



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 5, 2023

Biological Male Wins Prestigious Cycling Race Meant for Females

Cyclist Austin Killips, a 27-year-old biological male who identifies as a female, won the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) Women's Division of the Tour of the Gila, a nearly 66-mile, five-stage race held in New Mexico. On April 30, Killips won the fifth stage of the race and the overall title by 89 seconds over second-place finisher Marcela Prieto Castañeda.

Killips' win was met with outrage by many in women's athletics who contend that males who have gone through puberty should not be allowed to compete in female sporting events. Female tennis great Martina Navratilova, a lesbian and an LGBT icon, was among the first to register a complaint about the blatantly unfair situation.

"Transgender cyclist Austin Killips wins women's race, causes outrage- this will happen more and more- women's sports is NOT THE PLACE for trans identified male athletes," Navratilova tweeted.

Navratilova was not alone in her criticism. Former world champion female cyclist Alison Sydor also blasted the rules that allowed Killips to race against women.

"The current UCI rules that allow males to compete in female cycling events are NOT fair to female athletes. Time for UCI to admit this current rule situation is unsustainable and leaving a black mark on cycling as a fair sport for females," Sydor said in a tweet.

And Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies told the *Daily Mail*, "This is beyond disappointing. Those in charge should hang their heads in shame. The UCI is not fit for purpose."

The race itself [commented](#) on the controversy, but directed all blame to the governing body of the sport.

"Tour of the Gila recognizes the passionate debate regarding rider eligibility and classifications of riders set by UCI and USA Cycling and encourages UCI and USA Cycling to host an open discussion on the matter. All comments regarding rider eligibility should be directed to UCI and USA Cycling."

For the record, Killips broke no current rules, and his win was sanctioned by UCI, the cycling world's governing body — although UCI has signaled that it may be rethinking its rules on transgender athletes going forward.

"The UCI's objective remains the same: to take into consideration, in the context of the evolution of our society, the desire of transgender athletes to practice cycling," the organization said in a statement. "The UCI also hears the voices of female athletes and their concerns about an equal playing field for competitors, and will take into account all elements, including the evolution of scientific knowledge."



Twitter
Austin Killips



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Any new rules concerning transgender athletes in cycling won't be announced until August, when UCI will meet in Glasgow.

Killips commented about the situation as well, telling *Cycling News*, "It is incredibly painful to be othered - queer, trans, non-binary athletes who feel inspired to survive, race and pursue the sport in every way."

What about the "othering" of elite female athletes who train all their lives for such races only to be denied victory by a male competitor?

"Maybe this is the first Tour of the Gila that a trans woman has won, but we've been out here for a while," Killips added. "There is this idea of being the first ones to do things, but it's also like, there are not that many of us, so when the stars align, or we accomplish something notable, the previous ones fall off the collective consciousness. It isn't unprecedented, we've kind of been around for a while, and there have been a lot of people who have paved the way for what I am doing."

While the biologically male Killips might be commended for cycling extremely fast for a woman, it's obvious that he doesn't understand (or care about) what he's doing to his competitors. Among those competitors was Hannah Arensman, an elite female cyclist who retired at the age of 24 after finishing behind Killips at the 2022 National Championship Cyclocross in December.

"It's been very disheartening to finish this way," Arensman [explained](#) to *The Washington Times*. "If this does not change, if the rules are not changed to make women's sports for women, there's not going to be women's sports for the next generation. The records are all going to go to male riders."

The transgender community won't be satisfied until they've infiltrated every aspect of culture, including women's sports. But women's sports are unique, because men identifying as women can not only infiltrate that world, they can dominate it.



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