



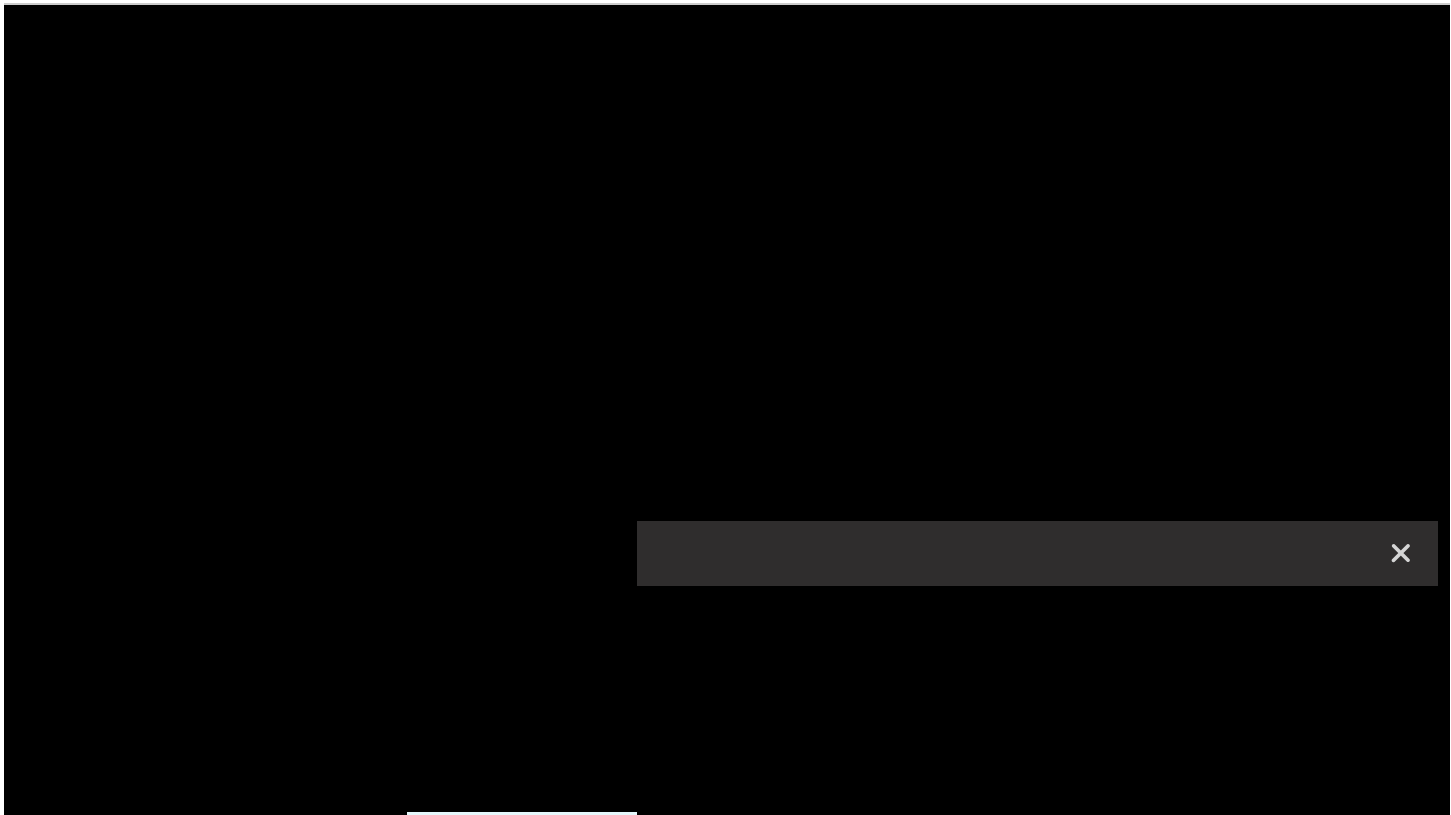
SPORTS



Oberlin College women's coach says she was 'burned at the stake' over her views on transgender athletes

By Ryan Gaydos, Fox News

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Oberlin College women's lacrosse head coach **Kim Russell broke her silence about transgender inclusion in women's sports** in a documentary for the Independent Women's Forum on Tuesday.

Russell, who became the head coach of the Yeowomen before the start of the 2019 season, talked about how administrators and her players ridiculed her after she posted on her personal social media account a message about Lia Thomas winning an NCAA Championship in the 500 in 2022.

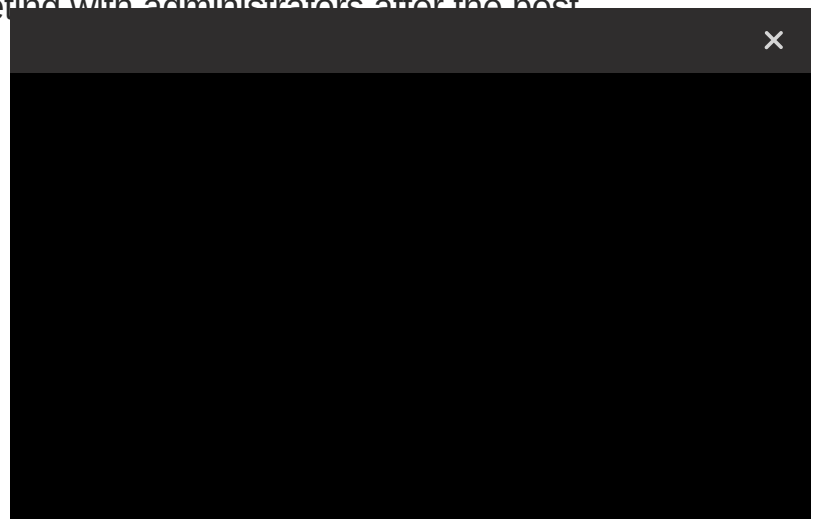
In the video, Russell reposted a headline sarcastically congratulating then-Virginia swim star Emma Weyant for the victory over Thomas, a transgender female.

