What is USA Masters Weightlifting?

USA Weightlifting Masters Committee

Mission / Business Model

USA Weightlifting Masters Committee is focused on providing support for USA master lifters including (2) National level meets and the interface with the Pan American Masters Championships and the World Masters Championships by leveraging volunteers, limited funding, and independent meet directors. All USA masters are members of USAW.

Governance

- USA Weightlifting Masters Committee is part of USA Weightlifting (USAW) organized pursuant to Section 8.24 of the Bylaws of USA Weightlifting, Inc., the National Governing Body of the sport of Olympic-style weightlifting.
- USA Weightlifting By-Laws are modeled after and were agreed with USAW and are posted on this web site https://usamastersweightlifting.com/masters-governance-financials
- The USA Weightlifting Masters Committee is composed of Masters lifters nominated and elected to four-year terms by members of USAW who are registered as Masters. The elected members of the Masters Committee in turn appoint other Masters volunteers to a number of sub-committees that together form a Masters Executive Advisory Group, and together these bodies govern Masters weightlifting in the U.S.
- The Masters Committee is an all-volunteer organization and serve without compensation; there are no salaried employees.
- With input from the Masters membership in the form of surveys and feedback gathered at national Masters competitions, the Masters Committee and the Advisory Group make decisions on such issues as governance, venues, and dates for national Masters competitions, Masters records and statistics, Masters technical rules, Masters scoring systems, awards, and prizes, anti-doping policies and procedures, and eligibility criteria for participation in international Masters competitions. In all of these decisions, the needs, and interests of the Masters lifters are paramount and take precedence over all other concerns.
The USA Masters Committee is recognized by the IWF Masters Committee as the sole representative Masters body in the U.S., with full powers to certify entries to all international Masters competitions that are under the control of IWF Masters. (USA Masters has played a leading role in IWF Masters since its founding in 1993, having also organized the very first World Masters Championships in 1985.)

**Weightlifting Meets**

Ensure that two domestic national Masters competitions are held each year, including the USA National Masters Championships, and to provide all necessary administrative and organizational support for the participation of U.S. Masters lifters in the Pan American Masters Championships and IWF Masters World Championships. Additionally, the World Masters Games are held every four years and the Masters Committee works with the IWF Masters to ensure access for USA master lifters.

When the Pan Americans or the Worlds are held in the USA then the USA masters committee is delegated by the IWF Masters to run the meets which are typically bid as are the domestic meets. (The Pan Ams are typically held in the USA every third year and the Worlds rotate internationally but have been in USA multiple times.)

Masters only meets reflect close cooperation between the Meet Directors and the Masters Committee. Their respective roles are detailed below. For the last 3-4 years there has been a dramatic increase in masters meets participation and a similar dramatic enhancement of the overall meet quality.

**Meet Directors:**

- The Masters National Championships and the Howard Cohen Americans are run by independent meet directors who operate under the bid specifications set by the Masters Committee.
- The complete bid process containing the Bid Specifications and related sample financial template documents are on the USA Masters webs site [https://usamastersweightlifting.com/event-hosting](https://usamastersweightlifting.com/event-hosting)
- National level masters meet fees typically range from $100.00 to $135.00 (more for refundable or late entry depending on the meet). The meet fees go to the meet director to cover their meet expenses, although entry processing fees (typically $9.00 in BARS) goes off the top to USAW.
- There is no admittance charge for spectators at any of the masters national level events.
- The meet director’s will provide or pay for the venue, hospitality, Livestream, loaders, awards, entry processing capabilities (BARS), stage, platform, pipe and draping, banners, medical (on site), additional event staff beyond volunteers as required, setup and breakdown, A/V equipment rental, anti-doping control and testing, stage and platform rental, truck and / or shipping rental, award stands and miscellaneous (cleaning supplies etc.)
Masters Committee Support:

