

## IWF NEWS

### Achilleas Tsogas appointed as new IWF CEO

The IWF is happy to announce the hiring of Achilleas Tsogas, as CEO of our International Federation, taking his functions from March 1, 2024 at the headquarters in Lausanne (SUI). With an extensive and solid experience in Sports Management, Mr Achilleas was previously working at the International Olympic Committee for more than eight years, firstly in the Olympic Games department, in the Youth Olympic Games unit and successfully delivered three Youth Olympic Games before transitioning to the sports department. Within the summer sports team, Achilleas was responsible for the combat sports, as well as for weightlifting, and the key contact person for all elements related to the Olympic Movement for the relevant International Federations. Before his IOC involvement, the new IWF CEO held several managerial roles in the organising committees of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, but also in other international, renowned events around the globe, namely the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Mediterranean Games, Arab Games and European Games.



*Achilleas Tsogas, the new IWF CEO  
from March 1, 2024*

Originally a judo athlete and member of the Greek national team, he relocated to Australia and became a member of the Sport department of the organising committee of the Olympic Games Sydney 2000. Following that, he became the sport's competition manager at the Olympic Games Athens 2004, having being also successfully involved in the Judo World Championships in 2001, 2003 and 2005, as an additional member of the IJF Sport commission.

Mr Achilleas is of Hellenic nationality and is fluent in his Greek and English, while having an intermediate level in French and Japanese. In his native Greece, he was also the man behind the creation and management of several sport clubs around the country. Education-wise, his bachelor degree in Physical Education and Sports Science, obtained in Athens, was complemented by a Masters in Sport Management at the University of Technology, Graduate School of Business, in Sydney (AUS).

*"We are extremely satisfied with the appointment of Mr Tsogas as our new CEO, as we believe his confirmed experience will be an added-value for the International Weightlifting Federation. In his previous functions at the IOC, he could witness the progress we have made in many essential areas; I am sure he will be pivotal for the reinforcement of our sustained and continuous development,"* considered the IWF President Mohammed Jalood.

*"It is a great pleasure and honour for me to embark on this new exciting journey with the IWF/Weightlifting Family. I have been privileged to undertake diverse sports event positions around the world in which I was able to successfully co-operate with various organisations and groups of people coming from different cultural and sporting backgrounds and look forward to bringing all the experience to the best use in my new role. I would like to thank President Jalood and the entire Executive Board for the confidence and trust and to ensure them that I will use at the best my experience to drive the IWF to new heights as a global sport and continue to strengthen the position of Weightlifting within the Olympic Movement,"* said the new IWF CEO.



## Four lifters integrate the 2024 IWF Refugee Team

The IWF is happy to announce its Refugee Team for the year 2024, comprised of four athletes: **Parisa Jahanfekrian** (originally from Iran, but residing in Germany), **Aline de Souza** and **Monique Araujo** (both from Brazil, but presently based in the USA), and **Addriel Garcia** (Cuba/Italy). These lifters were already part of the first-ever programme in 2023, and will therefore have additional opportunities during the upcoming months to compete at the IWF events. Applicants for the team could apply until January 31, 2024.

Besides these athletes, directly selected by the IWF, all lifters that are part of the IOC Refugee Team will also join the group. In 2024, the selected coach to manage the team in Aveenash Pandoo, former IWF Coaching and Research Committee Member, currently working as Head Coach in Abu Dhabi Weightlifting Club. The team is completed by Hussein Elsettawi, a physiotherapist.

The 2024 IWF Refugee Team programme will be effective until the conclusion of the IWF World Championships, next December in Manama (BRN).

Read more [here](#)



## IWF visits Norway and confirms that the 2025 Worlds are on the right track

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood led the visit of an IWF delegation to Oslo (NOR) to meet the organisers of the 2025 IWF World Championships taking place in Forde. The IWF General Secretary Antonio Urso and the IWF Communications and Marketing Manager Pedro Adrega were also in the Norwegian capital, where the group was welcomed by the President of the national weightlifting federation, Stian Grimseth and his team.

