# BBC faces controversy over new sports head's comments on trans athletes



The BBC is embroiled in a controversy following comments made by its new head of sport, Alex Kay-Jelski. In a 2019 article for The Times, Kay-Jelski stated that former Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies and tennis star Martina Navratilova are "not experts" on the subject of trans athletes, prompting a backlash.

Kay-Jelski, who began his role at the BBC in April, compared separate categories for trans athletes to creating specific categories for Jamaican sprinters and Ethiopian marathon runners, describing the idea as "mad" and "nasty."

Davies, known for opposing trans women competing alongside cisgender women, responded by writing a letter to BBC's director general, Tim Davie, accusing Kay-Jelski of misogyny and questioning his expertise in women's sports. She also criticized his remarks as racially insensitive.

Navratilova, also critical of trans women in women's sports, called Kay-Jelski "pretty pathetic" for blocking her on X (formerly Twitter). Author J.K. Rowling supported the athletes, denouncing Kay-Jelski's comments as "unbelievable."

Despite the controversy, Davies and Navratilova are set to continue their affiliations with the BBC at upcoming events, including the Paris Olympics and Wimbledon.