

## IWF NEWS

### IWF President has “very fruitful meeting” with IOC President in Lausanne

The IWF President Mohammed Jalood met on March 24 in Lausanne (SUI) with the IOC President Kirsty Coventry at the Olympic House, where both dignitaries had the opportunity to discuss topics of mutual interest. Mr Jalood was accompanied by IWF General Secretary José Quiñones and by IWF CEO Achilleas Tsogas.

The IWF delegation started by expressing our International Federation’s deepest gratitude and appreciation for the inclusion of two additional bodyweight categories in the 2028 Olympic Games Los Angeles programme, thus decisively contributing to a safer and fairer competitive environment for the athletes. The upcoming Olympic rendezvous will comprise six categories for both men and women. Comparing with the Paris 2024 programme (5+5), there will be now a reduction in the gap between the categories, a request specifically addressed by the IWF Athletes Commission.

The IWF representatives also reaffirmed their complete support to Ms Coventry’s efforts to dissociate Sports from any political interferences, so that athletes and their performances can remain at the core of the Olympic Movement.

Finally, the IWF President underlined the robust restructuring that our International Federation undertook in recent years, and the efforts for the sport of Weightlifting to remain an added-value and respected partner within the Olympic Movement.

On the occasion of this meeting, coinciding with the presence of Greek legend Pyrrros Dimas signing the Olympian’s Wall, the IWF representatives offered Ms Coventry a small trophy representing our Sport, and the commemorative book celebrating IWF’s 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025.

*“It was a very fruitful and productive meeting. We had an open discussion on the topics involving Weightlifting and the Olympic Movement. We stressed out our firm commitment in driving our beloved Sport in the right direction and we expressed our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the IOC for the constant support and decisive collaboration,”* stated the IWF President at the end of the encounter.



IOC President Kirsty Coventry and IWF President Mohammed Jalood



From left to right: Achilleas Tsogas (IWF CEO), José Quiñones (IWF General Secretary), Kirsty Coventry (IOC President), and Mohammed Jalood (IWF President)

## Greek legend Pyrros Dimas signs the Olympian's Wall in Lausanne

Pyrros Dimas is the most decorated lifter in the Olympic history of the IWF and also the most successful Greek athlete in the Games history (all sports included). On March 24, he received a special tribute at the Olympic House in Lausanne (SUI), where he had the honour to sign the Olympian's Wall. In a ceremony attended by IOC President Kirsty Coventry and the IWF President Mohammed Jalood, the immense champion could not hide his emotion and happiness for this recognition. The IWF General Secretary José Quiñones and the Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic in Switzerland, Ms Ekaterini Simopoulou were also among the guests at the IOC Headquarters.

With three gold medals – 1992, 1996, and 2000 -, and a bronze lining at home, at the 2004 Athens Olympics, Dimas is a reference in the Sport and a Hellenic inspirational hero. His third place in the Greek capital was perhaps the most inspirational moment of his rich career, with the local fans applauding him for long minutes, during the medal ceremony. After that, he announced his retirement. *"It has definitively been a great trajectory, full of beautiful and rewarding memories. I was very privileged to live such moments and to succeed at this level. Weightlifting has been an essential part of my life, and even today I get emotional when receiving these tributes. I would like to thank the IOC and its President Kirsty Coventry for this initiative. I also express my gratitude to the IWF for accompanying me during my entire career!"* considered the Hellenic ace.

Also member of the IWF Executive Board and leading our International Federation's Innovation Committee, Dimas believes he can still bring many positive outcomes to the Sport. *"I am now on the 'other side', and I feel I can bring my experience and expertise to the benefit of our athletes, and events. Weightlifting undertook a lot of changes in recent years, and we are now a valuable and respected partner within the Olympic Movement. We need to continue the good work, and I am proud to be part of this team!"* also stated Dimas.

Born in 1971 in Himara (Albania), to ethnic Greek parents, he soon demonstrates a great ability for the sport and moves in the beginning of the 1990s to Athens. At his first Olympic participation – Barcelona 1992 – Dimas gets the gold in the 82.5kg, with a total of 167.5-202.5-370.



Pyrros Dimas with IOC President Kirsty Coventry



Signing the Olympian's Wall



## IWF celebrates International Women's Day

On March 8, the International Women's Day, the IWF celebrated the women who are changing the sport – as athletes, leaders, mentors and advocates. Today and every day is about recognising their achievements, highlighting their stories and reaffirming the IWF's commitment to creating opportunities for women at every level, from grassroots participation to elite competition and leadership roles.

The work of these inspirational women has meant that female participation in strength training is growing worldwide. A 2023 global study, Move Every Mind, surveyed more than 37,000 women across 16 countries and found that 40% of respondents were engaging in regular strength training.

The IWF spoke with key voices in the sport to hear their reflections on what weightlifting means to them and the importance of supporting women across the sport.

### **Emily Campbell (GBR) – 5x European Champion, 2x Olympic and 2x World Medallist**

Emily Campbell is one of Britain's most accomplished weightlifters, having secured her fifth consecutive European title at the 2025 European Championships in Chisinau, Moldova. Beyond her achievements on the platform, she is widely recognised for her advocacy work, mentoring young athletes, promoting inclusivity and supporting community programmes that encourage girls and women to take up weightlifting.

