

Russian Olympian convicted of murder plot

by UPI

NOVOSIBIRSK, Russia -- A Russian court in Novosibirsk on Monday convicted four-time Russian Olympic biathlon gold medalist Alexander Tikhonov of helping plot a murder. However, despite finding Tikhonov guilty and sentencing him to three years in prison, he was immediately granted a parliamentary amnesty, the Novosti news agency reported. Tikhonov, who won his gold medals in Olympics in 1968 through 1980, was charged with acting as a mediator in finding hired guns to kill a business rival. He reiterated his plea of innocent Monday before the verdict was announced. Prosecutors said Tikhonov paid some men \$180,000 in advance but the crime was thwarted when the assassins notified the Federal Security Service and testified at related trials, Itar-Tass reported. In 2002, the same regional court sentenced Tikhonov's brother to four years in prison in connection with the scheme.

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