

**ATHLETE
ACTIVIST**



PROTECTING THE ATHLETE ACTIVIST

Play the Game 2019

Nikki Dryden Founder

Athlete Activist & Lex
Athletica

Athlete Activist & Lex Athletica

Athlete Activist

- Secure and protect the human rights of all athletes globally,
- Build the capacity of athletes to impact social change by using the power of sport to leverage humanitarian and rights outcomes in our sport and societies, and
- Amplify the athlete voice by connecting athletes to each other and the broader human rights movement.

Lex Athletica

- Build the capacity of legal professionals to represent athletes' human rights in a variety of tribunals,
- Connect legal professionals around the globe working to promote and protect the human rights of athletes, and
- Provide legal advocacy where possible to improve and protect athletes' human rights.

Athlete “Troublemakers”

Beijing 2008

Darfur Athlete Activists

- Olympic gold medalist Joey Cheek's visa was withdrawn along with 2 other members of Team Darfur
- 9 US Athletes listed as possible “Troublemakers” by the Chinese Government
- Athletes from 5 other countries were threatened by the Chinese Government for membership in Team Darfur



“Many of the strongest voices on Darfur have come from grassroots organizations like Team Darfur, and these voices must not be silenced.”

Presidential candidate Barack Obama, August 2008

“The moral dilemma, you solve it before you get on the plane...If it is so tough for you that you can't bear not to say anything, stay at home...When you go to an Olympics, part of the deal is that it is not a political manifestation. You're there as a member of your national Olympic committee to compete in accordance with the rules. You're entitled to your private opinion. (But) if you feel so outraged by what's going on in Darfur or in Tibet that you can't bear going to China, then don't go.”

IOC Member Dick Pound 2008



ATHLETE ACTIVISTS

- To be a human rights defender, a person can act to address any human right (or rights) on behalf of individuals or groups.
- Human rights defenders seek the promotion and protection of civil and political rights as well as the promotion, protection and realization of economic, social and cultural rights.
- Athletes Activists can be human rights defenders
 - *But athletes must first have their own human rights protected*

Hakeem Al-Araibi

- In 2011, Bahraini National Footballer Hakeem Al-Arabi was arrested and tortured during the Arab Spring because he was an athlete.
- During the Arab Spring, more than 150 athletes, coaches, and sportspeople, were targeted by the President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, Prince Nasser, member of the ruling Al-Khalifa family and son of the King.
 - *“Anyone who called for the fall of the regime, may a wall fall on his head...Whether he is an athlete, socialite or politician...Today is judgment day...Bahrain is an island and there is no escape.”*
- Fleeing persecution, Hakeem was granted refugee protection in Australia.
 - *In 2015, he spoke out including against a FIFA Vice-President*
- In retaliation, he was unlawfully detained in Thailand in 2018 at the behest of the Bahraini royal family, which controls Bahrain and Bahraini sport.

Megan Rapinoe



USA Soccer: Representing your country is a privilege and honor for any player is associated with U.S. Soccer's National Team.

- "In front of national and often global audiences, the playing of our national anthem is an opportunity...to reflect upon the liberties and freedom we all appreciate in this country. "
- **As part of the privilege to represent your country**, we have an expectation that our players and coaches will stand and honor our flag while the National Anthem is played."

MLS: The National Anthem...[is] an important and time-honored opportunity to salute our country and stand up for its principles -- whether in the United States or in Canada.

- "At the same time, freedom of speech -- and the right to peaceful protest -- are the hallmarks of both countries. Though we encourage our players to stand during the national anthem, **we respect and support their right to express their personal beliefs.**"

What are Athlete Human Rights?

