

Flag Bearer Zubkov Runs Away With Two-Man Gold

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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ROSA KHUTOR — Alexander Zubkov finally secured the Olympic bobsleigh gold he came out of retirement to win when he powered to the two-man title at the Sochi Games.

The 39-year-old, Russia's flag bearer at the Games opening ceremony, proved uncatchable on home ice and sealed victory with two more solid runs in front of an exuberant crowd at the Sanki Sliding Centre whose chants of "Rossiya!" echoed down the valley.

Pushed by formidable brakeman and Sochi native Alexei Voyevoda, a former arm wrestling world champion, Zubkov extended his first-day lead to half a second with a track record 56.08 seconds on his third run and was quickest of all again on his final slide.

The podium placings remained as they had overnight, Zubkov prevailing by an impressive 0.66 seconds, with Switzerland's Beat Hefti taking silver and Steve Holcomb of the U.S. in bronze.

"It is very different when you have to compete for two days — I had a night full of dreams, worries and anticipation," Zubkov said. "I tried to relax. We had some very strong contenders but we have proven we are Olympic champions.

"It is everybody's victory — coaches, technicians and fans. We did our job in the race without thinking about the competitors."

Zubkov briefly entered politics after winning a bronze with Voyevoda, 33, in Vancouver four years ago, before returning to the sport in a bid to win gold at his home Games.

The pair also won Olympic silver in Russia's four-man sled in 2006.

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