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Russian Fencer Wins World Championship Gold in First Competition Under National Flag Since 2022

By AFP

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Pavel Graudyn. **REUTERS /T yrone Siu**

A Russian fencer has won gold at the World Fencing Championships in Hong Kong, marking the country's first world title since being allowed to compete under its own flag in the sport.

Pavel Graudyn defeated South Korea's Do Gyeong-dong 15-7 in the men's individual sabre final on Tuesday.

The event was the first major championship since the International Fencing Federation lifted all restrictions on Russian and Belarusian athletes on June 2.

Initial sanctions imposed in 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine had forced athletes from both countries to compete strictly as neutrals.

Earlier this month, the International Olympic Committee also eased restrictions, clearing Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete in team events and participate in qualifiers for the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

Ukraine condemned the IOC's move as "premature" and "unfounded" after more than four years of war.

Fencing joins governing bodies in swimming, gymnastics, judo, taekwondo and wrestling that have recently removed restrictions on Russian and Belarusian competitors.

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