rostov, later [identified himself](#) as one of the players under investigation.

Obukhov said he was unaware that he was given doping drugs and said he was willing to

cooperate with FIFA's investigation.

"The news from FIFA was a big shock for me. Neither then in 2013 nor later did I hear anything about a positive test result, nor did I ask anyone to carry out any manipulations," Obukhov [told](#) the Championat.com sports website Monday.

"Throughout my career, I have been attentive to the drugs I use. But, unfortunately, an athlete doesn't always have the opportunity to check what the doctor gives him," he said.

The investigation threatens to put Obukhov's football career on hold for the next four years if he is disqualified.

Russian athletics have been plagued by doping scandals for years, with a 2015 World Anti-Doping Agency report finding evidence of mass doping among the country's track and field athletes.

As a penalty, Russian athletes are now barred from competing at major international events, including the Olympics, under the country's flag until December 2022.

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