To help achieve high quality meets, promote greater opportunities for meet directors and geographic diversification the Masters Committee has developed support resources to assist the meet directors. Upon the successful bid the meet director has the support from the Masters Committee in the following areas:

- All barbells used in the meets, warm-up platforms and training area are Eleiko, the most used barbell at the IWF international competition level. These are either shipped from the inventory maintained by the Masters Committee or from Eleiko directly (the Masters Committee has a contract with Eleiko USA to supply required equipment) shipped at Eleiko expense. After the meet the equipment is offered for sale at discounted prices. The Eleiko inventory maintained by the masters committee was purchased in 2019 to facilitate and support the meet directors.
- Official competition entry form template / qualifying process / athletes’ cards / materials for weigh-in/ up to 3 competition scales; etc.
- Referees and all officials for the competition. The lead Masters Technical Officials are IWF Category 1 card holders with decades of experience at the highest levels, including Senior World Championships and Olympic Games.
- All technology advisors and competition management teams, including competition secretaries and senior technology personnel to manage and run the electronic systems.
- Electronic Scoring System (contracted with technology chair and paid for by USA Masters). This combination software and hardware package has full capability for running Youth, Junior, and Senior competitions, and also incorporates a full array of Masters-specific system features developed over many years, uniquely designed to incorporate Masters age groups, Masters technical rules, Masters team scoring rules, and the Masters point-scoring systems (“SMF” and “SHMF” points) used for age-group and Grand Masters awards. It has been used in numerous national and international competitions for all age groups, including Masters.
- Coordination and contracting of drug testing for all masters only events

Other Masters Committee Activities

- The Masters Committee maintains its own website with up-to-date meet entry information, governance and financial information, records, Hall of Fame, meet results, Q&A, etc. at https://www.mastersweightlifting.org or https://www.usamastersweightlifting.com
- Certify and maintain USA Masters National records and meet records for the HC Americans.
- Selection and induction of USA Masters Hall of Fame members (Athletes and Significant Contributors)
- Track and confer annual “Grand Slam” awards (Winning all 4 major meets in a calendar year).
- Preservation and dissemination of the history of Masters weightlifting both internationally and in the U.S.
USA Masters Committee members are also deeply involved in the creation and maintenance of the international Masters weightlifting site at http://www.iwfmasters.org

Finance

- Revenues for Masters Committee primarily come from the $5.00 per year fee that USAW collects on behalf of the Masters Committee when the annual dues are paid for any athlete 35 years or older. For example, if in any one given year there were 5,000 master athletes times $5.00 the funding would be $25,000.) Additionally, a $5.00 per entry fee is typically charged to meet directors who organize national Masters competitions, to help defray meet-specific expenses by the Masters Committee. This can be waived if required due to exceptional circumstances (COVID pandemic related or other exceptional incremental costs, etc.).
- Revenues are used to pay for overhead activities such the masters web site, communications, awards, initial travel to a proposed meet site to confirm suitability of a bid, storage of owned Eleiko weightlifting equipment, T-shirts for World Championships, mailing, etc.
- All USAW membership fees (with the exception of the above mentioned $5.00 per annum) go to USAW which gives the master lifter the same benefits as other USAW members – membership in USAW supporting our Olympic hopefuls, right to attend meets, right to attend courses, doping control education, Safe Sport, Athletes Advantage etc. and generally being part of the weightlifting community, etc.
- Independent Masters funds were turned over to full control of USAW in early 2019, the Masters Committee has no funds under its sole control. The Masters Committee makes recommendations / requests for reimbursement of ongoing expenditures or purchases of equipment subject to approval by the USAW CEO. Funds transferred to USAW in 2019 were approximately $68,000 and are held in a USAW account in Colorado Springs.
- As of June 30, 2021, the masters fund balance at USAW is approximately $67,000. In general, revenues exceed overhead costs by about $10,000 per year but in 2019 there was the one-time purchase of $30,000 for the Eleiko equipment inventory.