
US women's soccer team threatens Olympic boycott over equal-pay issues

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The massively successful female side won gold at the London Games in 2012 and are tipped as one of the favorites to repeat the feat in Rio de Janeiro.

However, a wage-discrimination complaint has been filed as the women's team look to get parity in salary terms with their male counterparts.

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This complaint has been backed by a number of stalwarts from the team including Carli Lloyd, Hope Solo, Alex Morgan, Megan Rapinoe and Becky Sauerbrunn.

Vice-captain Sauerbrunn said that declining to play in the Olympics was a real possibility should the issue not be resolved.

"It [an Olympic boycott] would still be on the table," Sauerbrunn said in an ESPNW interview. "We are reserving every right to do so. We're leaving every avenue open. If nothing has changed, we don't feel real progress has been made, then it's a conversation we're going to have."

Female players are paid between \$3,600 and \$4,950 per win for the national side, while men receive \$6,250 to \$17,625 for each outing, win, draw or lose, according to the complaint as cited by TODAY.

The female stars also receive only 44 percent of what their male counterparts earn for making the World Cup team.

Sauerbrunn said that the issue gap in earnings was something that needed to be addressed.

"The outcome, I hope, is equal pay for equal play," she told ESPN.

"I think, compensation-wise and respect-wise, that's what I'm really hoping comes out of this complaint. I hope that it puts enough pressure on the federation, to show them our worth and our value."

"Hopefully also, from there, other people put enough pressure on US Soccer if the complaint doesn't fall in our favor. Hopefully that's the ending point."

Lloyd is one of the stars of the international women's game and agreed that the current earnings equated to a lack of respect.

"We've proven our worth over the years," she said. "The pay disparity between men and women is just too large. We want to continue to fight. The generation of players before us fought, and now it's our job to keep on fighting."

Not having some of the US star names at the Olympics would certainly take the gloss of women's soccer from a global perspective. The American side are also the current world champions having won the World Cup in Canada last year.
