

# Should Female Chess Champions Be Forced to Wear a Hijab?

About a year ago, [I wrote](#) about my interest in learning to play chess. This interest came about after reading Ben Franklin's arguments on the skills the sport builds, including foresight, caution, and perseverance.

Had I learned to play last year, I *undoubtedly* would have soared to the top and been eligible for next year's world championships. \*Ahem\*

But recent news leads me to be thankful I was not in this coveted position. You see, it was just announced that the 2017 chess championship will be held in Iran. And because the championship will be held in Iran, female players will be required to wear a hijab – regardless of the country they come from or the religion they follow.

Needless to say, female chess champions from around the world are not happy. American chess champion Nazi Paikidze-Barnes refused to attend the championship under such a requirement, [saying](#):

*"It is absolutely unacceptable to host one of the most important women's tournaments in a venue where, to this day, women are forced to cover up with a hijab.*

*"I understand and respect cultural differences. But, failing to comply can lead to imprisonment and women's rights are being severely restricted in general.*

*"It does not feel safe for women from around the world to play here. ... I am honoured and proud to have qualified to represent the United States in the Women's World Championship. But, if the situation remains unchanged, I will most certainly not participate in this event."*

Despite the outcry, organizers of the chess championship seem loathe to change their minds on this subject and allow women to compete without donning a hijab.

At Intellectual Takeout, we talk a lot about how many in today's world are increasingly sensitive and apt to be easily offended over small issues. Do you think this is the same type of situation and that female chess players are over-reacting? Or do you think they have a legitimate complaint that they should not be forced to comply with something which does not reflect their beliefs?

Furthermore, does this situation suggest there is a double standard when it comes to offenses which are caused by Islam?

*Image Credit: Dave King [bit.ly/liowB8m](http://bit.ly/liowB8m)*