

Championship of "Royals" expected in ChiangMai

2007 Royal WWC Preview

In the 116-year old history of weightlifting world championships the participation record is still held by Athens 1999, the 70th Men's and 13th Women's World Championships. The main qualification event for the Sydney Olympic Games welcomed an unprecedented field of aspiring Olympians: comprising 395 male competitors from 79 countries and 231 female lifters representing 51 nations. As a matter of fact, all Olympic qualification championships drew massive attendance:

	Men	Women
1995 Guangzhou:	63 nations – 345 lifters	(no women in OG yet)
2003 Vancouver:	59 nations – 297 lifters	47 nations – 208 lifters
2006 Santo Domingo:	59 nations – 298 lifters	39 nations – 186 lifters

Next in line is Thailand, more particularly: Chiang-Mai. This beautiful city, some three thousand kilometres from Beijing, is selected to make a vast impact on the future weightlifting lineups of the 2008 Olympic Games. It does not take a prophet to forecast that all the 1999 Athens turnout records will probably be surpassed in September 2007. We have every right to expect The Largest World Championships of All Times. The city of ChiangMai is not new to the worldwide weightlifting scene. It hosted the world championships exactly one decade ago. That one was the first world rendezvous after the Atlanta Olympics – an event of great success and to maximum satisfaction of all attending (Men: 51 coun-

tries with 189 competitors; women: 39 countries with 143 competitors). Between 16th and 26th September 2007, this will be the last major opportunity for the lifters and their nations to obtain a share of the Olympic slots. As far as statistics go, we should point out that between 1891 and 2006 altogether 342 male and 93 female world champions have been awarded with the gold medal. The overall number of world championships medals issued is 4,799.

we are looking forward to strong fields with old and new forces alike. Former superstars not seen for a while may re-emerge. For instance, Georgian **George Asanidze**, who won gold in 85kg at the Athens Olympics but never seen since on the platform. As Vice President of the Georgian Federation, he did appear though. A number of weathered, "old" fighters are expected to pop up, their line led by 37-year old Olympic and world champion **Nicolay Pechalov**, representing Croatia. Among those entered we

Tesovic; or bronze-medal winner **Viktors Scerbatihs** of Latvia. Further athletes returning to ChiangMai are: **Eric Bonnel**, France (he was 8th), **Akos Sandor**, Canada (13th), **Marino Boer**, Italy (6th). Canadian **Maryse Turcotte** was also among the participants in 1997 in ChiangMai. Of course, there will be a parade of the megastars of our days as well. Out of Athens' 8 Olympic champions only **Halil Mutlu** (56kg) and **Dmitriy Berestov** (105kg) will be missing! The proud line of Olympic Champions entered is led by **Hossein Reza zadeh**, but it also includes **Shi Zhiyong**, **Zhang Guozheng**, **Sagir Taner**, **Nicolay Pechalov** and **George Asanidze** among the men; and **Taylan Nurcan** and **Liu Chunhong** among the ladies. It seems, however, that both Thai Olympic champions, **Pawina Thongsuk** and **Udomporn Polsak** will be missing in accordance with the entry forms. The younger generation who may challenge the former stars includes **Ilya Ilin**, **Andrey Rybakou**, **Dmitry Klokov** as well as **Jang Mi-Ran**, **Mu Shuangshuang**, **Qiu Hongxia**, **Cao Lei**, **Nadezhda Evstyukhina** – just to mention a few names.

World Championship Medals 1891–2006				
	Gold	Silver	Bronze	All
Men:	1159	11555	1153	3467
Women:	444	444	444	1332
Most Medal-Winning Countries				
Men:	Gold	Silver	Bronze	All
URS	331	208	93	632
BUL	200	160	118	478
POL	52	85	108	245
CHN	76	64	68	206
HUN	33	52	74	159
GER	48	56	50	154
Women:	Gold	Silver	Bronze	All
CHN	300	79	23	402
TPE	25	51	58	134
BUL	18	55	60	133
HUN	8	37	33	76
RUS	20	28	27	75
USA	8	29	33	70

The competitions in ChiangMai, as said, are to decisively shape the Olympic entries in Beijing. Therefore,

can find some lifters who won in ChiangMai just ten years ago: Bulgarian **Stefan Georgiev**, or Slovak **Martin**



And now let's take a quick look at the **title defenders**, i.e. the 15 male and 11 female world champions of the 2006 Qualification Worlds held in Santo Domingo:

Men: _____

56kg: Li Zheng, CHN. Winner in total and snatch. No participation in IWF events since the WC.

Boulet Sergio Martinez, CUB. World champion in jerk. Won the Pan American Games with excellent clean and jerk.

62kg: Qiu Le, CHN. Three gold medals, 308kg in total. In 2007 Asian Championships he totalled 315kg and won.

69kg: Vencelas Dabaya, FRA. 332kg in total and 186kg in jerk. Won the 2007 European Championships with 331kg, with a strong attempt at 190kg.

Shi Zhiyong, CHN. Limited to the snatch gold in Dominica. Took the 2007 Asian title with 327kg.

77kg: Taner Sagir, TUR. 361kg in a big fight crowned him world champion. At the 2007 Europeans he surprised winning only bronze, with 353kg.

Li Hongli, CHN. Defeated by Dabaya only on body-weight, excelling in snatch. Asian Champion 2007 with 369kg, 2 kilos over his last performance in snatch.

85kg: Andrei Rybakou, BLR. Collected three golds in Santo Domingo. Not seen ever since.

