



Written by [James Murphy](#) on October 7, 2024

Another Women's Volleyball Team Opts Out of Playing Against a Man

Last week, the Utah State women's volleyball team chose to forfeit a match against San Jose State University (SJSU). The San Jose State team currently includes a biological male, Brayden (aka "Blair") Fleming, and this apparently led to the decision.

Utah State joins a [growing](#) list of teams — Wyoming, Southern Utah, and Boise State are the others so far — who have chosen not to play the undefeated San Jose State team. The match goes down as a forfeit with San Jose State being granted the win, but the action is about much more than a win/loss record.



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Thus far, the universities involved in the forfeits have issued bland announcements about the decision, but failed to give any reason. For instance, Utah State said, "Utah State University will not participate in its scheduled October 23, 2024, volleyball match at San Jose State University. The University will abide by Mountain West Conference policy regarding how this match is recorded."

GOP Pols Support the Women

The decision not to play these matches appears to be coming from the athletes themselves.

And GOP politicians are supporting them.

"To the Utah State and Southern Utah Women Volleyball teams: We stand behind you and are cheering you on! Thank you for standing up for not only yourselves, but for women across the country — current and future generations!" Utah House Speaker Mike Schultz [posted on X](#).

"It's time for the NCAA to take action to protect our female athletes and preserve women's sports," Schultz added.

Utah Governor Spencer Cox also [weighed in](#) on X:

I stand with the students, coaches and leadership at @SUUtbirds and @USUAggies in their decision to forgo their women's volleyball matches against San Jose State.

Hurt Feelings?

San Jose State has chosen to play the "hurt feelings" card rather than address the issue. Michelle Smith McDonald, director of media relations for the school said [in a statement](#):

It is disappointing that our SJSU student athletes, who are in full compliance with NCAA and Mountain West rules and regulations, are being denied opportunities to compete. We are committed to supporting our student-athletes through these challenges and in their ability



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to compete in an inclusive, fair, safe and respectful environment.

Leaders of the local LGBT community called the forfeits “uninformed and highly uneducated.”

In [a statement](#), Chad Call of Utah Pride Center claimed:

We are disappointed by the recent decision of Utah State University to cancel their volleyball match with San Jose State due to the participation of a transgender woman athlete. We expect more out of our state’s institutions of higher learning.

Fleming’s Teammate Speaks Out

While the Utah Pride Center and San Jose State may be disappointed by the forfeits, one person who is very close to the situation has a different point of view. Brooke Slusser, a teammate of Fleming on the San Jose State volleyball team has joined a lawsuit brought by female athletes against the NCAA. The suit contends that the NCAA is putting female athletes at risk by having them compete against biological males such as Fleming, as well as insisting they share locker rooms with them.

According to Slusser, it was an easy decision even though it could potentially alienate her teammate. She [told OutKick Sports](#):

It’s crazy to say, but it was an easy decision for me to join because it’s something I truly believe in. And it’s been easy because all the support that I’m getting — 99% of it is just love and encouragement. So, for me, it shows that I made the right decision to join. This is something that so many people do care about. It’s just that so many people are scared to talk about it.

Slusser claims that San Jose State hid Fleming’s true sex for all of 2023. And when it did become known, players were discouraged from talking about it. She continued:

And then, it still being a topic we weren’t really allowed to talk about. It was just kind of whispers behind closed doors that this is what’s happening, but no one’s really talked about it or addressed it.

And apparently that’s what the NCAA wants. They want the females being victimized by this unfair and perverse competition to just accept it and be quiet. Unfortunately for them, Slusser and other female athletes are voicing their displeasure, and the movement appears to be catching on.



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