

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY

IWF





IWF annual review 2019 background

Key Events

The IWF managed a full programme of events in 2019, with highlights that included:

- IWF Youth World Championships
- European Championships
- Asian Championships
- Pan-American Championships
- African Championships
- IWF Junior World Championships
- Oceania Senior and Junior Championships
- Commonwealth Youth Championships
- Pan American Games
- IWF World Championships
- IWF Grand Prix ODESUR CSLP
- SEA Games
- 13th South Asian Games



2019 IWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The IWF World Championships, held in Pattaya, Thailand from 18 to 27 September, were regarded as an outstanding success, despite taking place with no Thai athletes following TAWA's voluntary and irrevocable undertaking not to participate with athletes at any IWF events, including Qualification events and the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

A total of 588 athletes from 97 Member Federations competed – the highest ever number of countries at a World Championships, reflecting the continuing growth of weightlifting worldwide. Of these 588 athletes, 47 per cent were women. While our ultimate goal is to hit a 50:50 gender balance, we were encouraged by the number of female athletes we had at the Championships as we continue to reduce the gap in pursuit of gender equality.

A total of 20 countries won medals in the female competitions and 21 won medals in the men's, demonstrating the strength and breadth of weightlifting. While China topped the medal table, the Championships also saw the emergence of nations with less well-established weightlifting histories. Botswana competed for the first time at a World Championships in Pattaya, Iran sent a women's team for the first time and Great Britain won a rare medal. These developments showed us that our programmes to widen the reach of weightlifting and strengthen Member Federations are bearing fruit.

Athletes excelled at the Championships, setting 60 (27 female and 33 male) world records, including youth, junior and senior. These outstanding performances resulted in huge viewership and engagement around the world.

The Championships were televised in nearly 100 countries with a reach of over 500 million households. The live show featured numerous all-new production enhancements, including updated dynamic scoring graphics, guest announcers, and a warm-up room reporter. For the first time ever, the IWF also produced a daily preview show, which was distributed worldwide on IWF social media platforms, as well as OlympicChannel.com.

The event was webcast live on the Olympic Channel ensuring fans from every country without a broadcast partner were able to enjoy the action. All lifts of all athletes can be watched and enjoyed again on www.iwf.net, thanks to the recently introduced Video Playback Technology.

Over the course of the event, there were more than one million likes, comments, shares or retweets on social media contributing to 55.5 million impressions made on all the IWF's social media platforms. Social media continues to be a key target area for the IWF as we look to grow our sport and engage with young people around the world.



2019 IWF YOUTH WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2019 edition of the IWF Youth World Championships finished with double success for the host nation USA, showing the strength of next-generation US Weightlifting. This is the first time that both the male and female teams won the team classification.

However, it was not only on the platform that Las Vegas proved to be the lucky charm for Team USA: the already experienced squad under the leadership of Ursula Papandrea, President and Phil Andrews, CEO made sure all the 175 athletes representing 42 countries went home satisfied and with a feeling of a successful event.

Las Vegas 2019 marked several 'firsts'. This was the first time that USA Weightlifting simultaneously carried out three major events under one roof. The YWC, although the highest ranked, was almost dwarfed in terms of turnout against the Las Vegas International Open and the USA University & U25 Competitions, which rounded up the participants to nearly 800 lifters and took place on three platforms at the same time.

The favourable results of the IWF's serious Anti-Doping program and Education, providing a level playing field for all, were clearly visible at this Championships: the medals were shared by 26 countries of which 15 took gold. Countries with little or no previous medal record stepped forward with their youth lifters, such as Belgium, Brazil, Mongolia, Czech Republic and Saudi Arabia.

On this occasion, IWF tested an exceptionally high ratio of athletes (65 per cent).

Among the technical innovations introduced at this Youth World Championships the most significant was the Video Playback Technology (VPT). The teams quickly picked up the new possibility and several challenges were requested.

In total, nine new world records were set in the course of the 2019 Youth World Championships.

DAKAR 2022 YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES

In December, a meeting of the IOC Executive Board in Lausanne approved a significant increase in the quotas for young male and female weightlifters at the Dakar 2022 Youth Olympic Games (later postponed until 2026). The total number of weightlifters will rise to 144, from 110 at Buenos Aires 2018, with an equal number of places for boys and girls. Six bodyweight categories will continue to apply to girls and six to boys.

