



USA MASTERS WEIGHTLIFTING UPDATE

The formation of the International Masters Weightlifting Association (IMWA), formerly known as IWF Masters, was introduced to the Congress of Nations in December, 2022. This was done when the IWF wrote the Masters age group out of their bylaws. All nations in attendance voted to accept the change in name with the blessings of the IWF. In order to ensure their Masters lifters have the opportunity to compete internationally, the USA Masters continue its established relationship with the newly named IMWA.

Due to the behind-the-scenes instability that USAW NGB was causing within its dealings of the Master's Council leading up to the sudden resignation of then CEO Phil Andrews, the IMWA Board stated explicitly in their bylaws that they will not work with a National Body in any country that attempts to cut out its Masters led committees. While the hope was that the Masters Council and the USAW NGB may continue to coexist in a way that has served thousands of Masters lifters in the USA since 1975, including reaching a solution in 2021 of bidding out National meets that unfortunately, USAW refused to update in it's bylaws (as recent audit by the USOPC show that updating Bylaws "needs improvement".) When the writing on the wall became clear that relations continued to deteriorate with the onboarding of new USAW CEO, Matt Sicchio, it was absolutely necessary to ensure the USA Masters lifters were NOT in jeopardy of being left out of International competition through the IMWA. With the May 3 announcement by USAW taking the bidding and execution of Masters Nationals and relegating the Howard Cohen American Masters championship, a drug tested national competition where national records may be recorded & can be used as a qualifier for IMWA International competitions, to a "local" meet, the two National meets bid & run by the Masters Council was taken out of their hands in direct violation of not only IMWA rules but also USA Masters Council bylaws which were approved by USAW, meaning all USA Masters are now ineligible for international competition starting in 2024.

Due to the reckless abandonment by USAW of their entire Masters community, the USA Masters Council has voted to disassociate from USAW and form the USA Masters Weightlifting Inc. A non-profit organization designated solely for the purpose of creating Master competitions inline with the international weightlifting body. The formation of this Masters organization allows the only pathway to International competition for USA Masters weightlifters through IMWA in accordance with WADA.

Does this change anything for USA Masters lifters today? No, our mission has not changed. We are in the process of solidifying licensing and are beginning to look ahead to 2024 meets available for USA Masters weightlifters that will also serve as IMWA qualifications. With this new entity of USA Masters Weightlifting Inc. we bring all records; grand slams; HOF entries & points that the Masters community has built over the past 40 plus years.

More information will be available in the coming days on membership; qualification; and upcoming events. The newly formed USA Masters WL Inc. will honor the status of all USAW registered master lifters through the end of 2023. This will solidify eligibility for all USA Masters competing in Pan Am Master and World Masters under IMWA rules and bylaws.