

FGG Condemns Decision by World Rugby to Ban Trans Women from Playing Without Vote

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, USA, 11 October 2020

The Federation of Gay Games is both shocked and appalled by World Rugby's decision to ban transgender women from competing in the sport.

According to the press release, World Rugby convened cross-functional experts from the trans, player, medical, social and legal communities to assess the impact of this inclusion from many angles, but unfortunately the ban has been brought in, despite huge push back from around the world after the policy documents were leaked.

The Federation of Gay Games firmly believes in the power of sport to unite and to change lives, and the continued marginalization of sections of society prevents them from experiencing true inclusion.

This decision from World Rugby has set a precedent for other world level governing bodies, and for national rugby unions around the World. This policy could have a global impact at a participation level to ban trans women from playing rugby, and this has to be recognized and prevented.

Moreover, World Rugby informed all their Member Unions that there would be a Council vote on this topic in November. A governing body is answerable to its members and this decision goes against the rules of adherence and collaboration that a true consultative process requires.

The Federation of Gay Games condemns this decision by World Rugby, and refuses to work with any organization that places any kind of restrictions of any member of the LGBTQ+ community to take part in any of their initiatives.

The Gay Games is devoted to Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best™, and as a result,

the FGG's Diversity and Inclusion Committee has developed a gender inclusion policy to provide everyone a safe and inclusive space to participate in their sport or cultural event at the Gay Games in the gender with which they identify.

We take huge pride in being able to support the entire LGBTQ+ global community to take part in the Gay Games whatever their sex or gender identify might be, or any other characteristic.

Other sports teams and organizations are showing progressive intention behind their belief to be fully inclusive. We applaud San Diego Loyals soccer team for taking stands against racial and homophobic abuse directed against their players, and to the NFL for making a video for National Coming Out Day that features gay and bi former players with current players vocalizing their support.

These organizations, as much as individuals, are role models that are driving positive growth, and world level governing bodies of sport should be doing the same, not banning groups of people from taking part.

There is no place for any kind of homophobia, biphobia, lesbophobia or transphobia in sport.

Request to show your support

Rugby For All is running a campaign and we encourage all to support and contribute. The details of the campaign are below:

There are two options to participate in the social media campaign. On October 15th, post a photo of you holding a statement about a time you've felt unsafe as a woman in sport OR posting a video using the template.

Option 1 (PHOTO):

Have someone take a picture of you holding your statement. Make sure the writing is large and legible. (See below for some sample reasons.) Tag us if you can: IG: [@rugbyforall.co](https://www.instagram.com/rugbyforall.co); Twitter: [@RugbyForAll](https://twitter.com/RugbyForAll); TikTok: [@rugbyforall.co](https://www.tiktok.com/@rugbyforall.co)

Write:

[As a woman in sport](#), I've felt unsafe when:

- My team was forced to use a rusty scrum sled because that's all we had.
- My team played a season without a coach because we couldn't afford it.
- Members of our club made sexist/homophobic/racist comments during team events.
- I was sexually harassed by another member of our club.
- My right to play my sport was questioned because of the way I look.
- I found out my coach was sleeping with one of my teammates.
- We had an inexperienced ref who lost control of the match.

Here is the updated post copy (please post this with your photo AND/OR video on October 15th.

INSTAGRAM/FACEBOOK

@WorldRugby has banned trans women on the basis of "safety" without conclusive evidence. This makes the 2021@rugbyworldcup the first openly anti-trans world sporting event.

This is not inclusivity. This is not solidarity. This is not rugby.

As women in sport, there are many times we've felt unsafe, but sharing the pitch with trans women is not one of them. Join [@rugbyforall.co](https://www.rugbyforall.co) and share a time you felt unsafe as a woman in sport to tell [@worldrugby](https://twitter.com/worldrugby) to focus on the things that undoubtedly harm women's sport, let trans women play, and keep [#RugbyForAll](https://twitter.com/RugbyForAll). [#TackleTransphobia](https://twitter.com/TackleTransphobia) [#LetUsPlay](https://twitter.com/LetUsPlay) [#RugbyParaTodes](https://twitter.com/RugbyParaTodes) www.rugbyforall.co

TWITTER

[@WorldRugby](https://twitter.com/WorldRugby) has banned trans women b/c of "safety" w/o conclusive evidence. As women in sport, there are times we've felt unsafe, but sharing the field w/ trans women is not one of them. Join [@rugbyforall](https://twitter.com/rugbyforall), share your story, and tell WR to keep [#RugbyForAll](https://twitter.com/RugbyForAll). [#TackleTransphobia](https://twitter.com/TackleTransphobia)

Option 2 (VIDEO):

Share a 30-second (or less) story of a time when you've been made to feel unsafe as a woman in sport.

1. Use the video template below with your teammates or by yourself. Make it personal using your own experiences and words.
2. Everyone who participates will be asked to post on October 15th.

Script template:

"As a women's [insert sport] player, I've felt unsafe when [reason 1], when [reason 2], and when [reason 3]. I've felt unsafe when [reason 4].

But I have never felt unsafe sharing the pitch with trans women. I/We call on World Rugby to focus on the things that undoubtedly harm women's rugby and keep Rugby For All."

Shooting notes:

Use vertical video, holding phone up and down

Make sure light source is in front of you, natural light is best

Minimize background noise

Make it your own, put it into your own words

Visuals: solo or group, video (speaking to camera or holding written reason)

Use the following tags if you can: IG: [@rugbyforall.co](https://www.instagram.com/rugbyforall.co); Twitter: [@RugbyForAll](https://twitter.com/RugbyForAll); TikTok: [@rugbyforall.co](https://www.tiktok.com/@rugbyforall.co)

It's time World Rugby listened to the rugby community. Let's be loud and proud for our trans teammates. Please plan to release your post on October 15th. (If you can't do the 15th, any time after would still work.) Thank you for speaking up and helping to keep [#RugbyForAll](https://twitter.com/RugbyForAll).

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About the Federation of Gay Games

The Gay Games was conceived by Dr. Tom Waddell, an Olympic decathlete, as a way to empower thousands of LGBTQ+ athletes and artists through sport, culture, and fellowship. It was first held in San Francisco in 1982. Subsequent Gay Games were held in San Francisco (1986), Vancouver (1990), New York (1994), Amsterdam (1998), Sydney (2002), Chicago (2006), Cologne (2010), Cleveland+Akron (2014), and Paris (2018). Gay Games 11 will be

The Federation of Gay Games Mail - FGG Condemns Decision by World Rugby to Ban Trans Women from Playing Without Vote held in Hong Kong in 2022. Visit www.gaygameshk2022.com for more information.

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Address:

[584 Castro Street, Suite 343, San Francisco, CA 94114 USA](#)

Phone: +1-866-459-1261

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Share your stories of Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best™ with the hashtag #gaygames

Since the first Gay Games in 1982, the Federation of Gay Games mission promotes equality in and through sport and culture and ensures that the Gay Games, the world's largest sports and culture festival open to all, take place every four years under the founding principles of *Participation, Inclusion, and Personal Best™*.

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Address: [584 Castro Street Suite #343](#) • [San Francisco, CA 94114](#) • Phone: +1-866-459-1261