

PAUL COFFA sit down.....

Paul Coffa sit down! This is what the President of the IWF, Dr. Tamas Ajan said to Paul Coffa, the General Secretary of the Oceania Weightlifting Federation and Commonwealth Weightlifting Federation during the IWF Congress in Sofia, Bulgaria, on the 13th June.

Dr. Ajan was right of course in trying to stop Mr. Coffa who was interjecting during the presentation of the Universality places for the forthcoming Youth Olympic Games. During this particular discussion there was a strong feeling of resentment amongst those countries present, because the OWF had received more universality places than any other continent.

This is true. The Oceania region has received more universality places than any other continent. However nobody explained properly the reason why so many places went to the Oceania region.

I am not sure exactly how many invitations were sent out from the IOC to the National Olympic Committees. But I do know that over 100 countries were given the opportunity to apply for universality places.

The National Olympic Committees of the small Pacific Islands, received also these invitations and most of the NOC's applied for weightlifting because in the Pacific weightlifting enjoys great popularity and many of the Pacific countries have produced excellent lifters ahead of many other Olympic sports.

As General Secretary of the OWF, I feel very pleased that these Pacific Island nations chose to put weightlifting ahead of others..

However, it is not the fault of Oceania, if many other countries, from different continents, who received the same invitation from the IOC, **chose to apply for other sports.**

After all it is a testament to Dr. Ajan and the IWF, who have for the last 18 years supported and promoted greatly the sport in the Pacific. Let's remember it was Dr. Ajan who did everything possible to assist Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia in gaining IOC status. And because of this assistance Nauru & FSM have won medals at World Championships in a short period of time.

So let us not look at the negative side but let us congratulate these Pacific Islands and their respective National Olympic Committees for putting weightlifting **as number one priority for the Youth Olympic Games.**

This is the list of lifters from the Oceania region selected to compete at the 1st Youth Olympic Games.

MALE

NAURU	* Elson BRECHTEFELD	56Kg category
MARSHALL ISLANDS	* Amon SHIRO	56Kg Category
TONGA	* Michael TAUFA	62Kg category
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Steven KARI	69Kg category
NEW ZEALAND	Josh MILNE	69kg Category
FIJI	Charlie LOLOHEA	69Kg Category
KIRIBATI	* Kabuati BOB	77kg category
PALAU	* Maverick FAUSTINO	77kg category
AUSTRALIA	Liam LARKINS	77Kg Category
AMERICAN SAMOA	* Saumaleato FAAGU	85kg category

FEMALE

MARSHALL ISLANDS	* Jakira LEWS	48Kg Category
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	* Ranuinu SAMUEL	53Kg category
FIJI	Luisa LOLOHEA	58Kg Category
NEW ZEALAND	Naime KARI	63kg Category
AUSTRALIA	Michelle KAHI	63Kg Category
SAMOA	* Lumi SIMANU	+63kg Category
SOLOMON ISLANDS	*	

*Universality place lifters

