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World Table Tennis Body Reinstates Russian Players With Flag and Anthem

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REUTERS / Ramil Sitdikov/

Russian table tennis players will again be allowed to compete under their national flag and anthem, the International Table Tennis Federation announced Monday, making it the latest sport to reinstate Russian athletes after the International Olympic Committee provisionally lifted its suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee.

The reinstatement applies to both individual and team events, as well as to athletes with physical impairments, and takes effect on July 28, the ITTF said in a statement published on its website.

"This decision does not diminish ITTF's support for Ukraine, nor its concern for those who continue to be affected by the conflict," the organization said. "ITTF remains committed to supporting the table tennis community in Ukraine through different channels."

The move follows the IOC's decision last week to provisionally reverse its suspension of the ROC to provide "equal access" to Russian athletes and teams ahead of qualifiers for the 2028

Los Angeles Summer Games and the 2028 Winter Youth Olympics in Italy.

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Following the IOC decision, the International Volleyball Federation also reinstated Russian teams and officials.

The IOC ban was originally imposed in October 2023 when the ROC began including sports organizations in occupied Ukraine as its own members. The IOC said Russia has since assured them "it does not, and will not, conduct any activities in these territories [of occupied Ukraine]."

The ITTF said Monday that its decision is still contingent on foreign governments granting Russian athletes visas and the athletes passing anti-doping regulations.

It added that while Russian athletes can compete in ITTF championships and events under their national symbols, it does not automatically mean that the Russian flag will be displayed and the anthem played at the 2028 Olympics.

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