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International Equestrian Federation Lifts Restrictions on Russian Riders

By Reuters

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Natalia Simonia, 2022 Russian show jumping champion. **The Russian Equestrian Federation**

The International Equestrian Federation (FEI) will lift restrictions on Russian riders and officials starting Oct. 5 and once again allow international competitions to be held in Russia, the governing body has said.

Russian and Belarusian riders have been barred from representing their countries under their national flags at FEI events since March 2022, though some have competed as neutral athletes.

The FEI said the decision followed the International Olympic Committee's move in July to provisionally lift its suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC).

Russia's equestrian federation said Wednesday that the FEI Council had approved the move after what it described as extensive negotiations between the national body and international

officials.

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Under the new rules, Russia can host FEI-sanctioned competitions from Oct. 5, subject to compliance with FEI regulations. The restrictions on Russian national flags, anthems, colors, uniforms and other national identifiers will also be lifted.

"The FEI has also received written confirmation from the Russian Equestrian Federation that it does not develop equestrian sport or operate equestrian clubs in the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions, nor in Crimea and Sevastopol," an FEI spokesperson said in Wednesday's statement.

The FEI said it would continue to support Ukraine through a relief fund that it established in 2022 "to help address some of the urgent needs of the country's equestrian community."

Other international federations, including aquatics, motorsport, modern pentathlon, wrestling and gymnastics, have also eased restrictions on Russian and Belarusian athletes.

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