Dakar 2022 bodyweight categories for boys will be 55kg, 61kg, 67kg, 73kg, 81kg, +81kg. For girls, they will be 45kg, 49kg, 55kg, 59kg, 64kg, +64kg. These bodyweight categories will be new for Dakar 2022 and reflect changes made for weightlifting competitions at the senior level. The changes in bodyweight categories formed part of a wide range of recommendations from the IWF Sport Programme Commission aimed at ensuring this new chapter in the sport's history prioritises the achievements of clean athletes.

2022 IWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

In September, the International IWF Executive Board selected Chongqing, China as the host of the 2022 IWF World Championships.

The decision was taken during a two-day meeting in which Jinqiang Zhou, president of the Chinese Weightlifting Association, presented the city's bid to the EB. China will host the World Championships for the first time since 1995.



2019 IWF WORLD MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The IWF World Masters Championships concluded in Montreal on 24 August, following nine days of competition which showcased weightlifting as a sport that can be practised by men and women of all ages, body types, and backgrounds.

A total of 689 (385 male and 304 female athletes) from 54 countries competed in the Championships using the original 1976 Olympic Games competition platform in Montreal. Athletes aged over 35 years of age took part in more than 90 categories divided by age and weight. This year a Preliminary Entry System was introduced to calculate the best 700 athletes per verified entry total registered.

The Championships' oldest competitor was 87-year-old Tsutomu Kobayashi from Japan, who competed in the M80/73kg and lifted a total of 77kg. Meanwhile in the women's category, Lorraine Pelletier, born in 1943 from the host nation Canada, was the oldest female competitor and lifted a total of 66kg.

The Championships demonstrated the positive mental and physical benefits of weightlifting and the important role it can play in maintaining strength later in life.

2019 IWF JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2019 IWF Junior World Championships were successfully held in Suva, Fiji on 1 to 8 June, and were broadcast domestically by six cameras of the national television of Fiji, while streaming with professional commentary was available all around the world.

All the participants, including the athletes, officials, and dignitaries found the event spectacular and highly enjoyable.

The event was included in the 'Voices of the Athletes' Schools Program, which meant students from 12 Fiji schools had the chance to witness an event of this size. Weightlifting Fiji, under the leadership of Atma Maharaj, expects to spark further interest in weightlifting. "We want to be able to set up new high-performance centres in our country," Mr. Maharaj said. "We want to be able to propel the sport even further."

In total, 235 athletes participated, 105 women and 130 men from 41 countries. For the women, China won the medal tally (11,1,0), followed by KAZ (6,0,0) and VIE (3,3,0). For the men, Uzbekistan had the most medals (6,0,0) then EGY (3,0,0) and IRI (2,4,9).

Women's Team Classification: 1. USA (615), 2. KOR (431), 3. TUR (409)

Men's Team Classification: 1. IRI (622), 2. USA (552), 3. JPN (521)

2019 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

In addition to several continental records, world records were set in Batumi, Georgia at the European Championships held on 6-13 April.

Once again, the Georgians did not disappoint. After delivering many successful Championships and important events such as a Lifter of the Year Award Gala in the past, the 2019 European Championships was organized in the most professional way under the leadership of Kakhi Kakhishvili, President of the Weightlifting Federation of Georgia.



In Europe, this was the first Gold Level Qualification event where the new 10-10 bodyweight categories debuted.

World Records were set both in the men's and women's superheavyweight categories.

Twenty-one countries shared the medals, and nations that had had little success before surfaced. Israel won its first women's medal in a major Championship (bronze), Italy won golds, Britain pocketed silvers and bronzes.

Georgia topped the men's team classification board with 639 points closely followed by Belarus (634) and Armenia with 596 points.

For the women, Russia (736), Turkey (575) and Romania (480) took the first three places and Britain did well too, ending up fourth.

2019 IWF GRAND PRIX ODESUR CSLP

The 2019 IWF Grand Prix ODESUR CSLP in Lima, Peru was one of the highlights of the IWF calendar beside the World Championships, concluding with impressive results and a Junior World Record.

In this exclusive, invitation-only championships, 72 athletes (38 women and 34 men) from 24 countries of four continents competed to win prize money and to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, as the Grand Prix was also a Silver Level Qualification Event.

Columbia topped both gender's medal table (women: 5,5,1; men: 8,4,0). For the women, China (4,2,0) and Canada (3,0,1) followed, while for the men, Venezuela (3,0,3) and Dominican Republic (2,3,1) rounded up the top three.

Quality Media produced and distributed worldwide the 2019 Grand Prix Lima with eight hand-held cameras and one crane camera. The broadcasts appeared on television in 20 countries, while more than 30 local media covered the event and online live streaming was available all around the world, generating viewership of more than 300,000.

