

IWF COMPETITIONS

IWF Grand Prix I
Havana (CUB) - June 8-18, 2023

Great success for Cuba's first global event in 50 years

A world record for Angie Palacios of Ecuador, a winning start at a new weight for Solfrid Koanda of Norway and a career-best for the remarkable Indonesian Eko Yuli Irawan were among the individual highlights of the IWF Grand Prix that ended in Havana on June 18.

As for the teams, Indonesia, the United States and Ecuador all excelled, while the one dressed entirely in grey also had a successful championships.

The weightlifting team of Individual Neutral Athletes (AIN), including the lifters with Belarussian passport, had four winners. Three AIN lifters moved straight into the top 10 of the Paris rankings, Petr Asayonak and Yauheni Tsikhantsou at 89kg and 102kg respectively, and Siuzanna Valodzka at 71kg, while others have made it into the top 20.

This was their first international competition since December 2021.

"We are back home, back in the family... I can't describe how good it feels," said Vitaliy Kreidich, vice-president of the Belarus Weightlifting Federation and part of the team who managed 13 lifters, eight men and five women, in Havana.

Mohamed Jalood, the IWF president, said, *"We saw here that weightlifting is a sport for all. The team respected the conditions they signed up to, they came as neutrals and everybody respected them on the platform, on the podium, everywhere."*

Palacios, from Ecuador, was the only world record breaker in Cuba, with a snatch of 121kg at 71kg. She is part of the remarkable family that has produced Olympic and continental champions, including her sister Neisi, who won at 81kg in Havana.

Koanda overcame cramp to win in her first competition at 81kg, and Irawan is on course for a record fifth Olympic medal. He posted career-high numbers after going up to 67kg, and his team-mates Ricko Saputra and Rahmat Erwin won at 61kg and 81kg.

Read more [here](#)

[Results](#) | [Olympic Qualification Ranking](#)



Solfrid Koanda (NOR)



Yauheni Tsikhantsou (AIN)



Angie Palacios (ECU)

Cuba and the IWF Grand Prix: Hard work, emotion, and development

Jorge Luis Barcelan likes to talk with passion about the causes he cherishes. His eyes get wet when he recalls all the hurdles and difficulties until the staging of the IWF Grand Prix in Havana (CUB). President of the Cuban Weightlifting Federation since 2014, Barcelan was a dedicated host to the nations and athletes that decided to come to the Caribbean island and compete in an event that is also qualifying for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris (FRA). The Cuban leader is proud of this achievement and hopes that more opportunities will arise in the future.

"It all started two years ago. The IWF, recognising the tradition and history of our country in the sport, decided that we were worth staging a world event of this magnitude. It seemed a dream then, as the last, and only, world competition ever hosted in Cuba were the IWF World Championships, in the already distant year of 1973," recalls Barcelan.

"The International Federation decided that this could be a good occasion to revive and develop the sport on the island. Once we knew that the IWF and the Pan American Federation strongly supported the project, we knocked at the door of the Ministry of Sport and even the leadership of our country. And they were seduced by the idea!" he continues. However, this determination was somehow refrained by the general situation in the country, subject to an economic embargo for six decades now. With tears in his eyes, the Cuban Weightlifting Federation President explains: *"We are living and imposing very drastic measures on our people, as we are subject to a very challenging environment. This creates obvious difficulties, not only in the daily lives of our citizens but in all the projects that may involve a huge investment. This was the case at this Grand Prix. Fortunately, all the concerned national authorities understood the importance of this event and immediately offered their help and financial support"*.

Read more [here](#)



Jorge Luis Barcelan, during the Opening Ceremony of the IWF Grand Prix in Cuba



Top: the IWF President Mohammed Jalood;
Bottom: Barcelan with Jose Quiñones, President of the Pan-American Federation and IWF EB member

IWF Executive Board Meeting - June 10-11

Bahrain will be the host of the 2024 IWF World Championships!

Manama, the capital of Bahrain, will host the 2024 edition of the IWF World Championships, after the vote of the IWF Executive Board in Havana (CUB). The Middle East bid received more support than the two other candidatures for next year's IWF top-event, Yerevan (ARM) and Tirana (ALB). This will be the most important weightlifting event ever staged in Bahrain, which successfully hosted the 2022 Asian Championships.

