

## A TRAGIC WEEK FOR WEIGHTLIFTING

**The world of weightlifting has experienced a series of tragic deaths and accidents in the past week.**



Olympic weightlifting champion Waldemar Baszanowski (Poland), one of the greatest lifters of all time passed away on April 29<sup>th</sup> in a Warsaw hospital following a long illness. He was 75.

Baszanowski's glory days were the 1960s, when the Polish champion scooped two Olympic gold medals (Tokyo 1964 and Mexico 1968) and five World Championship titles.

He was world champion in 1961, 1964, 1965, 1968 and 1969 in the lightweight class (67.5Kg) He set a staggering 25 world records over the course of his career, and in 1969 he was voted best Polish athlete. He was ultimately inducted into the International Weightlifting Hall of Fame in 1999. He served as president of the European Weightlifting Federation from 1999 to 2007



On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 22 year old Belarus champion weightlifter Siarhei Lahun died in a tragic car accident. Young Siarhei was a gold medallist at the 2007 World Junior Championships held in Prague.

He competed at the 2009 World Senior Championships in Goyang –Korea where he successfully won gold in the clean & jerk and silver in the total competing in the 85Kg category.

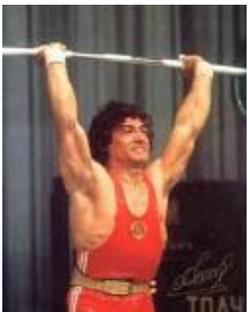
He won gold once again at last year's world championship in Antalya-Turkey in the clean & jerk, competing again in the 85Kg category.

In the car with Siarhei was another top Belarus team member Yauheni Zharnasek. He was lucky to survive the accident but sadly he suffered severe injuries and remains in hospital in intensive care. Yauheni had placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 105+Kg category at last week European Championships held in Kazan-Russia.



In the same week Armenia, world champion weightlifting star Nazik Avdalyan, was involved in a major car crash. Avdalyan, aged 24, a beloved sportswoman since winning the world title in 2009, lost control of her Toyota on Tuesday between Vanadzor and her native town of Gyumri.

According to the Armenian News – NEWS.am Avdalyan's condition is stable. Her pulse and breathing is normal. The athlete was hospitalized with diagnosis of combined spinal and chest trauma.



Also, all time great Yuri Vardanian who was involved in a car accident in Armenia last year was undergoing surgery for lower leg reconstruction a few days ago at the Erebuni Medical Center.

Whilst in surgery, Vardanian's heart stopped.

Doctors had to discontinue the operation to proceed with open-chest massage.

Press Secretary of Armenian Health Minister Shushan Hunanyan told Armenian News-NEWS.am. "He has recovered and spoken to his family members," she said.

***The Oceania Weightlifting Federation extends its condolences to the Polish Weightlifting Federation and to the Baszanowski family and also to the Belarus Weightlifting Federation and the family of young Siarhei Lahun. In addition we wish a speedy recovery to Yauheni Zharnasek, Nazik Avdalyan and also to Yuri Vardanian.***