

Sport

Athlete sues Connecticut over loss to trans runner – who she beat in several other races

Jun 15 • Written by Amelia Hansford

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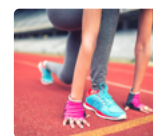


Several of the athletes involved in the lawsuit have been outspoken in their opposition to the policy. (Getty)

An athlete declaring herself the “fastest girl in Connecticut” is suing the state after she lost a race to a trans athlete.

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The woman also lost to numerous cisgender competitors, and beat her transgender competitors in several events.

The right-wing legal group [Alliance Defending Freedom](#) (ADF) filed a legal complaint on behalf of track athlete Chelsea Mitchell and three others, alleging that a trans-inclusive policy had unlawfully discriminated against them.

Plaintiffs also include athletes Alanna Smith, Selina Soule and Ashley Nicoletti, according to the ADF.

A reference guide for the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) policy [states](#) that it would be “fundamentally unjust” to prevent trans athletes from taking part in gender-specific sports categories.

Initially filed in 2019, the legal complaint accuses policymakers of “excluding specific and identifiable girls, including plaintiffs, from honours, opportunities to compete at higher levels and public recognition critical to college recruiting and scholarship opportunities”.

Since filing the complaint, Mitchell has said on multiple occasions, including in an opinion piece for [Fox News](#), that the lawsuit is about “decrying the unfairness” she claims occurred due to transgender competitors being able to run against cis women.

“CIAC’s policy forced us to compete against and lose to biological male competitors, depriving us of our Title IX rights and tarnishing our athletic records,” Mitchell said.

In the past, Mitchell has specifically cited her loss against Bloomfield competitor Terry Miller during the 2019 CIAC Class S Championships.

Miller won against Mitchell in the Varsity Girls’ 55-meter dash finals and preliminaries and had even won the 300-meter dash finals, which Mitchell had not taken part in.

Mitchell had also lost to Andraya Yearwood, another trans competitor, in the 55-meter dash preliminaries.

However, several months after the loss, Mitchell won against both Miller and Yearwood in the 100-metre dash preliminaries during the [CIAC State Championships](#).

Mitchell would go on to [win against Miller several times](#) in the months and years following the loss and eventual legal complaint, including in a 2020 55-meter dash final and a 300-meter dash final in which [she came first](#) and Miller came 16th.

Mitchell has also lost against several cisgender runners over her years of competing, having come fourth in a [2018 55-meter dash](#) finals and third in the preliminaries.

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Nonetheless, Mitchell has reiterated during her three-year trial that the inclusion of trans women in women’s sporting events has cost her scholarship after scholarship.

She told the [New York Post](#) in an interview that she believed colleges “didn’t see a winner” when they looked at her.

“I wasn’t a first-place finisher, and I think that’s what really hurt me,” she said.

Her representative, ADF attorney Matt Sharp said: “We’re asking for the court to recognize the damage done to Chelsea and the other athletes, and to restore their record and the credit that they rightfully worked hard to earn.”

The case was initially dismissed in April 2021, but was reheard in 2023 after an appeal was granted by state officials. Oral arguments for the case began on 6 June.

Defending both Terry Miller and Andraya Yearwood is the [American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut](#) (ACLU), which has said the plaintiff’s arguments are “filled with hypotheticals”.

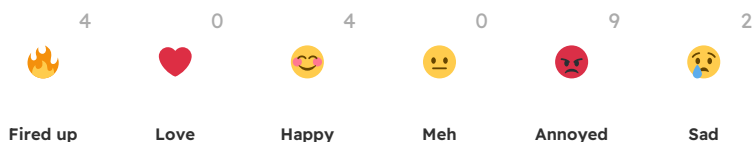
ACLU LGBTQ+ and HIV Project staff attorney Joshua Block said: “The facts are that these plaintiffs repeatedly outperformed Andraya and Terry, and won an impressive collection of first place trophies in the process.

“There is enough room on the victory podium for transgender girls too,” Block continued. “Under Title IX, all girls, including transgender girls, should be able to participate fully and equally in athletics, in accordance with who they are.”

Additionally, ACLU Connecticut senior staff attorney Elana Bildner said that she hoped the court would “follow the facts” and uphold its earlier decision.

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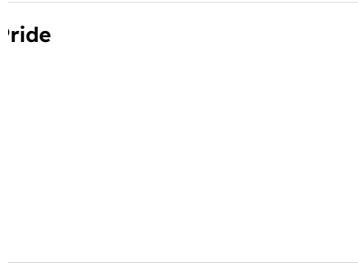
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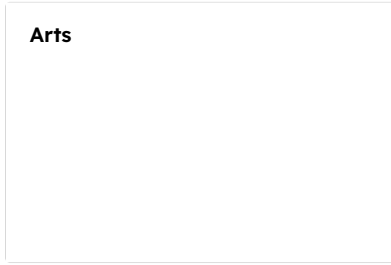




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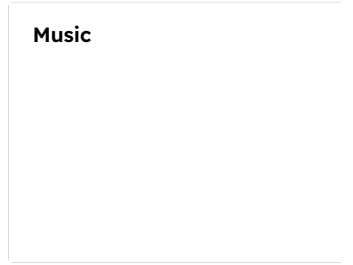
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