Russell wrote in the post, "What do you believe? I can't be quiet on this... I've spent my life playing sports, starting & coaching sports programs for girls & women.."

The post ignited a firestorm within Oberlin College — a liberal arts school in Ohio.

Russell said she was called in for a meeting with administrators after the post.

They **reprimanded her for the post.**





Oberlin College women's lacrosse head coach Kim Russell broke her silence about transgender inclusion in women's sports in a recent documentary.

Twitter/IWF

She recorded the conversations, which were heard in the IWF documentary.

Russell was told, "Unfortunately, you fall into a category of people that are filled with hate in the world," and "It's acceptable to have your own opinions, but when they go against your college's beliefs, it's a problem. For your employment."

At the end of the week, she was told to write an apology letter to the athletics department and the team but couldn't go through with it.





Russell became the head coach of Oberlin College (seen above) women's lacrosse team before the start of the 2019 season.

Getty Images

"I will have a conversation with anyone who wants to have a conversation about this," Russell says in the documentary. "I am passionate about this. I really believe that women should be competing against other biological females."

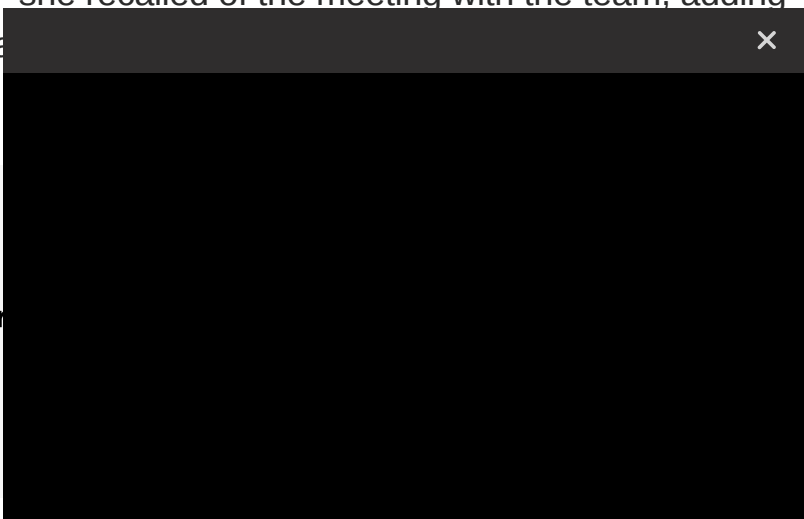
She then had a meeting with the team, the athletic director, the Title IX officer for her department, and a Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion officer along with the Title IX director and DEI officer for the college.

"Chairs were set up in a huge circle. I felt like I was burned at the stake. I felt like I was stoned and hanged all at the same time," she recalled of the meeting with the team, adding that it felt like another way for others to take their own opinion on the main issue at hand."

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She said her players' comments made her "sad."

Oberlin finished the 2022 season 6-9.

She said at the end of the season a letter was given to her that demanded she change her "behavior."

She responded, saying if she's breaking university policy tell her what that is and fire her.

She said after that she felt like she was "walking on eggshells."

Russell came back and finished 7-9 during the 2023 season.

"When I started, I thought it would be the perfect place for me. Every time I've spoken up, I've been silenced, which, to me, is exactly the opposite I thought Oberlin would be," Russell says.

Russell later added: "It is scientific that, biologically, males and females are different. Period. I don't believe biological males should be in women's locker rooms. Where's the Me Too movement now? What happened to that?"



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AP



Russell said she's ready for the "storm" that may come her way for speaking out, including the possibility of getting fire.

According to her profile on Oberlin's athletics website, she's set to return in 2024.

Oberlin College didn't immediately respond to Fox News Digital's request for comment.



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Twitter/IWF





Former University of Kentucky swimmer Riley Gaines has been vocal about fairness in women's sports.

AP

Riley Gaines, the **"Gaines for Podcast"** host who is one of the chief leaders for fairness in women's sports, applauded Russell for speaking out.

"This is really really huge. The voice we've been missing is that of coaches. Watch this to understand why so many remain silent even though they know what they're being told to do is wrong," she wrote on X.

"Thank you for putting your name to this, Coach Kim Russell."





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Twitter/IWF

Andrea Mew, the IWF's storytelling coordinator and documentary producer, said in a news release that Oberlin College's treatment of Russell for "simply believing biological truths was nothing short of a modern, Maoist struggle session."

"Russell's story exposes what can happen when a faculty member dares to differ from the progressive norm," Mew added. "At Independent Women's Forum, we've elevated the **voices of female athletes like Riley Gaines**, Paula Scanlan, Payton McNabb, Kaitlynn and Abigail Wheeler, Cynthia Monteleone, and more to a national stage.



What do you think? Post a comment.

"But, to this date, very few college coaches hope that by sharing Russell's story, more support women and girls, the integrity of opportunity will know that they're not alone



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