

Trans Swimmer's Teammate Speaks Out About 'Frightening' Situation

✖ Paula Scanlan knew that someone had to stand up and speak the truth, no matter what the cost.

Scanlan, who competed on the University of Pennsylvania's swim team for three seasons, broke the silence in an interview with conservative cultural commentator Matt Walsh on the Daily Wire, calling out the university and male teammate "Lia" Thomas for putting her and her other teammates in a "frightening" situation.

Scanlan told Walsh that the university did not want its student athletes to speak out on what was happening in the athletic department, saying it was "scary." Penn allowed Thomas, a biological male, to compete on the women's team and use the women's locker room at the same time.

Thomas became the first openly transgender athlete to win an NCAA Division I national championship in any sport, winning the women's 500-yard freestyle event and being named an All-American in the women's division. Since 2021, he has become the subject of a fiery debate about transgender women in sports.

Thomas, born with the first name Will, competed on the Penn men's swim team for three years before competing on the women's team in 2021-2022.

University of Pennsylvania officials ignored many of the women's team's complaints about Thomas and were basically told to shut up about it.

"They continued to tell us that our opinions were wrong and if we had an issue about it, we were the problem," Scanlan told Walsh. "[A]nd it's frightening, and your future job is on the line."

Scanlan told Walsh that many of her teammates had begun to change clothes in the bathroom stalls, behavior that never existed before Thomas became part of the team.

"The biggest thing was just when you're changing, and there's all of these people talking in the background, and you hear all of these women's voices, and all of the sudden, you hear a man's voice," Scanlan told Walsh. "I'd always kind of jump a little."

In this video, Scanlan told Walsh of one teammate who complained to the athletic department. Scanlan says she does not know what was said to her, but after she went to the athletic administration, she "began acting as if having a biological male on the women's swim team was a 'magical, beautiful thing.'"

The Penn athletic staff didn't budge on Thomas' standing on the women's team.

"They said, 'Don't talk to the media; you will regret it. ... Lia's swimming is non-negotiable,'" the athlete said. "And then they provided us with counseling services to help us be OK with Lia swimming."

"So of course, it worked, and then after that point, no one would talk about it anymore," Scanlan said.

The Ivy League, of which Penn is a member, and the National Collegiate Athletics Association did nothing and, in essence Scanlan said, failed her and her teammates.

"I think the biggest thing is to just fight for those people who don't have a voice: those younger girls, the girls that

are aged 12 to 14 who are just starting out on those sports teams,” Scanlan said.

And then there’s the situation at the University of Kentucky, where former swimmer Riley Gaines told Tucker Carlson in an interview last year that she was surprised the NCAA allowed a biological male to compete against women.

Scanlan says her speaking out against this travesty was courage that came from above.

“I think God kind of put me in that position to where I’m just not someone who’s scared to speak out,” she said. {eo}

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