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Russian Wrestlers Reject Olympics Invitation

By AFP

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Two-time Olympic champion Abdulrashid Sadulaev was not invited to this summer's Olympic Games.
Berit Roald/ EPA / TASS

Russian wrestlers who were given permission to participate in this summer's Olympic Games have rejected the invitation, the Russian Wrestling Federation said Saturday.

After initially barring Russian athletes from the Games over Moscow's war on Ukraine, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has moved to allow a handful of Russian athletes to take part under a neutral flag if they meet strict conditions.

But the national federation said Saturday that 10 wrestlers who passed the eligibility checks would boycott the Games in protest at the IOC.

"We do not accept the unsportsmanlike selection principle that guided the International Olympic Committee when forming the list of eligible athletes, the purpose of which is to

undermine the principle of unity of our team," the federation said in a statement.

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The federation's executive committee, coaches and wrestlers "came to the unanimous decision to refuse to participate in the Olympic Games."

Russian athletes hoping to compete in Paris must demonstrate they do not support Russia's war on Ukraine and have no links to the country's armed forces.

Those admitted will have to compete under a neutral banner and will be excluded from any team events and also the opening ceremony.

Russian officials have repeatedly blasted the IOC policy.

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