

Fairness in Women's Sports: Connecticut

Case Name: *Soule v. Connecticut Association of Schools*

Case Status: Lawsuit filed in federal court on February 12, 2020. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights declared the CIAC's policies in violation of Title IX on May 15, 2020.



Significance: Allowing males to compete in the girl's category creates an unfair playing field and violates Title IX.

Background:

Selina Soule, Chelsea Mitchell, Alanna Smith, and Ashley Nicoletti are elite athletes from Connecticut. As dedicated competitors, they have all devoted countless days, nights, and weekends to training, striving to shave mere fractions of a second off their race times. They have done so hoping for the personal satisfaction of victory, an opportunity to participate in state and regional meets, and a chance to earn a college scholarship. Yet, despite their best efforts, Selina, Chelsea, Alanna, and Ashley entered races over the past few years knowing that they and their fellow female competitors have little chance of winning. That's because the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) allows males to compete in girls' athletic competitions based on gender identity. Not only does the CIAC's policy—and the endorsement of it by public high schools—create an unfair playing field for female athletes; the policy reverses nearly 50 years of athletic advances for women.

Key Points

- Girls deserve the same opportunity as boys to excel and chase their dreams. Allowing boys to compete in girls' sports shatters dreams and takes away opportunities.
- Comparably fit and trained males will always have physical advantages over girls—that's the reason we have women's sports.
- Men and women are different, and those differences matter. When schools and society ignore biological reality, it's girls who pay the price.

Key Facts

- In Connecticut, two boys have won 15 women's track championship titles between 2017-2019—titles once held by nine different girls. Because of the CIAC's policies, girls have lost over 85 opportunities to participate in higher levels of competition.
- Science and common sense tell us that males are generally bigger, faster, and stronger than females. For example, males have greater strength, denser bones, larger hearts, and greater lung capacity. No amount of testosterone suppression can eliminate all those advantages.
- This isn't just about winning. Girls are losing the opportunity to compete fairly, showcase their talents to college scouts, and potentially earn the college scholarships that are crucial to launching their future careers.

The Bottom Line: Girls deserve to compete on a level playing field. Forcing female athletes to compete against biological males ignores real differences between the sexes, isn't fair, and destroys their athletic opportunities.