



COMMITTEE FOR EQUITY IN WOMEN'S SURFING

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Puerto Escondido, Mexico: Surfers Make History. And Big Waves.

The 2019 Puerto Escondido Cup was the first big wave surf competition outside the U.S. to offer a women's final with equal pay.

QUE PASO? WHAT HAPPENED?

On July 15, 2019, the Surf Open League made history at the "Puerto Escondido Cup" by becoming the first big wave competition outside the U.S. to offer equal pay to women and men! International competitors demonstrated commitment and bravery navigating 20-25-foot waves.

WHO WON?

July 15, 2019, defending champion **Bianca Valenti** (USA) and WSL Big Wave World Tour standout **Billy Kemper** (HAW), won the Puerto Escondido Cup organized by the Surf Open League. Congrats to all competitors! The Playa Zicatela (aka Mexican Pipeline) was filled with hundreds of fans supporting pay equity. They cheered as women skillfully hucked themselves over death defying ledges.

EQUAL PAY AWARDS SPEECH

Following the competition, big wave World Champion **Keala Kennelley** (HAW) acknowledged the pay equity victory on stage in front of the local community, and the international surf community. She said, "This isn't about the money it's about equal opportunity and inclusion."

- Link to Kennelley's speech:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tg8PYsrn_9o&feature=youtu.be

In late June 2019, promoters invited big wave surfers to compete in the annual Puerto Escondido Cup in Mexico. The men's division prize purse was set at \$15,000 and the women's division prize purse was \$6,000. The first-place woman would earn \$0.36 on the dollar for surfing the same wave on the same day. Women ranked 2-6 would earn \$0.50 on the dollar.

Considering the unfair prize breakdown, CEWS co-founder Bianca Valenti contacted one of the promoters and politely asked for equal pay. Competition organizer Gary Linden said male surfers had not received a raise in 10 years. He challenged Valenti to raise the money without disadvantaging male competitors.

Based on past success winning equal pay at Mavericks and Jaws CEWS had three choices: boycott the competition, surf for less money, or raise \$9000 for equal pay. 2019, World Champion big wave surfer and CEWS co-founder Keala Kennelley and Bianca Valenti discussed their options; they wanted to surf, support the competition and keep their commitment to pay equity. Kennelley suggested a GoFundMe campaign as a temporary solution. Valenti launched the campaign on Facebook and **within 72 hours surfing fans raised over \$10,000.**

- Link to GoFundMe campaign: https://www.gofundme.com/f/bigwave-surf-comps-fund?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=fb_dn_cpgntopnavlarge_r&fbclid=IwAR3KSVVWVwR4a38bMJpAJR8z3gFyZT-1RRbGGWhRiN_N3I93f-fOYzZfR8

Crowd-funding prize money for a women's division places an unsustainable burden on women athletes. It's a catch-22; athletes who push promoters for equal pay risk losing inclusion in competition. Valenti said, "I hope the campaign raises awareness and shines a light on how much support there is for women's big wave surfing and equity! **I want to create opportunity by attracting sponsors who are willing to pay women equally.**"

2019 Puerto Escondido Cup Prize Breakdown before the GoFundMe campaign:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Place	M	W	W % of Men	W % less than men
2	1	7000	2500	35.71428571	64.28571429
3	2	4000	1500	37.5	62.5
4	3	2000	1000	50	50
5	4	1000	500	50	50
5	5	600	300	50	50
7	6	400	200	50	50
3			Average:	45.53571429	54.46428571
3					

July 2019 Quotes from Athletes

*When things get hard, I focus on having a positive impact on kids. Possibilities I imagined when I was 7 turned into tough realities in my teens. **It's never been okay with me that girls who work their hearts out earn less than boys**, regardless of achieving the same wins. My dream for kids: They're able to focus strictly on performance without worrying about equal inclusion and equal pay.*

—Bianca Valenti, United States

*CEWS fought so hard for equal pay and we are trying to make this the standard. I would love to go to Puerto and compete, I love that wave but **I don't want to go backwards on the equal pay initiative and have to compromise my integrity**. It would be great to travel to a competition and win money to cover the expenses. A lack of opportunity to earn a living discourages women and girls from competing professionally. I would like to set an awesome precedent in Mexico where women on average make so much less than men. I think it would be so rad to have an equal pay competition, especially in Latin America, so let's do this!*

—Keala Kennelley, United States

***Competitions that include male and female divisions are super important because they open opportunity to everyone and allow surfers to earn a living.** Competitive surfing motivates and inspires new generations to respect and enjoy the ocean and it improves the economy in coastal communities.*

—Coco Nogales, Mexico

July 2019 Quotes from Athletes (continued)

Equal pay in a sporting event here in Mexico? I'm at a loss for words; it blows my mind and gives me goosebumps. It's a milestone that's outstanding and unheard of in our society. I want every woman, man, girl and boy in Mexico to witness this competition. It's an eye-opener to what's possible and it will initiate a new way of thinking.

This is the spark plug to a chain reaction we really need in our society.

*It will encourage women to value their work and strengthen their self-esteem. Young girls invest in their future and pursue their dreams through hard work. I want them to believe that they **WILL** be rewarded; for their achievements, not paid less because of their gender.*

—Isa Leonhardt, Mexico

*In most events men get more prize money than women, it's funny (sarcasm) because **we all surf the same place and spend money, women have less to spend.***

—Maya Larripa, Mexico

*Stoked to know that so many people are supporting our dreams! **My heart is full of joy.** I want more women and girls to believe in their dreams, help others, and have fun doing what they love! I'm grateful to everyone who made equal pay possible at the Puerto Escondido Cup. It's my hope that women's big wave surfing inspires strength, wisdom, and faith. Thanks so much!*

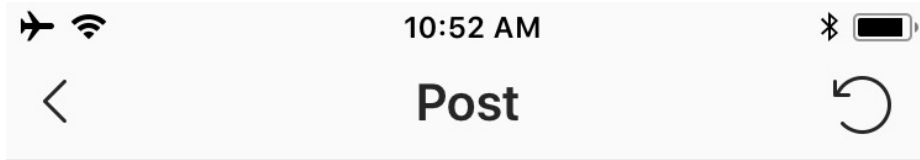
—Raquel Heckert, Brazil

In **2018**, the Puerto Escondido Cup first place winner, Bianca Valenti earned **\$1,750** while her counterpart in the men's division took home **\$7,000**.



Bianca Valenti earned **75% less** than Lucas (Chumbo) Chianca.





lucaschumbo
Puerto Escondido