94kg: Ilya Ilin, KAZ. Best Lifter in the last two years. In Dominica took only the total gold. Skipped the Junior and the Asian Championships this year.

Roman Konstantinov, RUS. Winner in snatch with 177kg. Silver medallist of the EC with 176kg in snatch.

Szymon Kolecki, POL. Clean and jerk champion in 2006 with 219kg. European champion in 2007, jerking 218kg.

105kg: Marcin Dolega, POL. Gold in jerk and total, world record holder in snatch. Not entered since Santo Domingo.

Dmitriy Lapikov, RUS. World champion in snatch (194kg). 3rd in the Europeans.

+105kg: Hossein Reza Zadeh, IRI. Unmatched in Dominica. No results since then. Iranians say he is getting ready for ChiangMai.

Women: _____

48kg: Yang Lian, CHN. Pocketed all golds in Dominica and not seen ever after.

53kg: Qiu Hongxia, CHN. Did not participate in any major event in 2007.

58kg: Qiu Hongmei, CHN. She took the world title with 237kg and this year's Asian title with 241kg.

Svetlana Tsarukaeva, RUS. Defending world champion in snatch and no show yet in 2007.

Kameaim Wandee, THA. World champion in jerk with 130kg. Silver medal at the Asian Games 2006, with 126kg in jerk.

63kg: Quyang Xiaofang, CHN. After capturing three gold medals in Santo Domingo, she became runner-up to Thongsuk in Doha at the Asian Games with 247kg.

69kg: Oksana Slivenko, RUS. Stood out with three gold medals and 263kg. She took the European title in 2007 with 257kg.

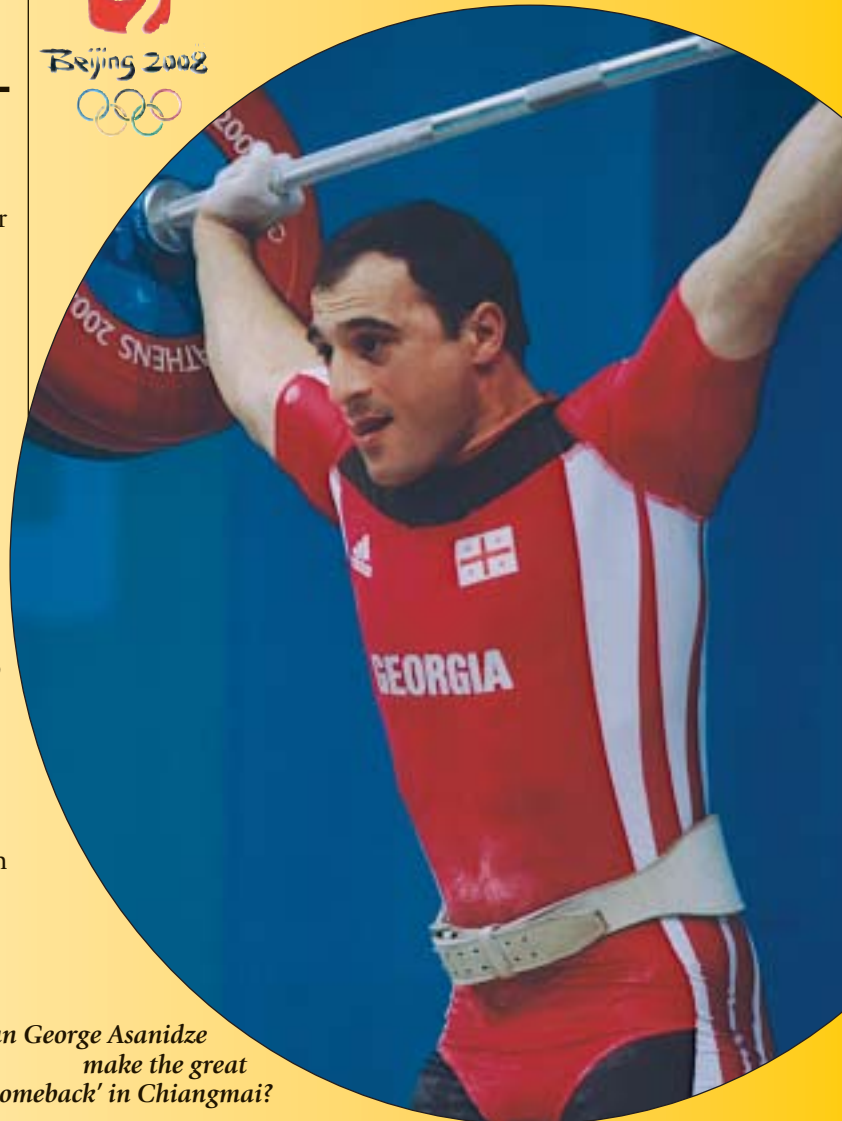
75kg: Cao Lei, CHN. World champion in total (268kg) and jerk (150kg). Asian Games champion in Doha with 272kg.

Nadezhda Evstyukhina, RUS. World champion in snatch 2006. No entry in 2007.

+75kg: Jang Mi-Ran, KOR. Winner of the duel with Mu, 314kg in total, 179kg in jerk. Lost to Mu at the Asian Games last December.

Mu Shuangshuang, CHN. Winner in snatch at the 2006 WWC. Took a revenge on Jang in Doha (317kg). Her 2007 Asian champion score was 305kg.

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Can George Asanidze make the great 'comeback' in Chiangmai?