

The Sun

Armed cops march seriously ill doc off easyJet flight at gunpoint after he ‘attacked cabin crew’ in row over extra leg room

By Neil Syson
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Dr Sam Ramsay Smith, 72, was returning to Gatwick from Amsterdam, where he had seen medics over a rare and excruciating condition that has left him crippled

A SERIOUSLY-ill retired surgeon was ordered off an easyJet flight at gunpoint after becoming "violent and abusive" in a row over an extra leg room seat.

Dr Sam Ramsay Smith, 72, was returning to Gatwick from Amsterdam, where he had seen medics over a rare and excruciating condition that has left him crippled.



Dr Sam Ramsay Smith of Lewes who was ejected from a flight to the UK by armed police

But the eminent former NHS physician flipped at Schipol when he found front row seat 1E - for which he paid £27 extra - occupied.

He says when he complained at being placed in a seat with normal leg room, the captain ordered: "I don't like your attitude. You have to get off the plane."

The dad-of-three who hobbles with the aid of walking sticks said: "Three policemen - I think they were from the anti-terrorist branch - came on with Heckler and Koch machine guns.

"One said to me 'are you going to resist?' I replied 'do I look as though I am capable?'"



He suffers multiple sclerosis-like erythromelalgia from a bee sting a year ago, which inflames legs and feet

But easyJet hit back yesterday that Dr Smith lost his front seat as he made a last-minute flight change - and it had already been taken.

A spokesman said: "After changing Dr Ramsay Smith's flight at his request we were unable to assign him the same seat he had selected on his original flight.

"During boarding he was verbally abusive to crew over being unable to sit in this seat. The Captain tried to resolve the issue by offering two other alternative seats which he rejected.

"At this point he physically assaulted the cabin manager and police were called to escort him off the aircraft.



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The eminent former NHS physician flipped at Schiphol when he found front row seat 1E - for which he paid £27 extra – occupied *Credit: Getty - Contributor*

“The safety of our passengers and crew is always easyJet’s highest priority and we cannot tolerate abusive or threatening behaviour towards our crew.”

The doctor spent years working for Medicines Sans Frontiers in war-torn Africa. He had been to see ex-colleagues at the Amsterdam HQ to plead for help for his one-in-a-million condition.

He suffers multiple sclerosis-like erythromelalgia from a bee sting a year ago, which inflames legs and feet.

Divorced Dr Smith was for 10 years a senior NHS surgeon at Victoria Hospital in Lewes, West Sussex, though now spends most of his retirement in Spain.

After flying back the following day, he added: "I missed a doctor's appointment because of this. The treatment I received from easyJet was despicable."

The doctor - reacting to easyJet's statement - last night insisted he booked the front row seat for the flight from which he was barred.

He added: "I only pushed the flight attendant when she stood on my foot, I was in agony.

"I told the captain his mother would not be proud of him...but I don't think I was abusive."