The President of the Bahrain Weightlifting Federation, Eshaq Ebrahim Eshaq led the three-person delegation from his country and was visibly a happy man after the outcome. *"I sincerely thank the IWF Executive Board for the support and trust in our bid. We promise we will not disappoint you! We will deliver a top-class event and the entire IWF Family will live an unforgettable experience in Bahrain,"* Mr Eshaq considered.

The 2024 IWF World Championships will be held in November/December, some months after the conclusion of the Olympic Games in Paris (FRA). For 2025, the host of the IWF showcase – Norway – had been already awarded in December 2021.

If this was the highlight of the two-day meeting of the IWF Executive Board in the Cuban capital, which hosted the first 2023 IWF Grand Prix, other important decisions and discussions were held under the leadership of the IWF President Mohammed Jalood. These include:

- Update on the Sustainability Project, namely the ongoing works on the assessment and subsequent work to diminish the IWF carbon footprint;
- Under the anti-doping strategy, approval of a motion specifying that the IWF may exclude countries from competing where doping tests could not be taken by the IWF or any Anti-Doping Organisation with testing authority instructed by the IWF. Moreover, the IWF Executive Board approved an early implementation of the principle of Member Federations' categorisation based on their doping risk from January 1, 2024 to November 1, 2023;



- Lift of the temporary suspension for four Pan-American Member Federations (subject to payment of the 2023 annual fee): Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, and the Cayman Islands;
- Approval of a financial assistance to the Cuban organisers of the 2023 Grand Prix, in order to compensate for the loss caused by numerous last-minute withdrawals from the competition;
- Approval of a policy establishing that for international events, under the IWF umbrella, participation of Member Federations is subject to the payment of the accommodation, entry, and anti-doping fees by no later than 10 days after the submission of Final Entries;
- Approval for the hiring of an independent company in charge of elaborating an internal financial audit;
- Creation of a Working Group in charge of a policy of "Human Rights and Non-Discrimination";

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IWF Refugee Team had first training camp in Sweden



Led by coach Patric Bettembourg, the IWF Refugee Team had, from June 23 to July 1, its first Training Camp in Halmstad (SWE), in order to prepare the participation in the 2023 IWF World Championships, taking place from September 4-17 in Riyadh (KSA). Of the seven members of the team, only four could make the trip to Sweden – among women, Parisa Jahanfekrian (originally from Iran), Aline de Souza and Monique Araujo (both Brazilian natives), and also male lifter Addriel Garcia (Cuba).

The three remaining lifters of the group – Clementine Meukeugni Noubissi (Cameroon, but living in Great Britain), Fawaz Mohammed Saleh Hussein (Yemen/Saudi Arabia), and Reza Rouhi (Iran/Great Britain) – could not, despite the best IWF efforts on this matter, join the training camp due to the difficulty in leaving their respective host country for the moment. The four athletes present in Sweden could benefit from superb facilities in Halmstad – the headquarters of barbell company Eleiko – and had the opportunity to train twice a day.

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood commented on this training camp: *"I am happy to see the practical implementation of the IWF Refugee Team programme. The training camp held in Sweden was the first step in a pathway that will see this group of athletes competing in our major events"*.

Read more [here](#)

IWF delegation concludes successful visit to Paris

An IWF delegation was recently in Paris to meet with the organisers of the upcoming Olympic Games in 2024 and discuss on the event readiness, with about 13 months to go before the start of the competition. On June 21-22, Matthew Curtain, IWF Executive Board Member and IF Delegate, as well as Moira Lassen, IF Delegate, and Matyas Lencser, IWF Competition Manager, were in the French capital to discuss with the Organising Committee of the Olympic rendezvous about many areas of interest.



Those topics included the transportation plan, the sport presentation of the weightlifting events, the award ceremonies, training venues, and the brand identity and look of the Games. Important updates were also given on the accreditation procedures, the venue and infrastructure, test event, and the ticketing programme. To conclude the two-day visit, the IWF officials also had the opportunity to visit the venue of the weightlifting competition. *"It was a very useful and important meeting, where we could appreciate the efforts and expertise of the Olympic hosts. The Organising Committee of the Games is doing their utmost to ensure the best conditions are met for our athletes, coaches, and officials during the time of the Games,"* said Matthew Curtain and Moira Lassen.

Read more [here](#)