

Tory MP under fire for 'part time job' as Champions League Ref

By [Max Morrison](#), Sport Editor (2017)

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Image: Wikimedia Commons - Douglas Ross MP

The world of football and politics rarely collide...but earlier last week, a Conservative MP triggered controversy in the Commons by taking to the touchlines of the Camp Nou to help officiate Barcelona's Champions League clash with FC Olympiakos.

Scottish Conservative's minister, Douglas Ross, jetted off to Spain last Monday in order to undertake his duties as linesman for the match in question. Not all MPs perceived the issue in such a light-hearted manner however, mainly because of the fact Ross was missing out on a debate surrounding the government's controversial 'universal credit' scheme on the same day as the game.

Ross, the MP for Moray, was not due to speak in the debate, but despite this he faced tough disapproval by many of his opposition members in the House of Commons - namely John McNally - SNP minister for Falkirk. On Monday, McNally ironically wielded a 'red card' mocking Prime Minister Theresa May, before going on to question her authority and control over her MP's 'extra-curricular activities': *"What signal does she think this sends to hard working members of the public who are expected to turn up for their day jobs or face sanctions?"*

Other disparagers of the parliamentary-linesman included SNP MSP Stewart Stevenson who accused Ross of *"yet again leaving his constituents without a voice in parliament because he'd rather rub shoulders with famous footballers"*. As well as Labour shadow Scotland Office Minister - Paul Sweeny - who said the

Moray MP had shown *"a perverse sense of priorities"*.

But critics of Mr Ross weren't left unanswered, Theresa May responded to John McNally's comments in expected partisan style, replying with: *"the Scottish Conservative members are doing more for the interests of Scotland in this parliament than the Scottish Nationalists have ever done."* Mrs May continued to also reiterate how Mr Ross' constituents are supportive of him and his part time job completely. Douglas Ross won his seat off the former representative of Moray, ex-SNP Westminster leader – Angus Robertson.

The Champions League game ended 3-1 to Barcelona. And as for the vote on the motion to pause the rollout of the government's new universal credit scheme across the country – Labour won in in a record victory 299-0 after the Conservatives abstained en masse.



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