# WPBSA and other sports bodies tighten transgender participation rules following Supreme Court ruling



The World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) is currently reviewing its gender policy that may result in the prohibition of transgender women from competing in female snooker events, a move reflecting recent shifts in regulations within other sports such as football and cricket. This reconsideration follows last month’s landmark ruling by the Supreme Court regarding the legal definition of a woman, which has prompted various sporting bodies to reassess their inclusion policies.

Amidst this backdrop, LGBTQ+ charity Stonewall faced criticism for its response to the Supreme Court ruling, with some suggesting it has been encouraging organisations to disregard legal definitions of biological sex. Maya Forstater, chief executive of women's rights group Sex Matters, voiced her concerns, stating that Stonewall's influence and charitable status should not be used to promote what she described as unlawful practices. Speaking to The Telegraph, Forstater emphasised that “it should not be encouraging employers, service providers, sports governing bodies or individuals to ignore or flout the law.”

The potential changes to the WPBSA's policies have been welcomed by former world No.1 Maria Catalano, who has refused to compete in women’s snooker for the past three years in protest of existing regulations that allowed trans women with reduced testosterone levels to participate in the female division.

In a parallel development, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced on Friday that transgender women would be barred from participating in all levels of women's cricket. This decision is part of a broader crackdown on trans participation in women's sports, with immediate effect. While the ECB has asserted that it remains committed to inclusivity, it clarified that trans women and girls could still compete in open and mixed categories. The ECB expressed its recognition of the significant impact this ruling would have on affected individuals and stated that it would continue to support them through recreational boards while awaiting further guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Moreover, the English Football Association (FA) recently implemented a similar policy, declaring that transgender women would not be permitted to play in women’s football beginning June 1. Stonewall FC, a football team squarely focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion, expressed profound disappointment regarding the FA's ruling, proclaiming that the change sends a harmful message to transgender players who wish to engage in the sport they love as their identified gender. Their statement affirmed, “Trans rights are human rights. That includes the right to play, to belong and to thrive in sport,” signalling strong opposition to policies that restrict accessibility.

Commenting on the ongoing situation, a spokesperson for Stonewall acknowledged the complexities introduced by the Supreme Court ruling, stating that the organisation is currently seeking legal advice to grasp its implications fully. Meanwhile, the WPBSA has indicated that it is navigating a complicated landscape of equality legislation that spans both the UK and global contexts, underscoring the multifaceted nature of this ongoing discussion in sports.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/cricket/transgender-women-barred-womens-girls-cricket-england-2025-05-02/> - The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has announced that transgender women will no longer be permitted to participate in women's and girls' cricket matches in England, effective immediately. This decision follows a recent UK Supreme Court ruling stating that only biological women fall under the legal definition of 'woman' in equality laws. While transgender women are barred from participating in gender-specific female teams, they are still allowed to compete in open and mixed cricket matches. The ECB emphasized its commitment to inclusivity and stated that the updated regulations aim to balance fairness and safety in the sport. Transgender players were previously excluded from the top two tiers of women's cricket and the women's Hundred tournament under new policies. The ECB plans to work with Recreational Cricket Boards to support those impacted by the policy and is awaiting further guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This move aligns with a broader trend, following a similar decision by England's Football Association to prohibit transgender women from participating in women’s soccer.
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2024/oct/17/cricket-transgender-women-banned-top-two-tiers> - The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has updated its transgender participation policy, barring transgender women from competing in the top two tiers of women's domestic cricket and the women's Hundred competition. This policy aligns with the International Cricket Council's (ICC) decision to exclude transgender women who have undergone male puberty from international women's cricket. The ECB emphasized that this decision was made after extensive consultation and consideration of fairness, safety, and inclusion.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/articles/c3vk40xkqy0o> - The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will ban transgender women from playing at the elite level of women's domestic cricket from 2025. Any player who has gone through male puberty will not be eligible to feature in the top two tiers of the women's game. The new regulations will also apply to The Hundred's women's competition, but transgender women will be eligible to play in tier three of the domestic structure, which comprises traditionally lower-level counties, and in recreational cricket. This decision follows the International Cricket Council's (ICC) ban on transgender women from international women's matches.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/21/transgender-players-banned-from-international-womens-cricket-by-icc> - The International Cricket Council (ICC) has become the latest sports body to ban transgender players from the elite women’s game if they have gone through male puberty. The ICC said it had taken the decision, following an extensive scientific review and nine-month consultation, to 'protect the integrity of the international women’s game and the safety of players'. This decision aligns with similar actions taken by other sports organizations, such as rugby union, swimming, cycling, athletics, and rugby league.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/67470009> - Transgender women have been barred from playing in international women's matches under new regulations from the International Cricket Council (ICC). Any player who has gone through male puberty will not be eligible for women's internationals regardless of any surgery or treatment undertaken. The new regulations will be reviewed within two years. This decision follows a nine-month consultation process and is based on 'protection of the integrity of the women's game, safety, fairness, and inclusion'.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/21/transgender-players-banned-from-international-womens-cricket-by-icc> - The International Cricket Council (ICC) has become the latest sports body to ban transgender players from the elite women’s game if they have gone through male puberty. The ICC said it had taken the decision, following an extensive scientific review and nine-month consultation, to 'protect the integrity of the international women’s game and the safety of players'. This decision aligns with similar actions taken by other sports organizations, such as rugby union, swimming, cycling, athletics, and rugby league.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14674057/Trans-players-banned-womens-snooker.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data