- International law and most democratic countries recognize the universality of
 - *freedom of expression and assembly,*
 - *freedom from abuse*
 - *as well as due process rights*
 - *and more!*

Freedom of Expression

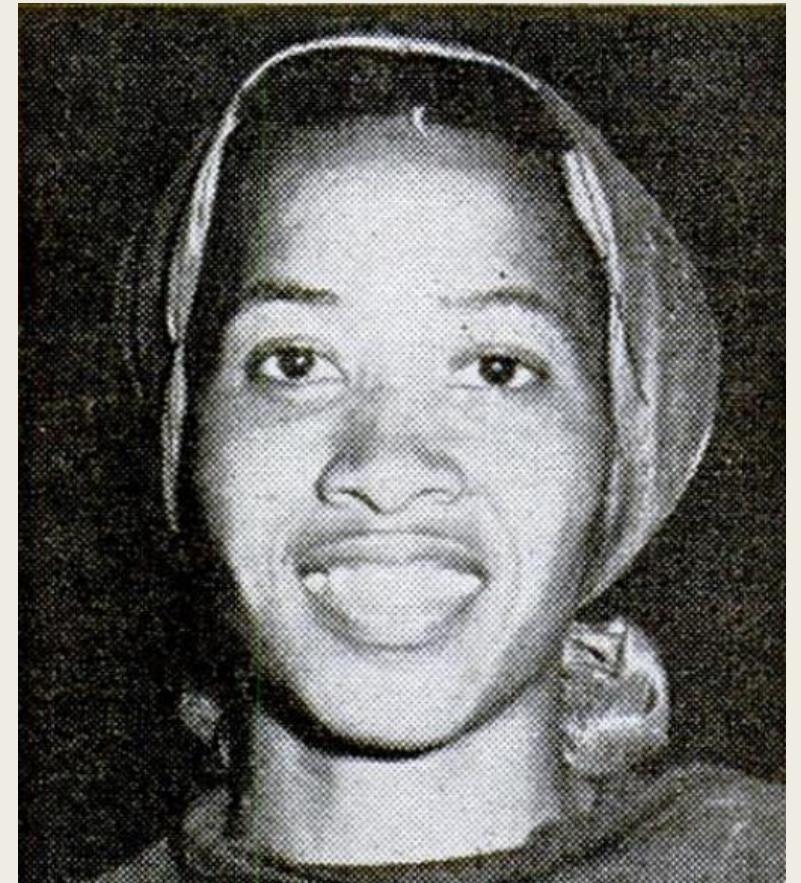
ICCPR Article 19

“Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference”

“Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression”



Wyomia Tyus 1968



Eroseanna "Rose" Robinson 1959



The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination notes in Article 5 that ***“racial and ethnic minorities equally should not be discriminated against and have equal access to airing their views and sharing information of concern to them...***

Broadcasters also have a responsibility to promote a culture of tolerance and ensure that their broadcasts do not become a vehicle for spreading hatred and contempt of minority groups.”



CEDAW

Article 2-Measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization...measures, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women

Article 4-Affirmative action measures that accelerate "de facto equality between men and women" are not discrimination

Article 5- Measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women...to achieve the elimination of prejudices and customary practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women

Article 13-take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in particular: "The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life."

Wimbledon has sent me a message: I'm only a second class champion

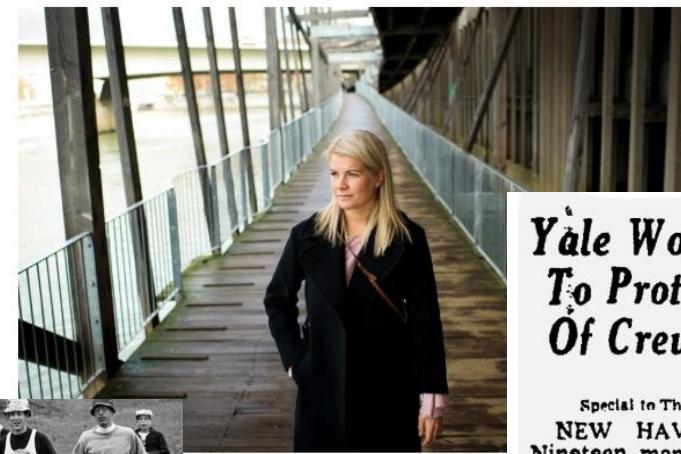
The time has come for it to do the right thing: pay men and women equal prize money

HAVE YOU ever been let down by someone that you had long admired, respected and looked up to? Little in life is more disappointing, particularly when that person does something that goes against the very heart of what you believe is right and fair.

