

Sportswear maker accused of sexism

11th March, 2015



An Indonesian sportswear manufacturer has had to apologise for a label on its merchandise that people deemed to be sexist. The label appeared on the shirts of one of the country's top football clubs, Super League team Pusamania Borneo. It read: "Washing instructions: Give this shirt to a woman. It's her job."

The company, Salvo Sports, issued its apology on Sunday March 9th, which was unfortunate timing as Sunday just happened to be International Women's Day, an occasion to honour and celebrate women's achievements around the world. The company received a flood of complaints on social media from people who thought the wording on the label was highly inappropriate.

The company was quick to offer an apology and said it did not mean to denigrate women. A Salvo Sports spokesperson said on Twitter: "The message is simply, instead of washing it in the wrong way, you might as well give it to a lady because they are more capable." It added: "There is no intention to humiliate women. In contrast, we want to tell the men to learn from women on how to take care of clothes." Many people felt the apology was also sexist. On a more positive note for women, The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) launched its inaugural AFC Women's Football Day on Sunday. This is designed to recognise events that develop and promote the women's game in Asia.

Sources: *HuffingtonPost / Reuters UK / BBC.com*

Writing

Women's sport should be given as much exposure as men's. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

sportswear / merchandise / label / instructions / apology / unfortunate / achievements / spokesperson / message / capable / humiliate / sexist / positive / develop / promote

True / False

- A sportswear maker apologized because people said it was sexist. T / F
- The concern was over the washing instructions on the label of a shirt. T / F
- The apology coincided with International Women's Day. T / F
- A few people used social media websites to complain. T / F
- The company was very slow in putting out an apology. T / F
- The company said it meant that women are better at washing clothes. T / F
- The company said it would teach men to wash clothes. T / F
- Asia's Women's Football Day celebrated its tenth year. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. manufacturer | a. belittle |
| 2. merchandise | b. rather than |
| 3. issued | c. unsuitable |
| 4. flood | d. advertise |
| 5. inappropriate | e. maker |
| 6. denigrate | f. goods |
| 7. instead of | g. first |
| 8. positive | h. gave |
| 9. inaugural | i. wave |
| 10. promote | j. cheerful |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why are people sexist?
- How sexist do you think the instructions were?
- What needs to happen for people to stop being sexist?
- What forms of inequality do women in your country face?
- What else do you think the company should do to apologise?
- What happens in your country on International Women's Day?
- Have you ever complained about anything on social media?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. apologise for a label on | a. women |
| 2. unfortunate | b. humiliate women |
| 3. celebrate women's achievements | c. of complaints |
| 4. The company received a flood | d. the wrong way |
| 5. the wording on the label was | e. timing |
| 6. it did not mean to denigrate | f. around the world |
| 7. instead of washing it in | g. positive note |
| 8. There is no intention to | h. highly inappropriate |
| 9. On a more | i. women's game in Asia |
| 10. promote the | j. its merchandise |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the contents of the tweet of apology?
- In what way might the apology also be sexist?
- What kinds of sexism exist in sports?
- What can sports do to eradicate sexism?
- Should sexist comments be made a criminal offence?
- How can authorities better promote women's football?
- What problems does sexism create in society?
- What questions would you like to ask the company's boss?

Spelling

- An Indonesian sportswear aumrcnaurfet
- uunoarentf timing
- elecaretb women's achievements
- The company received a flood of nistpoacml
- the ordgnwi on the label
- highly oiiaparptrepn
- The company was quick to offer an olgyyoa
- it did not mean to rdenaigte women
- There is no intention to ialutmeih women
- On a more ipevoist note...
- its aranuguli AFC Women's Football Day
- oopmetr the women's game in Asia

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. f	3. h	4. i	5. c
6. a	7. b	8. j	9. g	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Football

You think football is the most exciting sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sports aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the most boring of these (and why): tennis, boxing or athletics.

Role B – Tennis

You think tennis is the most exciting sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sports aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the most boring of these (and why): football, boxing or athletics.

Role C – Boxing

You think boxing is the most exciting sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sports aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the most boring of these (and why): tennis, football or athletics.

Role D – Athletics

You think athletics is the most exciting sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sports aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the most boring of these (and why): tennis, boxing or football.

Speaking – Sports

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| • athletics | • football (soccer) |
| • boxing | • tennis |
| • skiing | • golf |
| • judo | • cycling |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.