

LET THE GAMES BEGIN ..

On Tuesday, July 9th in Apia, the first women's category of 45kg will start at 09.00am in the morning and the battles will begin.

These games will undoubtedly produce the best performances in the history of the Pacific Games. Battles are expected in the women +87kg category with the Commonwealth Games Gold medallist and World Junior Silver medallist in the total and Gold Medal in the snatch – Feagaiga Stowers from Samoa facing a fierce battle from Laurel Hubbard of New Zealand who has recently in training done 126kg snatch and cleaned 157kg. Luniara Sipaia from Samoa will also be lining up in the ring together with Australia's Charisma Amoe-Tarrant. Never before has the Pacific Games seen four super heavies of this calibre.

The battle of the giants in the men's +109kg category, between David Liti of New Zealand – (the Commonwealth Games Medallist) and Lautiiti Lui of Samoa – (the Commonwealth Games Silver medallist) will also be one of the best event at the Games.

Another big battle will be the 96kg category with Steven Kari of Papua New Guinea – (Commonwealth Games Gold Medallist) against the young Wallis & Futuna star Israel Satino Kaikilekofi who has been training in France for the past four years, and of course Siaso Leuo from Samoa.



The weightlifting stadium in Samoa.



Weightlifting -The Samoan people love the sport.



*Tuoape Asiata Jerry Wallwork
Samoa Weightlifting President and coach.*

There will be other battles in many categories. On top of that we expect some world class performances from Morea Baru from PNG in the 61kg category. Also the World Junior Gold Medallist Don Opeloge from Samoa is expected to rewrite the record books in the 89kg category. Elson Brechtefeld from Nauru in the 55kg category. This is Elson's first tournament in the 55kg category and he expects to win easily. So too is the Commonwealth Games Gold Medallist in the 109kg category, Sanele Mao. Sanele is expected to rewrite the record books. Also let's not forget Dika Toua from PNG competing for the first time in the 49kg category, as she goes for her 12th Oceania Championships title. The only female weightlifter to have reached this milestone!

Eighteen countries will take part in the sport of weightlifting at these Games. Unfortunately two countries will not be participating due to

their athletes non compliance with the ADAMS whereabouts. Approximately 250 lifters will participate. The Oceania and Commonwealth Championships for Senior, Junior and Youth will run concurrently with the Pacific Games.

Jerry Wallwork is the Competition Manager of the event, and Attila Adamfi the IWF Director General is the Technical Delegate. The referees (ITOs) will be coming from eleven different countries.

Technical Meeting and Verification of Entries

- These two meetings will be held at the weightlifting venue on 7th July. The Technical meeting will start at 9am and the Verification of entries will follow afterwards.
- **The OWF Congress** - will be held at 9.30am on 8th July at the Tanoa Hotel.
- **The CWF Congress** - will be held on 8th July at the Tanoa Hotel at 2.30pm.
- In addition to this, we are organising a Elite Coaching Seminar on 8th of July **Time and place TBA**
- The Anti-Doping seminar will be held on Monday the 8th July at 5.30pm at the Weightlifting venue.

June -Oceania & Commonwealth Masters

On the 14 -16 June, the Oceania and Commonwealth Masters Championships was held at Mantra on View Hotel at the Gold Coast -Australia. Coral Quinell the Chairperson of both OWF & CWF Masters, did an extraordinary job as usual. The Oceania countries participating were Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia. Whilst in the Commonwealth there were twelve countries participating: Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Great Britain, India, Malaysia, South Africa, and Singapore, The competition was conducted on two platforms, beautifully set up by Bowen Stuart the Australian Weightlifting Federation Manager - Information Technology & Communications . The competition ran smoothly. Each platform had a warm up area of its own and a large crowd attending.

Training, warm up, competition and accommodation was all at Mantra on View Hotel. This made it extremely easy for everyone attending the Championships. Over 200 masters lifters participated. Masters participation is growing from year to year. The secret to this growing success is that fact that the lifters who competed in mainstream competition in the past are now moulded together in the masters competition. They know each other, they see each other, and they compete against each other like in the past. Now as they are getting older events like the Masters keeps the friendship united.



The two warm up areas at the Oceania and Commonwealth Masters at the Gold Coast.

The Competition stage



The competition venue set up at the Mantra on View Hotel at the Gold Coast- Australia

Kiribati visit:

The Institute has recently had the honour of receiving a visit from His Excellency David Ateti Teaabo the Kiribati High Commissioner to Fiji. His Excellency was attending a regional meeting in New Caledonia and decided to visit the four Kiribati lifters based at the Institute, David Katoatau, Taretiita Tabaroua, Ruben Katoatau and Tiaau Bakaekiri. He was very impressed with the set up of the Institute and the program. He was so pleased with the performances of his athletes and the possibility was discussed of hosting a regional championships in Kiribati in the near future. The first and only time that a regional weightlifting event was held in Kiribati was the Oceania Junior Championships in 2001.



Fiji Rugby superstars visit Institute

On June 27 – 29 a classic rugby tournament was held in New Caledonia with New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and France. Many past and present champions took part in this tournament. The surprise visitor was Sisa Koyamaibole. The moment he landed in New Caledonia he made arrangements to visit the Institute. Sisa was coached by Paul Coffa in the area of strength in 2002 and 2003 in Sigatoka Fiji. In fact he was one of the first athletes who decided to train at the Institute to increase his strength and speed. Paul Coffa established the Oceania Institute in March 2002 in Sigatoka and Sisa joined the group immediately. He became a superstar in rugby and he went on to play World Cups for Fiji, eventually moving to Europe. The friendship continued over the many years. Not only with Sisa but with many Fijian players, especially those based in Nadroga when the Institute was there. Once the institute relocated to Samoa in 2005, the Institute building which Paul Coffa built with his own personal funds – was gifted to Fiji Rugby. And this now is the High Performance Strength Centre for rugby in Fiji..

The friendship and respect for the Institute and Paul Coffa was evident by the Fijian delegation during their stay in Noumea. Paul Coffa was asked by former champion Julian Vulakoro to present the playing jerseys to the team, in the change rooms before the game and Julian also asked Paul to say a few words to the team. Paul Coffa said during his short speech “that Fiji is Rugby and Rugby is Fiji”



Sisa Koyamaibole, Kelemedi Bola, Malakai Ravulo and Neori Buli visit the Oceania Weightlifting Institute.



Sisa Koyamaibole relaxing at the Institute having a cup of coffee and discussing the days of hard training in Sigatoka. He says it was the best time.



Dika Toua (PNG) and Sisa were the first two athletes to join the institute in 2002.



The great Mikaele Pesamino from Samoa, caught up with Paul Coffa in Noumea.



Former, Manu Samoa captain, Mahonri Schalger was very pleased to catch up with Paul and reminisce about the days in Samoa.



Julian Vulakoro invited Paul Coffa to present the jerseys to the Fijian team prior to their game against Australia.



The Fijian Team with Paul Coffa at the opening of the Rugby Academy in New Caledonia.

ELEIKO
RAISE THE BAR