



Tennis Great John McEnroe Scolded by PC Police

After being asked by a National Public Radio (NPR) reporter to compare the top-ranked women's tennis player, Serena Williams, to the top men's player in the world, John McEnroe (who was once the top-ranked men's player in the world) said Williams would rank about number 700 among the professional men in the world.



The way some outlets reported McEnroe's remarks, one would think he initiated the discussion that the top women's tennis player in the world could not beat any of the top men in the world. The reaction of the *Huffington Post* is instructive: "Insulting."

Notice that the *Huffington Post* did not say that what McEnroe said was in any way untrue. Today, the Thought Police make sure that certain things cannot even be said — regardless of whether they are true. Fox Sports even opined, "John McEnroe said something stupid." The reality is, however, if Fox Sports thinks McEnroe's statement that Serena Williams is *not anywhere near* the best tennis player in the world, if by that you are saying she is better than any other *male* player in the world, then it is Fox Sports that is "stupid."

The fact of the matter is, Lulu Garcia-Navarro of NPR's *Weekend Edition* boldly asserted that Williams was the best tennis player in the world — male or female — and insisted that McEnroe agree with her. A closer look at the exchange will illustrate that Garcia-Navarro owes McEnroe an apology. McEnroe had gone onto the program to promote his book, *But Seriously*, not to castigate Williams. But Garcia-Navarro preferred to make a feminist statement.

Garcia-Navarro: "We're talking about male players but there is [sic] of course wonderful female players. Let's talk about Serena Williams. You say she is the best female player in the world in the book."

McEnroe: "Best female player ever — no question."

Garcia-Navarro: "Yeah, the best tennis player in the world. You know, why say female player?"

McEnroe: "Well because if she was in, if she played the men's circuit she'd be like 700 in the world." (Here McEnroe is throwing out a ballpark figure, but his point was that Williams would be nowhere near the top of the men's game.)

Garcia-Navarro: "You think so?"

McEnroe: "Yeah. That doesn't mean I don't think Serena is an incredible player. I do, but the reality of what would happen would be I think something that perhaps it'd be a little higher, perhaps it'd be a little lower. And on a given day, Serena could beat *some* players." (Emphasis added.)

McEnroe explained that "some situations" could lead to a Williams victory on occasion over a strong male player, "but if she had to just play the circuit — the men's circuit — that would be an entirely



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on June 30, 2017

different story.”

No person who understand sports in general, and tennis in particular, would dispute McEnroe’s comments, and it is entirely unfair that his comments are characterized as “stupid,” or sexist, or “insulting.”

There are others who, like McEnroe, have more expertise on this subject than Garcia-Navarro, and agree with him completely.

One is Serena Williams.

In 2013, in an appearance on CBS’s *Late Show*, host David Letterman asked Serena about the possibility of her playing Andy Murray, then and now a top male tennis player. Williams just laughed, and said, “I would lose 6-0, 6-0 in five or six minutes, maybe ten minutes.”

She further explained that the men’s and women’s tennis games are “almost two separate sports,” because the men are so much faster and they serve so much harder. “I only want to play girls, because I don’t want to be embarrassed.”

In 2010, Andy Murray said that he would be “surprised” if the top women’s player could be “inside 1000” in rank.

Another person whose experience qualifies her to offer a more-informed opinion than Garcia-Navarro is Billie Jean King, once the top-ranked women’s tennis player herself. Despite being an ardent feminist, she told Boomer Esiason on the *Boomer & Carton* show that the top women cannot beat the top men, and no one would argue otherwise. (Except those with an agenda, such as the *Huffington Post* or Garcia-Navarro.) “We never said we’re better than the guys in any way. But ... I think she’d be better than 700 but ... the best women cannot beat the best men ... ever. So we never argued that.”

King added, “We don’t have the androgen that guys have, we don’t have testosterone, [men] have bigger hearts.... Physically there’s no question.”

King became an international celebrity outside of tennis in 1973, when she accepted the challenge of 56-year-old Bobby Riggs to play a match in the Houston Astrodome. Riggs, who had won Wimbledon in 1939, had routed the top-ranked woman in the world, Margaret Court, and was expected to do the same to the 29-year-old King. But King prevailed. The match caused a surge in interest in tennis.

Of course, Riggs would not have been rated in the top 700 of men’s tennis at the time, while King had moved up to number one in women’s tennis.

McEnroe said that to compare the top-ranked men and women tennis players was like “comparing apples and oranges.”

Exactly. It is like comparing who could have won between Joe Louis and Rocky Marciano in their primes. Marciano certainly pounded the aging Louis when the “Brown Bomber” was way past his prime, but both agreed that it would have “been a match” had they faced off when both were at the top of their game.

As all athletes learn, if they live long enough, Father Time eventually beats even the greatest of athletes, whether it be tennis, boxing, or golf.

But that is not an “insult” to a 70-year-old Jack Dempsey to say he could not have beaten the 100th-ranked heavyweight when he reached that advanced age. Actually, it would be stupid to say that he



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could have knocked out a 25-year-old professional heavyweight.

As foolish as this whole argument really is, it does illustrate vividly just how far the Left is willing to go to advance their agenda. We hear absurd arguments all the time that there are multiple “genders,” and that there are men who are really women, and women who are really men. But we only have men’s tennis and women’s tennis. Should we have 50 different tennis circuits to accommodate all this foolishness?

For all their insults to conservatives that we “don’t respect science,” they are the ones who ignore biological reality. This tennis discussion may seem like much ado about nothing, but because the same arguments are often used to promote the placement of women in combat, in utter disregard for the lives of combat soldiers and the survival of the country, we must oppose such silliness.

There are differences — both physical and psychological — between men and women, designed by the Creator of the universe. That is not to say that one sex is superior to another sex, before that Creator. And all the liberal posturing in the world cannot change that fact.

Ironically, another person who objected to McEnroe’s statement that Serena Williams would be ranked 700 among the men was a Russian tennis player — Dmitry Tursunov. He is ranked 701 in the world, and he believes he could beat Williams. At least, he told the BBC, “I would hope that I would win against Serena.”

Photo of John McEnroe: AP Images



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