

You are currently viewing the printable version of this article, to return to the normal page, please click [here](#).

Wives spat energized Ted Cruz, weakened Donald Trump

By [Kelly Riddell](#) - *The Washington Times* - Tuesday, March 29, 2016

Ted Cruz needs a win in Wisconsin to boost his presidential ambitions, and rival Donald Trump gave him a rallying cry heading into Tuesday's primary by attacking the Texas senator's wife.

Last week, Mr. Trump, the GOP presidential front-runner, retweeted an unflattering image of Heidi Cruz juxtaposed with a picture of his supermodel wife. For any woman, who has ever had a bad picture taken (that's every woman), it was a shot across the bow — reminding them of all the underlying negatives of Mr. Trump's campaign.

It also fired up Mr. Cruz's team, who needs a win in Wisconsin's April 5 primary, to have a shot at gaining the 1,237 delegates that Mr. Cruz needs to secure the Republican nomination outright, or to deny Mr. Trump the majority, bringing the contest to a brokered convention.

Immediately after the attack, Cruz staffers began changing their Twitter image profiles to that of Heidi Cruz, emblazoned with the logo "Team Heidi." Cruz surrogate, and former presidential contender Carly Fiorina — who was herself a subject of Mr. Trump's insults ("look at that face") — hit the campaign trail telling voters Mr. Trump clearly has a problem with "strong women."

On Monday, Charlie Sykes, a popular conservative radio host in Wisconsin (and also in the anti-Trump camp), did an interview with the business mogul comparing Mr. Trump's attacks on Mrs. Cruz to a "12-year-old bully on the playground."

Mr. Trump told the radio host his decision to retweet the controversial photo was a very "mild" response, and that: "I didn't even know it was necessarily a very bad picture of her versus [my wife] Melania."

Yeah, right.

Further coming to Mr. Cruz's aid, was an endorsement by Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker on Tuesday, who said: "It was an easy call for me to support Ted Cruz."

Perhaps even easier after last week's mudslinging.

Mr. Cruz and Mr. Trump are running neck-and-neck in the Badger State, and that was according to polling taken before the controversy. One can only presume Mr. Trump's negatives are going to tick up after it — especially among women.

Mr. Cruz was leading the businessman by 1 percentage point in an Emerson College Polling Survey taken between March 20-22, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.6 percentage points. A poll conducted by the Washington Free Beacon, had Mr. Cruz leading by 5 percentage points.

"I'm not sure anybody in the Trump campaign understands yet what a big mistake this is, and they can't keep doing this stuff and think they're going to get the nomination," former House Speaker Newt Gingrich told Sean Hannity in an interview Monday night, regarding Mr. Trump's stunt against Mrs. Cruz. Mr. Gingrich has largely been in support of the businessman.

Part of Mr. Gingrich's concern is Mr. Trump's favorability among women — numbers the Trump campaign needs to boost to win the Republican primary outright, not to mention in the general election, when he'll be up against presumed nominee Hillary Clinton.

A recent CNN/ORC poll found that 73 percent of registered female voters in the United States had an unfavorable view of Mr. Trump, and 31 percent of Republican women would be upset if Trump won.

Mr. Trump, for his part, seems to understand the heat is on — a least not by his words, but by his actions.

He has five scheduled campaign stops in Wisconsin, Tuesday and Wednesday, including smaller, town-hall events. That's a far cry from the stadium rallies, one-and-done, media-fueled campaign he's been running so far.

© Copyright 2016 The Washington Times, LLC. [Click here for reprint permission.](#)