During the encounter with the hosts of the 2025 IWF showcase, various aspects related with the organisation of the event were discussed, namely the competition and training venue, the accommodation plan, the anti-doping procedures, the medal ceremonies' protocols, the TV production of the competition, and the involvement of the local population in the Championships.

During its visit to Oslo, the IWF delegation had the opportunity to also meet with the Vice-President of the Norwegian Olympic Committee, Mr Sondre Sande Gullord.

Read more [here](#)

## IWF President receives the highest EWF award

At the recent EWF (European Weightlifting Federation) Congress in Sofia (BUL), and as a tribute for his action as IWF President, Mohammed Jalood was awarded the highest EWF recognition, the "Gold Collar". *"Considering your admirable commitment in supporting sport and Olympic values, considering also the outstanding achievements in leading the IWF through the worst moment in our sport's history, confirming weightlifting in the Olympic program, and establishing confidence with the IOC, I am honoured to present you this recognition,"* considered Antonio Conflitti, the leader of the European continental body.



# 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES COUNTDOWN

## Pan-Americans 2024: Final day report from Caracas

Keydomar Vallenilla (*photo below*) was a picture of calm even when lifting 212kg above his head on the way to victory for Venezuela at the Pan American Championships. The host nation ended the final day with three winners and a big move in the Olympic rankings by women's super-heavyweight silver medallist Naryury Perez.

*"Zero stress, just the way I like it,"* Vallenilla said after making 170-212-382 for a sweep of golds at 96kg, the weight at which he won silver in the Tokyo Olympic Games. He weighed in light at 89.85kg because and he is now an 89kg athlete. There is no 96kg category in Paris.

Vallenilla decided not to go head-to-head for a second time with Yeison Lopez from Colombia. At the Pan American Games in October, Vallenilla finished 1kg ahead of Lopez at 89kg.

*"I look forward to competing with Yeison again, he is a very strong athlete,"* Vallenilla said. *"But the real contest is in Paris, not here. It made sense to go at 96, I could relax, I could just make four lifts. It was very exciting, and also it was very calm."*

Read more [here](#)



## Asians 2024: Final day report from Tashkent

Olympic bronze medallist Man Asaad (*photo below*) returned to the international platform for the first time in 14 months and achieved both his aims in an exciting super-heavyweight session in Tashkent – victory in the Asian Championships and a continental record in clean and jerk.

On the final day of competition there were also moves in the rankings by the Iraqi teenager Ali Yusur and the popular Japanese Eishiro "Tank" Murakami, both of whom improved their best qualifying total by 8kg. At 109kg there was gold for the host nation's hero Ruslan Nurudinov and a first medal for UAE.

Asaad's targets looked optimistic. A shoulder injury plagued him throughout 2023, and to reach them he had to beat the double Asian champion Gor Minasyan from Bahrain, who finished one place ahead of him in Tokyo and is second in the rankings for Paris 2024. While Asaad has been recovering and training in Damascus, Minasyan has won Asian Games gold, his second Asian title, and been on the podium at the World Championships.

Read more [here](#)



## Europeans 2024: Final day report from Sofia

Lasha Talakhadze's long run of European titles came to an end in Sofia when he withdrew from the men's super-heavyweights. Varazdat Lalayan (*photo below*) from Armenia is the new champion after winning the final session of the 2024 European Championships on 205-250-455.

In the women's super-heavyweights Emily Campbell overcame another injury scare to win her fourth title for Britain. It was her first competition in 10 months.

Giorgi Asanidze, Georgia's head coach, said, *"Lasha has a minor trauma in one of his knees and we made this decision to mitigate the risk as much as possible."*

*"Our objective in Paris qualification. An athlete at any stage should retain 'the feeling of the podium'. We are definitely looking to compete in Thailand (at the final IWF World Cup) for Lasha to retain that feeling of the podium."*

The World Cup in Phuket brings to a close the qualifying programme for Paris 2024 when it ends on April 11.

