

Elena Rybakina's Coach Cleared to Return by WTA Tour

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The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) has lifted the suspension of Stefano Vukov, the coach of 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina, allowing him to return to tour events following an investigation into a potential breach of the organisation's code of conduct.

Vukov was provisionally suspended in January amid an inquiry by the WTA. At that time, the tour stated that the investigation was ongoing and did not specify the expected duration of

the ban. In February, the suspension was maintained without a clear end date. However, a recent announcement confirmed that Vukov would now be eligible to receive credentials granting access to player areas and practice courts during WTA tournaments.

In a statement, the WTA emphasised its commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for athletes and all participants. It noted that any sanctions following breaches of its safeguarding rules are thoroughly reviewed and subject to appeal before an independent tribunal. While the details of the case remain confidential, the organisation confirmed that Vukov's suspension has been lifted, allowing him to resume his coaching duties at official events.

Rybakina, currently ranked No. 10 on the WTA Tour, previously announced ahead of last year's US Open that she would part ways with Vukov. However, she later confirmed before the Australian Open that he would rejoin her coaching team. The player has consistently maintained that she was never mistreated during their time working together.

Recently, Rybakina advanced to the semifinals of the National Bank Open in Montreal, where she was defeated by Canadian teenager Victoria Mboko, who went on to win the tournament.

The WTA's safeguarding measures are part of broader efforts within professional sports to ensure athlete welfare and uphold ethical standards. Maintaining transparency and fairness during disciplinary procedures remains a priority for the organisation.