

95 Russian Athletes Cleared of Doping Charges by WADA

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Christinne Muschi / Reuters

The World Anti-Doping Agency has cleared 95 Russian athletes of doping charges because it lacked sufficient evidence to support the allegations, an internal WADA report [obtained](#) by the New York Times says.

An independent report by WADA in 2016 accused Russia of running a “state-sponsored doping program” to cover up positive drug tests for its athletes at major international competitions.

A day before the opening ceremony of the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics, the International Olympic Committee barred 167 Russian athletes from participating on account of doping charges and imposed a blanket ban on the paralympic team. Lawyer Richard McLaren, who has been leading an investigation into Russian doping, identified upwards of 1,000 implicated athletes.

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Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of Moscow's anti-doping laboratory, in a 2016 interview admitted to personally administering three different steroids to Russian athletes and destroying tainted urine samples during the 2014 Sochi Olympics. Rodchenkov gave the interview shortly after fleeing Russia to the United States.

According to the report cited by the New York Times, Rodchenkov is currently unavailable to testify for the “unforeseeable” future and “due to circumstances beyond WADA’s control.”

His absence contributed to WADA’s decision that "the available evidence was insufficient to support the assertion of an ADRV (anti-doping rule violation) against these 95 athletes.” The report does not specify who the athletes are.

Three Russian cyclists banned from participating in the 2016 Rio Olympics [filed](#) a lawsuit on Sept. 11 in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice against Richard McLaren and WADA, alleging that they were “unfairly implicated” and wrongfully associated with cheaters and doping.

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