# Lucy Zelic criticises Australian sports bodies for prioritising gender ideology over female athletes' protection



Journalist Lucy Zelic has criticized various Australian sporting organizations for allegedly prioritizing gender ideology over protecting female athletes by allowing transgender athletes to compete in women’s sports. Speaking with Sky News Australia's Chris Kenny, Zelic specifically targeted Sports Australia and Football Australia, accusing them of ignoring scientific biological differences and compromising the integrity of female sports.

In her critique, Zelic singled out Sports Australia CEO Kieren Perkins, who has previously called individuals concerned about women's sports "bigots." Zelic argued that the inclusion of biological males in women's sports presents significant challenges and criticized the swift accommodation of gender ideology by these organizations.

She also cited the Sydney-based Flying Bats FC, which faced controversy in March for including five trans players in their winning squad. Flying Bats club president Jennifer Peden defended the team's inclusivity, emphasizing the benefits of participation in sports for marginalized LGBTQIA+ communities and the importance of treating cisgender and transgender players equally.

Football Australia responded, acknowledging the complexity of the issue and outlining plans to engage experts in sports science, medicine, and high performance for a comprehensive review. However, Zelic dismissed their response as inadequate.

This discussion follows the case of transgender swimmer Lia Thomas, who was denied a spot on the US women’s team for the upcoming Paris Olympics by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The ruling, which prevents biological males from competing in women’s categories, was praised by American swimmer Riley Gaines and World Aquatics as a step toward protecting women's sports.