

USA Masters Weightlifting Board Conference Call

1/12/2021

1. Call to order and Meeting Agenda (Michael Cohen)

Michael Cohen called the teleconference meeting to order at 9:00 PM. The purpose of the call is to update the USA Masters BoD regarding COVID-19 impacts on our sport, review plans for upcoming USA / International Masters meets and the upcoming USA Masters elections.

Attendees included Michael Cohen, Sheryl Cohen, Joe Triolo, Corinne Grotenhuis, Les Simonton, Van Cramer, Jeff Scott and Jerry Dunne.

2. Final Review and Lessons Learned from the 2020 Online Masters (Sheryl Cohen)

COVID-19 impacted everyone in 2020 including our Master athletes, coaches, and supporters. Although admittedly less than perfect, the 2020 Online National Masters meet provided a viable option when a physical meet could not be held.

We learned many lessons regarding the challenges to run, administer and referee an online meet including the need for individuals to master the technology. New software was successfully employed and we had an abundance of volunteer referees that made it easier.

Hopefully, this will be the first and last time the USA Master's program will be forced to utilize this format. However, it should be noted that there were about 800 online participants representing the substantial majority of the 1000+ lifters who registered for the original physical onsite meet.

As technology evolves our meets will adapt and more remote options will present themselves but for now the focus is to return to physical meets with appropriate safety protocols.

3. Update on the 2020 Masters End of Year Budget (Michael Cohen)

The USA Masters treasurer will work with USAW financial and administrative staff to better understand and confirm the current budget and status of monies held by USAW on the USA Masters behalf.

4. Elections (Jerry Dunne)

Jerry Dunne, head of the USA Masters Nominations and Elections committee, outlined the election and nomination status.

In October, USAW on behalf of the USA Masters, circulated a call for nominations and election dates for the two elected positions - USA Master Chair and Treasurer positions. At the same time USAW circulated a call for nominations for non-elected (appointed by the USA Masters BoD) committee

members. The committees include Records, Competition, Technical, Women's, Sports Medicine, Social Media/Media.

After the nominations due date, USAW reported the results back to Jerry. Only two nominations were submitted for the elected offices – Michael Cohen for Chair and Van Cramer for Treasurer. Therefore, Jerry entertained a resolution to unanimously approve the uncontested elections. The resolution was unanimously approved by the USA Masters BoD and both individuals will now serve a 4-year term.

Additionally, there were multiple nominations for committee members and the existing committee chairs supported those nominations. The selected committee members will be notified and then posted on the USA Masters website.

5. 2021 National Masters Update (Michael Cohen)

The 2021 National Masters are on track to be held in Orlando March 17 – 21 reflecting COVID -19 protocols such as enhanced social distancing, masking, audience and coach limitations, and disinfectant protocols. No more than 12 participants per class at a time with each participant having their own warmup platform. There will be a separate training hall with 10 physically separated platforms.

This will be a 5 day meet to allow for these protocols to be effectively implemented. Effective implementation will require a larger number of technical officials and the support staff to provide the required cleaning, monitoring of social distancing, etc. Depending on the final registration totals this will be a 1 or 2 platform meet but the plan is to stick with the 5 days to allow for effective COVID-19 protocols.

We also plan to hold testing for national referees.

As of now the meet is planned to go ahead. It is recognized that different areas of the country are in different phases of the COVID-19 outbreak, individuals may be reluctant to travel and individuals have different risk tradeoffs. If the meet cannot be held in March, the fallback, as stated on the USA Masters website, is to hold the meet physically in conjunction with the Pan American Masters Championships in August in Orlando.

6. 2022 National Masters update (Michael Cohen)

The 2022 National Masters will be hosted by Debbie Millet in Salt Lake City. Exact dates for the spring of 2022 are WIP.

7. 2021 Howard Cohen American Championships Update (Michael Cohen)

The 2021 Howard Cohen American Championships will be held Reno November 4-7, hosted by Carlos Hernandez and Calavera Barbell. Preparations appear to be progressing smoothly. The event venue will be the Silver Legacy Casino.

8. 2021 World Masters Update (Corinne Grotenhuis)

The latest plan is that the IWF Masters will hold a real time online competition in May 2021 via a Zoom type environment. Technical details are WIP, at this time it appears the USAW will provide the technology and technical support with the IWF Masters supplying the referees / technical officials. The real time meet will likely be held on a 2-3 hemisphere basis (for example all the Americas lifters in the same class compete at the same time / separately the European and Asian lifters compete to mitigate the time zone challenges.)

The participants will be limited to 800 and the time to register will be pushed back to February 15.

The registration process should be similar to the 2019 and 2020 Worlds whereby the American lifters register first in BARS and then get an access code to register in the preliminary World registration system to be part of the pool pending final IWF Masters approval. (Limited to 800 total lifters / 12 per class with no more than 5 lifters per class from one country.)

9. 2021 Pan American Masters Update (Michael Cohen)

2021 Pan American Masters will be held in Orlando August 5-8 at the same venue as the National Championships. Currently planned to be a 4 day meet with anticipated COVID-19 protocols as required at that time.

10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

COVID-19

The challenges of dealing with COVID-19 makes running meets exponentially harder.

Requirements include greatly enhanced social distancing, masking, physical limitations, and disinfectant protocols for the meet itself. There are challenges getting enough officials, being able to safely travel for both athletes and officials, hotel accommodations and social distancing and sanitizing. There may be various state quarantines rules that may inhibit getting to and from the meet.

Given the current COVID-19 situation, the plan is to strongly encourage / require meet directors to wait until the last possible moment to purchase meet related items and be able to allow a full refund even if the meet is moved to another time period or site. While this is in line with USAW policy it makes the meet director's role extremely challenging and increases their financial risk . Successfully planning a meet takes advance preparation and time and it may not always be possible to withhold spending until close to the meet itself.

Adjourn (Michael Cohen)

Michael adjourned the teleconference at approximately 10:15 PM and thanked all for their attendance, contributions. He again acknowledged the extremely difficult circumstances COVID-19 continues to present to society in general and specifically master lifters, coaches, officials, and the meet director(s).