

END SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN SPORT

OPEN LETTER: IT IS TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS TO ACCEPT THEIR ROLE IN ENDING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN SPORT.

Dear all professional sports clubs in Scotland,

Twice last year it was made clear that Scottish sports fans do not and will not welcome perpetrators of sexual violence and sadly, it has been left up to them to make their voices heard to have the professional sports clubs correct some misguided decisions. Whilst it shows how amazingly supportive Scottish sports fans are, it should not be up to them to prevent the enabling of sexual misconduct in sport. Whilst events like what we witnessed in 2022 can have an impact financially and reputationally for the clubs, the impact remains most on the fans and onlookers who are survivors of rape and sexual abuse who are often retraumatised by these events.

However, this issue is not about tackling single instances of sexual misconduct or about individual people being held to account; it is about tackling a culture that perpetuates sexual violence through silent complicity and even at times overlooking serious transgressions in favour of skill. It is necessary to begin to change a culture that influences all areas of sport; from the treatment of their female counterparts to the role model young boys aspire to be in school, there is a deep-rooted influence that sport holds over our society.

Now is the time for the clubs to follow the example set by fan bases across Scotland and stand up against sexual misconduct in sport. This means organisations and clubs need to begin changing their culture and recognising that education and open discussion is a key prevention tool in the fight to eradicate men's violence against women. We want to encourage Scottish sports clubs to play their part.

No one should experience sexual harassment or sexual violence therefore we are calling on all Professional sports clubs in Scotland to:

- Pledge to input a Sexual Misconduct Policy by the end of 2023 to the minimum standard of our Suggested Example Sexual Misconduct Policy;
- As part of this policy, introduce mandatory training for all players, managers, coaches, owners and staff on the prevention of sexual misconduct including the topic of consent;
- This policy shall also create clear protocols on how to handle complaints of sexual misconduct and guidance on the appropriate consequences and disciplinary action on players;
- Create clear channels to report both external and internal reports of sexual misconduct and liaise with local organisations that specialise in this area to apply clear policies for responding to allegations (whilst also recognising that players themselves may experience misconduct) and provide access to confidential support for internal reporters.

It is time for organisations and clubs to take sexual misconduct and other forms of gender-based violence, such as domestic abuse, seriously and foster behaviours within that call out microaggressions such as 'locker-room banter' and sexist or misogynistic attitudes. Players of sport are often viewed as highly influential figures that many aspire to be, and clubs have a notable position to influence change of a culture that currently puts so many women and girls at risk. We need professional sports clubs to stand up, use their influence and significantly challenge sexual misconduct in sport.

Please email info@endsexualmisconductinsport.com to arrange a meeting to discuss how you can help to End Sexual Misconduct in Sport and to register your PLEDGE to input a Sexual Misconduct Policy by the end of 2023.

Yours sincerely,

End Sexual Misconduct in Sport

Supported by,

#GameOver4SexualMisconduct

White Ribbon Scotland Kyniska Advocacy

Scottish Women in Sport