Read more [here](#)



# 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES COUNTDOWN

## African Championships 2024: Review

A rush of winners in the heavier weight categories for men and women took host nation Egypt clear at the top of the medals table at the 2024 African Championships in Ismailia.

Sara Samir (*photo below*) was among them as she claimed her ninth continental title as a youth, junior and senior. Samir declined her final attempt in the 81kg category after making five good lifts for 113-140-253.

Like all continental championships this month, this was an Olympic qualifier. Egypt's biggest gain in the rankings was made by Karim Abokahla at 89kg, where his 170-211-381 took him ahead of Italy's Tokyo medallist Nino Pizzolato into sixth place.

That is only 6kg below Abokahla's best total in the 102kg rankings.

Read more [here](#)



## Oceania Championships 2024: Review

Don Opeloge (*photo below*) broke records and made a significant move in the Paris 2024 rankings when he won the 102kg title for Samoa at the Oceania Championships in Auckland, New Zealand. Opeloge's 175-215-390 was the best-ever effort by any Samoan weightlifter on Sinclair points.

Another upward move came from Kiana Elliott from Australia, who finished ahead of her rankings rival Mattie Sasser at 59kg. The news was not so good for Elliott's team-mate Eileen Cikamatana, who bombed out at 81kg.

Read more [here](#)



## TOP-3 – Olympic Qualification Ranking

Before the IWF World Cup (mandatory event for Paris 2024), the top-3 of the Olympic ranking is as follows:

### Men

#### 61kg

- 1.LI Fabin (CHN) - Jinju - 314
- 2.MASSIDDA Sergio (ITA) - Riyadh - 302
- 3.IRAWAN Eko (INA) - Bogota - 300

#### 73kg

- 1.ABDULLAH Rahmat Erwin (INA) - Tashkent - 363
- 2.WICHUMA Weeraphon (THA) - Riyadh - 349
- 3.ANDREEV Bozhidar (BUL) - Sofia - 348

#### 89kg

- 1.LI Dayin (CHN) - Jinju - 396
- 2.NASAR Karlos (BUL) - Yerevan - 395
- 3.LOPEZ Yeison (COL) - Doha - 390

#### 102kg

- 1.LIU Huanhua (CHN) - Riyadh - 404
- 2.ELBAKH Fares (QAT) - Doha - 400
- 3.DJURAEV Akbar (UZB) - Tashkent - 400

#### +102kg

- 1.TALAKHADZE Lasha (GEO) - Yerevan - 474
- 2.MINASYAN Gor (BRN) - Jinju - 464
- 3.LALAYAN Varazdat (ARM) - Yerevan - 462

### Women

#### 49kg

- 1.JIANG Huihua (CHN) - Doha - 216
- 2.MIRABAI Chanu Saikhom (IND) - Bogota - 200
- 3.KHAMBAO Surodchana (THA) - Jinju - 200

#### 59kg

- 1.LUO Shifang (CHN) - Doha - 247
- 2.KONOTOP Kamila (UKR) - Riyadh - 236
- 3.ALVAREZ Yenny (COL) - Bogota - 234

#### 71kg

- 1.LIAO Guifang (CHN) - Riyadh - 273
- 2.REEVES Olivia (USA) - Doha - 262
- 3.PALACIOS Angie (ECU) - Havana - 261

#### 81kg

- 1.LIANG Xiaomei (CHN) - Doha - 284
- 2.AHMED Sara Samir (EGY) - Tunis - 268
- 3.KOANDA Solfrid (NOR) - Havana - 266

#### +81kg

- 1.LI Wenwen (CHN) - Jinju - 315
- 2.PARK Hyejeong (KOR) - Jinju - 295
- 3.CAMPBELL Emily (GBR) - Bogota - 287

## [OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION RANKING](#)