Governance

OPEN LETTER TO WEIGHTLIFTERS

In November, IWF responded to a statement by the USA Weightlifting Athletes' Committee and the Athletes Advisory Committee of the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Global Athlete, that questioned the independence of IWF's sanctioning powers in anti-doping cases.

In an open letter, IWF responded to the criticism by proposing that the Anti-Doping Division of the Court of Arbitration in Sport should handle such cases. The letter said: "This would ensure that only independent expert arbitrators adjudicate those cases where hearings are requested by the individuals concerned.

"By choosing this solution, the IWF would adopt the most rigorous approach available to us. It is the same solution that applies to athletes at the Olympic Games, who are no longer sanctioned by the IOC in the case of anti-doping rule violations. Instead, these cases are also adjudicated by the Anti-Doping Division of the Court of Arbitration in Sport."

PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES

In May, IWF fulfilled the final criteria required by the IOC to enable weightlifting's participation in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

In March, the IOC Executive Board had decided to lift the status of conditional inclusion of weightlifting in the programme of the Olympic Games, Paris 2024, subject to finalisation of the agreement between the IWF and ITA and confirmation of a successful transition of key areas of the IWF anti-doping programme to ITA.

The IOC's March decision was based on a comprehensive series of measures established and implemented by the IWF in recent years, all aimed at protecting clean athletes and promoting clean sport.

The final measure to be put in place was a contract with the International Testing Agency (ITA) that extends an agreement already put in place between the IWF and ITA in November 2018, with responsibility for a number of anti-doping areas being transferred to the ITA.

"We are very much looking forward to having weightlifters join us in Paris in 2024," said Paris 2024 Director General Etienne Thobois. "We had already been planning on having great competitions for weightlifting, and the certainty of their place on the programme now allows us to plan more effectively, in just the same way as it allows weightlifters to train with the proper focus."

The improvements made by the IWF were the result of a wide-ranging team effort involving the World Anti-Doping Agency, national anti-doping agencies, independent experts, educators and the International Olympic Committee.

"We've been working particularly closely with the IWF, specifically on the issue of clean sport and we've seen the IWF implementing concrete measures to ensure a sustainable change in favour of clean weightlifting, not least thanks to a newly designed Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 qualification system, which links the number of quota available per country to their history of doping to explicitly reward clean sport" said IOC Sports Director Kit McConnell.



Measures adopted by the IWF included the suspension of nine members, considered to be high risk countries, whose athletes had constituted a disproportionately high number of anti-doping rule violations during the IOC's retesting of stored samples from the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Olympic Games. Innovative, advanced and additional testing continues to underpin the IWF's efforts.

IWF EB MEETING AND CONGRESS IN LAS VEGAS

The first Executive Board meeting and Congress of 2019 were held in Las Vegas, USA prior to the Youth World Championships, 5-8 March.

The board agreed to launch an IWF Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024 to strengthen the IWF's position in the global sport environment and the Olympic Movement. Its elaboration will be preceded by a wide consultation with Member Federations and other members of the weightlifting family to achieve an athlete centred, sport focused concept.

With respect to Thailand's multiple Adverse Analytical Findings (AAFs) and their potential consequences that seriously damage the integrity of the sport, Thai Amateur Weightlifting Association (TAWA) undertook not to participate at any IWF events, including Qualification Events and the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

TAWA still continued to fulfil its obligation to deliver the organisation of the 2019 IWF World Championships despite the fact that no Thai athletes would be entitled to participate.

In January, the IWF disclosed four AAFs, recorded by Thai weightlifters at the 2018 World Weightlifting Championships. This followed two previous disclosures concerning AAFs for Thai athletes on 23 December 2018.

Anti-Doping

PARTNERSHIP WITH ITA

On 3 December 2019, representatives of the IWF and the International Testing Agency (ITA) met at the ITA's headquarter in Lausanne to evaluate the cooperation and discuss the future plans aimed at protecting clean athletes and promoting clean sport.

The partnership started on 1 January 2019 with out of competition testing, Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) and Education. The transfer concluded in September 2019, whereby all key areas have been transferred to ITA, including: detailed risk assessment, test distribution planning and management, in-competition testing, management of the IWF Athlete Biological Passport programme, results management, and long-term storage and re-analysis of samples. The ITA handled in-competition testing for the 2019 IWF World Championships for the first time, which included the collection and analysis of more than 300 samples.

EGYPTIAN WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION APPEAL DISMISSED

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) dismissed an appeal by the Egyptian Weightlifting Federation against its two-year suspension, imposed by the Independent Member Federations Sanctioning Panel (IMFSP) on the basis of multiple anti-doping rule violations committed by Egyptian weightlifters.

