

Cyclist Protests After Losing Women's Race to Transgender Competitor

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The recent Lyons Masters National Championships in Wisconsin have sparked heated debate in the world of competitive cycling after a transgender athlete took first place in the women's race. Julie Peterson, who finished second, is speaking out about what she believes was an unfair situation, one she says she didn't even know she'd be entering.

Peterson, an experienced cyclist, told Fox News that she was never informed that Kate Phillips, a transgender woman, would be competing. "If I had known, I wouldn't have spent thousands of dollars on travel and time off work to come and do a race," she said. The cost

was only part of her frustration. After crossing the finish line behind Phillips, Peterson protested, refusing to step onto the winners' podium.

"I said, 'I don't want to race against a man,' and they quickly scolded me and said, 'Oh, you can't call him a man,'" Peterson recalled. "And I'm like, 'Well, he is a man.'" Her comments quickly drew attention from other female cyclists who feel similarly concerned about competing against athletes born male.

Debbie Milne, a veteran racer who finished seventh place, echoed Peterson's sentiments. Milne argued that biological differences, including muscle mass and power, create unavoidable advantages. "To be fair to all humans, he was born a biological male. That is a fact," she said. "And that is the thing that makes it an unfair advantage."

Milne also pointed to the unique challenges women face that transgender athletes don't experience, such as racing while managing hormonal cycles. "Even that alone is something that a man-born biological male can never experience," she explained.

Like Peterson, Milne said she had no advance notice about Phillips's participation. "I did not expect this," Milne said. "I had no idea. I'd like to have known that's what the terms were if I came."

Kristina Gray, a longtime women's cyclist who did not race in Wisconsin but has faced similar situations, said she's frequently shared the podium with transgender competitors. In Oregon, she said, racing against transgender athletes is now a regular occurrence.

In response to these concerns, the three women have contacted the Independent Council on Women's Sports to highlight their experiences and push for greater transparency.

USA Cycling has a policy that allows transgender women to compete in the female category if they meet specific eligibility criteria and complete a fairness evaluation. However, many athletes say the policy fails to ensure a level playing field.

USA Cycling and Kate Phillips have not yet issued public statements addressing the controversy.