

# **2019 USA Masters WL Board Meeting – Open Meeting held at Howard Cohen American Masters**

Thursday November 14, 2019

## **1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order** (Michael Cohen)

Michael Cohen welcomed all the attendees and thanked them for being able to participate. Attendees included Michael Cohen, Phil Andrews, Les Simonton, Corinne Grotenhuis, Jeff Scott, Van Cramer and Sheryl Cohen. The meeting was an open meeting held at the conclusion of the last session at the Friday Howard Cohen American Masters. Voting was done by the elected Board members only.

## **2. International Travel Insurance** (Michael Cohen)

In the previous meeting we discussed several USA master lifters who had bad experiences with overseas medical emergencies, especially limitations of their overseas medical insurance coverage. Many USA domestic medical insurance policies **do not** cover international travel. Even those that do usually only reimburse the expenditure **after** the individual has paid out of pocket.

The Board decided to implement overseas medical insurance coverage for USA Master lifters supplied by USAWL. We will strongly encourage every USA master to sign up for this coverage as part of the registration process for international masters events. The coverage will be **voluntary**, however, to decline the coverage the lifter will need to click an online waiver box to “opt out” of the coverage.

Phil indicated the USAWL masters insurance coverage will be the same as existing coverage for USA elite athletes and will cost about \$10 per overseas day. For a masters meet this might mean \$50-60 dollars for the meet trip which is very reasonable given the overall cost of overseas travel. The coverage would be for the weightlifting event itself and “normal” tourist activities (excluding things like sky diving or scuba diving etc.)

## **3. Bringing on a Non-Voting Board member to coordinate medical issues** (Michael Cohen)

At the last meeting the Board agreed with Michael’s suggestion to create a non-voting USA Masters Board position to coordinate USA Master medical issues, especially on-site support at all national level and international level master meets. Melissa Doughty has accepted this role / Michael welcomed her to the Board. Melissa is both an MD and a masters lifter in the W55 category and is very well qualified.

## **4. USA 15/10 Starting Attempts rule** (Michael Cohen)

At the Worlds Master Championships, the 15/10 starting attempts rule was modified several times as the competition progressed. The eventual IWF masters rule now being applied is that lifters must start with at least 80% of their class and / or respective individual qualifying total.

After a discussion of the alternatives, the Board decided that USA National Master Championships starting attempts must be at least 80% of the class qualifying total. (Nationals only – the Howard Cohen American meet has no qualifying total.)

#### **5. Mike Choi's Resignation** (Michael Cohen)

Michael Cohen received Mike Choi's resignation from the USA Masters Board. Mike indicated he had many commitments and was not able to give the masters program the attention he felt was warranted. Everyone thanked Mike for his time on the Board and wished him well. Michael Cohen indicated that Joe Triolo was willing to serve in a Board capacity and Joe would be joining the USA Masters Board. (At the previous USA Masters Board election Joe was the second-place vote getter to Mike Choi.) Joe brings a wealth of weightlifting experience as a competitor, coach and official and is a long-time contributor to the USA Masters program and an IWF international referee.

#### **6. Criteria for USA Masters Hall of Fame Eligibility** (Van Cramer)

At the last meeting the Board discussed an option to move to a points-based criteria system conceptually similar to the current Canadian system. The board asked Van to evaluate various scenarios / Les to provide calculation and database capabilities. Van sent the Board a short position paper on the options and impacts utilizing the excel calculation spreadsheets that Les developed.

Conceptually, we want to better reward USA Masters lifting excellence (slanted to a domestic focus – there is already an IWF Masters HoF) recognizing the large growth of the sport and the increased depth of competition, especially for the younger classes.

Options considered:

- 1) **Nationals 1st Place only** - 10 wins (current system) / transparent, simple, rewards 1st place results, penalizes younger lifters who face substantial competition...rewards older lifters who may win with relatively little or no competition...
- 2) **Nationals 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place** using 10-7-5 scoring / require 100 points / better rewards depth of competition for all ages while maintaining focus on national championships...
- 3) **Nationals / Worlds / Pan Ams** 1st, 2nd ,3rd Place 10-7-5 / 6-5-4 / 5-4-3 scoring require 150 points / broader base including international results but only premier meets...further rewards depth of competition...
- 4) **Nationals / Worlds / Pan Ams / HC Americans** 10-7-5 / 6-5-4 / 5-4-3 / 3-2-1 scoring / require 150 points / even broader base / helps emphasize HC Americans / may lead to discussion as to why American Open Series or other "drug tested premier meets" are not included...could allow less qualified lifters who travel and lift everywhere to gain entry that might otherwise have not reached the HoF.

Balancing lifting excellence with simplicity, transparency, administrative efficiency Van recommended Option #3 – Nationals / Worlds and Pan Ams. This option emphasizes premier meets and depth of competition but is a manageable database.

After discussion, the Board voted to implement **Option #3**. Overall, the new criteria should better recognize the depth (and difficulty) of competition in the younger classes.

The Board also agreed to a 3- year period of time to maintain a “dual track” for athletes to earn entry from both the existing (10 National master wins) and the new selection criteria. The newly approved criteria (applied retroactively) will accelerate (9) athletes to be immediately eligible for entry into the USA Masters Hall of Fame and inducted at the National Championship in April 2020.

#### **7. Status / Locations for Upcoming USA Masters sponsored Meets** (Michael Cohen)

**2020 Master Nationals** - Orlando FL / April 16-19, 2020 (sponsored by Team Savannah). Same venue as the 2019 Pan Ams / will be able accommodate a 3 platform meet if required.

**2020 Howard Cohen Americans** – Savannah (sponsored by Team Savannah).

**2021 Masters Nationals** – TBD/ possibly Fort Worth TX in conjunction with the USAWL Juniors competition pending resolution of equipment, approved vendors, drug testing and timing issues. Michael Cohen will contact the meet director and clarify the above issues to help make the final decision. Phil Andrews indicated he understood the issues and is supportive of a dual meet or a separate meet. If held jointly, the meet will be in February due to USAWL Juniors scheduled timing and the fact that the World Masters Games in Japan are being held in May.

**2021 Howard Cohen Americans** – Reno NV (Calavera Barbell)

**2022 Masters Nationals** – Salt Lake City (Debbie Millet)

**2022 Howard Cohen Americans** – Nashville TN (Osman Manzanares)

#### **8. Meeting Close** (Michael Cohen)

Michael Cohen congratulated Robbie Arroyo for his contribution to put on a well-run 2019 Howard Cohen American Masters competition and thanked him again for a successful meet.

Michael then closed the meeting and thanked all for their attendance.

The next scheduled meeting will take place at the Masters National Championships in Orlando April 16-19, 2020. Interim teleconference(s) will be held if required.