When speaking to the IWF about International Women's Day, and what women in weightlifting means to her, she stated: *"Weightlifting has given me so much. It has taught me resilience and discipline, but above all, it has shown the impact sport can have when it is truly welcoming and inclusive. Every young woman and girl should feel they belong in weightlifting, whether they aspire to compete internationally or simply enjoy the sport. Empowering women and creating real opportunities at all levels is what will make the sport stronger for everyone. It is such a passion of mine, and it is incredibly rewarding to see even more young girls getting involved and benefiting from the sport."*

### **Solfrid Koanda (NOR) – Olympic Champion, 4x European Champion, 3x World Medallist**

Solfrid Koanda is one of Norway's standout weightlifters, having captured the 86kg world title at the 2025 World Championships in Førde, Norway. Competing in front of a home crowd, she not only demonstrated her incredible talent but also embodied the growing visibility and influence of women in the sport.

She explained: *"Winning in front of a home crowd last year at the IWF World Championships was an unforgettable experience. Seeing young girls in the audience reminded me how important it is to show what is possible. Weightlifting has given me confidence, independence and a sense of purpose, and I hope my journey encourages other women to pursue their goals and see that this sport is open to them too."*

### **Hidilyn Diaz (PHI) – 2x Olympic Medallist, 4x World Medallist**

Hidilyn Diaz is a national hero in the Philippines after being the first Olympic champion (all sports included) for her country – gold at the Tokyo 2020 Games, in the 55kg category. In 2022, she was also first at the IWF World Championships, and has also been since then a very active member of the IWF Athletes Commission.

She underlined: *"Weightlifting has brought so much joy, discipline, and purpose into my life. I basically grew up with this sport, and it helped shape who I am today. I can also say, in my own small way, that through my journey and my Olympic achievements, weightlifting has grown more in the Philippines too. The days of discrimination are behind us. Today, weightlifting is a sport where both men and women can stand equally strong. More and more girls and women around the world are getting into it, and that's something really inspiring to see. For me, celebrating women isn't just about March 8. International Women's Day should be felt every day of the year, everywhere in the world."*

Read more [here](#)

## Great attendance at the IWF/ITA Clean Sport Education webinar for Coaches

A total of 362 participants attended the successful IWF/ITA Clean Sport Education webinar for Coaches, held on March 19. From the IWF side, President Mohammed Jalood and General Secretary José Quiñones had the occasion of welcoming the attendees, while Colin Buckley, IWF International Coach Licence manager, was also present to specifically address the importance of this initiative for the weightlifting coaches.

Besides the significant level of attendance, the feedback received from the participants was also very positive: at the post-webinar survey, a rate of 9.2/10 was achieved. The three main groups attending the webinar included 241 coaches, 63 athletes, and 31 administrators. By nationality, the most represented country was Türkiye, with 46 participants.

The topics discussed comprised items such as the anti-doping roles and responsibilities, Member Federation's categorisation, Therapeutic Use Exemptions, Testing process, or the Reporting procedure,

This webinar is part of the global IWF/ITA Clean Sport Education programme, which includes also the organisation of in-person seminars at our main yearly events.

### IWF World Junior Championships 2026

The IWF confirms the organisation of the IWF World Junior Championships in Ismailia (EGY), from May 2-8, 2026, after receiving the information from the highest sport authorities in Egypt that *"all necessary measures to ensure the highest levels of security and safety have been already taken"*. Moreover, the Egyptian officials reaffirmed the status of "readiness" concerning the "successful" staging of these Championships.

In light of these guarantees, the IWF reminds all National Member Federations that **the deadline for confirming the FINAL ENTRIES for the competition is April 2, 2026 (Thursday)**.

For that the IWF E-Entry System at <https://mf.iwf.sport> is used and NFs must:

- Select a maximum of 10 athletes (8+2 reserves) / gender from the registered Preliminary Entries;
- Remove athletes who will not participate in the competition;
- Confirm Final Entries by clicking the "Confirm Final List" button.

### IWF Tenders for LA28 Olympic Qualifiers

In order to ensure a top-level and uniform broadcast of the five IWF Qualifiers for the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028, the IWF launched recently a public tender ([link here](#)) to select a partner that will be responsible for the TV production of these events.

Following this first tender, the IWF launched a second one ([link here](#)) related to the organisation of IWF Qualifiers – this time concerning the Sale of Media and Television Rights from those competitions.

The calendar of those events is as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> IWF Qualifier – Doha, Qatar, December 2026
- 2<sup>nd</sup> IWF Qualifier – Tashkent, Uzbekistan, March 2027
- 3<sup>rd</sup> IWF Qualifier – Lima, Peru, June 2027
- 4<sup>th</sup> IWF Qualifier – Caracas, Venezuela, November 2027
- 5<sup>th</sup> IWF Qualifier – Chiang Rai, Thailand, January 2028

For both tenders, **the deadline to receive proposals is Monday, April 13, 2026**.

### 500 days to go for the Francophonie Games

As part of the 500-day countdown to the 10th Francophonie Games 2027, which will take place in Yerevan from July 23 to August 1, 2027, a meeting was recently held at the French Ministry of Sports in the presence of Ms. Marina Ferrari, Minister of Sports. The French Weightlifting Federation was represented by its President Michel Raynaud (who is the IWF Delegate to these Games), and by Philippe Geiss, National Technical Director. Ten sports will be featured in the event, including Weightlifting. Regarding the technical organisation of our sport, in collaboration with the Armenian Weightlifting Federation and the IWF, the competition will take place over five days.

The eight IWF weight categories for men and women will apply according to IWF regulations. Athletes must be between 18 and 35 years old on the day of the competition. A maximum of eight men and eight women may participate, with up to two athletes per bodyweight category.