When I was a little girl, and Serena and I played matches together, we often pretended that we were in the final of a famous tournament. More often than

Venus Williams
June 26 2006, 1:00am,
The Times

The best female soccer player boycotts the World Cup



Joni Barnett, Ballon d'Or winner, quit the Norwegian national team to support for women's soccer in her home country.
New York Times

Yale Women Strip To Protest a Lack Of Crew's Showers

Special to The New York Times

NEW HAVEN, March 3—Nineteen members of the Yale women's varsity crew stripped naked, this afternoon in the office of Joni Barnett, director of physical education, to protest the lack of shower facilities at Derby, Conn.

The nude women, with the words "Title IX" emblazoned across their chests and backs in Yale-blue paint, stood at attention as Chris Ernst, a senior from Wilmette, Ill., who

- The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.
- The practice of sport is a human right.
- Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit
- The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Olympic Charter shall be secured without discrimination of any kind, such as
 - *race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*
- Despite the above, the IOC directly curtails athlete rights to freedom of expression and due process

Olympic Ideals

Olympic Charter

Rule 50.2

No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas.

- In the context of the Olympic Games...with regard to individual competitors and teams: **temporary or permanent ineligibility or exclusion** from the Olympic Games, disqualification or withdrawal of accreditation...
- In addition, at the **discretion** of the IOC Executive Board, a competitor or a team may **lose the benefit of any ranking obtained in relation to other events at the Olympic Games** at which he or it was disqualified or excluded; **in such case the medals and diplomas won by him or it shall be returned to the IOC** (Executive Board);
- The competent IOC body...may also, or in lieu of the measures and sanctions authorised by such Rules, **impose financial sanctions...**
- The **sanctions may include fines and/or the suspension or cancellation of any form of financial support** by or emanating from the IOC.
- In all cases, the IOC shall be entitled to recover its related expenses and costs.

FEYISA LILESA RIO 2016

Asylum Seeker/ Exile





Gold medalist Simone Manuel of the United States celebrates on the podium during the medal ceremony for the Women's 100m Freestyle Final on Day 6 of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium on August 11, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Adam Pretty/Getty Images

Simone Manuel Rio 2016

"It means a lot, especially with what is going on in the world today, some of the issues of police brutality," Manuel told reporters during the press conference after her race. *"This win hopefully brings hope and change to some of the issues that are going on. My color comes with the territory."*

International Federations

Anti-gay protest 2013



Anti-doping protest 2019





Race Imboden

@Race_Imboden



We must call for change.

This week I am honored to represent Team USA at the Pan Am Games, taking home Gold and Bronze. My pride however has been cut short by the multiple shortcomings of the country I hold so dear to my heart. Racism, Gun Control, mistreatment of immigrants,



♡ 62K 11:41 AM - Aug 10, 2019

Pan American Games 2019



Gwen Berry

What Athlete Activists Need

- Athletes need their human rights secured
 - *End of Rule 50.2*
 - *Explicit support for freedom of speech, association, and due process in the Olympic Charter*
- End of the autonomy of sport
 - *Domestic and international oversight of sport governing bodies*
 - *External sport governance overall, not internal reforms*
 - *Implementation of due process measures and effective remedial mechanisms for athletes*
 - *Financial support for athlete legal representation*
- True athlete consultation and capacity building
 - *End to forced athlete agreements*
 - *Financial support for athlete capacity building and leadership*