# J.K. Rowling criticises BBC over treatment of Martina Navratilova by new sports director



J.K. Rowling has criticized the BBC and its new director of sport, Alex Kay-Jelski, after he allegedly blocked tennis legend Martina Navratilova on social media and stated she was not an expert on trans athletes. Rowling called Kay-Jelski's actions "unbelievable" and described the BBC’s coverage of women's rights and gender issues as "shameful."

The dispute arose when a 2019 article by Kay-Jelski resurfaced. In the article, he noted that while Navratilova and former Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies were "important, influential voices," they were "not experts" on the topic of trans athletes. Navratilova reacted by criticizing Kay-Jelski and revealing she had been blocked by him on social media.

The BBC declined to comment on the situation but stated that Kay-Jelski’s focus would be on his new role. The controversy is notable as Navratilova is part of the BBC's Wimbledon coverage team.

Kay-Jelski's article further compared separate categories for trans athletes to having special categories for Jamaican sprinters and Ethiopian marathon runners, a suggestion he deemed unreasonable.

J.K. Rowling has been an outspoken advocate for women's sex-based rights and has criticized what she perceives as trans activism's assault on these rights. The BBC has faced scrutiny over its handling of gender issues, with past accusations of undue influence by campaign groups like Stonewall.