

Will men race women at the next Olympics?

By Peter Vigneron, *Outside*

According to a recent, rather cryptic Reuter's report, the International Olympic Committee is considering introducing mixed-gender competitions at the 2018 and 2020 Olympics. The three relevant sentences from the article:

Mixed-gender cycling events could form part of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics if experiments prove successful, Brian Cookson, president of the sport's governing body, said on [March 17].

With IOC president Thomas Bach pushing sports federations to improve gender equality, Cookson said trials would begin behind closed doors in Switzerland on Friday.

Men and women could compete against each other in sports such as Alpine skiing and bobsleigh as soon as the Pyeongchang Winter Games in 2018.

Notable, right? Women have been agitating to compete against men in golf, tennis, and skiing for years. One constant has been the resistance to those requests from the sports' governing bodies: Michelle Wei was allowed to compete in men's professional golf only after years of lobbying; Lindsey Vonn's request to ski against men in Lake Louise several years ago was essentially dismissed out of hand. And yet, here the International Olympic Committee seems to be floating the idea of mixed-gender competition without any pressure to speak of at all. What gives?

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