In dismissing the Egyptian Weightlifting Federation's appeal against the sanction, the CAS arbitration panel ordered the Federation to make a contribution towards the IWF's expenses in connection with the proceedings.

After having been ineligible to send athletes to the 2019 World Weightlifting Championships, the Egyptian Weightlifting Federation will now be unable to qualify athletes for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

2019 IWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

A major anti-doping step was completed at the 2019 IWF World Championships by transferring all key areas to the International Testing Agency (ITA) which was in charge of in-competition testing for the first time. This included pre-competition activities, like eligibility checks and test distribution. The ITA, with an international group of doping control officers, conducted 321 tests during the event.

As is customary at IWF events, we maintained our emphasis on educating athletes about anti-doping, and in particular their rights and responsibilities, with a range of activities linked to the #iLiftCLEAN campaign. #iLiftCLEAN in Pattaya included both a booth linked to the WADA legacy outreach programme, to engage with educational materials, and also dedicated workshops. Two seminars for athletes and their entourages, meanwhile, provided opportunities to learn in-depth from world-leading experts.



IWF CONGRESS REPORT

Meeting ahead of the IWF World Championships in Pattaya, Thailand, the IWF Congress heard a report from the IWF Anti-Doping Commission which reported that more than 1,100 in-competition tests had been conducted this year on athletes from 89 countries, using a number of different world-class sample collection authorities.

The Commission noted a decline in the number of ineligible athletes at their events and encouraged all Member Federations to promote #iLiftCLEAN e-learning platform. The International Testing Agency (ITA) Director General Benjamin Cohen reported that more than 550 out-of-competition tests have been conducted this year by ITA, on athletes from more than 50 nations. Cohen also revealed that WADA had expressed its satisfaction with the IWF's anti-doping programme following its audit over the summer.

A report on the 2019 IWF budget was presented, in which it was explained that revenues were higher than originally budgeted. The budget for 2020 is set to be very positive due to the impact of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The IWF's commitment to anti-doping was further reinforced by the fact that 40 per cent of the IWF's total revenue is spent on anti-doping.

RUSSIAN ATHLETES

In August, the IWF, in collaboration with ITA, asserted five anti-doping rule violations against Russian athletes based on the evidence arising from investigations conducted by Professor McLaren and the WADA Intelligence & Investigations department (WADA I&I) into the Russian doping scheme.

In view of the severity of the asserted anti-doping rule violations and compelling nature of the evidence, the IWF in cooperation with the ITA also decided to provisionally suspend the relevant athletes. On behalf of the IWF, the ITA will be prosecuting these cases before the competent jurisdiction, in accordance with the applicable IWF Anti-Doping Policy.

These assertions are the result of a close collaboration between IWF and WADA I&I, which provided invaluable support including documentary packages containing the relevant evidence with respect to the individual athletes. The IWF and ITA jointly are conducting follow-up investigations that may lead to further cases being brought in the near future.

IWF JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Successful IWF Anti-Doping Outreach and an iLiftClean Booth were established for athletes and officials again during the 2019 IWF Junior Championships in Suva, Fiji.

The iLiftClean Booth was set up near the field of play, where participants had the chance to receive useful information in the field of Anti-Doping. Another booth was set up by Voices of the Athlete (VOA) at the Event, which generated interest in the following topics:

- Go Green - Sustainable Coastlines. Participants discussed issues such as protecting the environment, cleaning up beaches, pollution, and ways of advocating 'Going Green' in their own countries.



- Be a leader - Athlete's Commission. Participants discussed the qualities of a good leader and were empowered to recognise that they can be agents of positive change in their communities.
- Staying Healthy – Voices of the Athlete (VOA). The staying healthy component focused on the topic Non-Communicable Diseases. The program covered the effects of Non-Communicable Diseases, as well as healthy lifestyle choices students can make in order to stay healthy.

The IWF Anti-Doping Outreach was organised in the context of the WADA Legacy Outreach Program, with athletes and officials being offered the chance to try their knowledge in the field of Anti-Doping.

A total of 71 athletes from 17 countries filled in the IWF's Anti- Doping questionnaire, which was based on the WADA quiz.

Commercial partnerships

In April, IWF announced a new partnership with Rogue Fitness, a leading USA-based barbell and sports equipment manufacturer.

Rogue Fitness became a second-tier sports equipment supplier — a new level of partnership for the IWF. The partnership does not impact the long-term cooperation the IWF has with its five first-tier suppliers.

As a second-tier supplier, Rogue Fitness can provide weightlifting equipment for IWF Bronze Level Qualification Events and Other Events.