

OCEANIA COCONUT WIRELESS

Single page news....

October 2026 3rd issue

Athletes' Commission.

Two of Oceania's greatest-ever weightlifters, Dika Toua and David Liti, have nominated for positions on the **I**WF Athletes' Commission. Both have been outstanding ambassadors for our sport and our region over many years. It would be wonderful to see all Oceania lifters rally behind them and throw their full support behind these deserving candidates.

Now Rugby

It seems Jerry Wallwork doesn't have enough on his plate! Already heavily involved in weightlifting and wrestling, he has now been asked to help lead rugby in Samoa. Weightlifting, wrestling, rugby... what could possibly be next?

New President

Palau Weightlifting has a new President, one of Palau's finest weightlifters, Junior Sumor, has been elected President, while the Vice President is none other than Stevick Patris, a familiar and respected face throughout Oceania. Congratulations to both gentlemen. Great future!

Quiz..

Unbelievable! Within just ten minutes of the last issue of Coconut Wireless being released, a gentleman by the name of Stuart Bennett submitted the correct answer to our trivia question: *Where was the third Oceania Championships held?* The answer, of course, was Apia, Samoa 1982. Commiserations to everyone else who missed out on the T-shirt prize. What makes Stuart's effort even more remarkable is that he is not involved in weightlifting at all. He must have conducted some lightning-fast research to beat everyone else to the finish line!

Web- Cheating ??

Great article..

Fantastic written feature article on weightlifting recently appeared in the Commonwealth Sport.

https://www.commonwealthsport.com/news/4576771/a-different-map-of-commonwealth-strength

The next time you're sitting back with a cold drink in hand, take a few moments to open the link and enjoy the read. It is well worth your time.

World Championships -China

Paul Coffa and Jerry Wallwork are off to Ningbo, China, to attend the IWF Congress and a Continental meeting. The trip? Just 48 hours! Travel halfway around the world, attend important meetings, and head straight back. Only in weightlifting would that seem perfectly normal.

FIJI work on talent

In Fiji, weightlifting is not only producing champions and winning gold medals, but it is also investing in the next generation. A new Power Clean (Only) has been introduced in schools, attracting more than 60 participants in its opening activity. What a tremendous initiative. Imagine the talent pool Fiji could be developing for the future. The champions of tomorrow may well be taking their very first lifts today.

The **Universal Cup is back!**

From 24 to 29 May next year in Samoa, during the Commonwealth Senior, Junior and Youth Championships, and the second edition of the Universal Cup will be staged. Adding even more excitement, the Oceania Junior and Youth Championships will also be incorporated into the event. Do not be surprised if participation reaches somewhere between 300 and 400 lifters. Interest is already building, with Indonesia becoming the first nation to express its desire to participate. This promises to be one of the most exciting events ever held in Oceania.

2026 World Championships

There is absolutely no doubt about it, women are on the move in world weightlifting. At the forthcoming World Championships in China, an incredible 268 women and 263 men from 99 countries will compete. For the first time, women will outnumber men at the Championships. What a tremendous milestone and what an extraordinary event this promises to be.

IWF Start List

Looking through the start lists for the World Championships; I noticed something that surprised me greatly. Only three Oceania athletes, Olivia Selemaia and David Liti from New Zealand and Taniela Rainibogi from Fiji, have secured places in the B Sessions. All other Oceania athletes are currently scheduled in the C and D Sessions. It will be the first time in many years that Oceania will not be represented in any A Session. Looking across the entries, one cannot help but wonder how important Los Angeles Games in 2028 are. Since the last Olympic Games, totals appear to have increased at a remarkable rate. In my entire career, I cannot recall seeing such rapid progression across so many categories in such a short period. I suppose if you want to go to Los Angeles hard training and improvement is the only way to go.

3 Hour weigh-in

I never believed I would see the day... but it is happening in Ningbo. The new rule requiring the weigh-in to occur three hours before the start of competition will be implemented. Let me paint a picture. At the Pacific Games in Tahiti, competition is scheduled to begin at 9.00 am. Under the new rule, weigh-in must now take place at 6.00 am. However, the technical officials' hotel is approximately 50 minutes from the venue, that means TO's need to leave the hotel approx.. 4:15 am. My advice to the technical officials? Take a tent and spend the 4 nights at the venue! One has to question whether sufficient thought has been given to the practical realities faced by organisers around the world. Most international competitions are not World Championships. They operate with limited resources, fewer technical officials, and far less flexibility than the IWF enjoys. Sometimes common sense needs to have a seat at the decision-making table. Just think about it!

Did you know?

Back in 1988, during celebrations marking the 30th Anniversary of the Hawthorn Weightlifting Club, I was interviewed and asked a very interesting question: *"If you were in charge of the IWF, what changes would you make?"* My response was immediate. I said I would remove the overall total and create two separate World Championship titles: one for the Snatch and one for the Clean & Jerk. (ask Matthew Curtain he was at the function). Now some 38 years later, I am hearing rumours that the IWF may actually be considering this very idea. Unbelievable. As they say, sometimes it takes nearly four decades for a good idea to travel.

Do we need so many technical officials ?

People have often said to me that weightlifting must be the most overregulated sport in the world. Think about it. In soccer, you've got 22 players charging around a field and **four** on-field officials trying to keep order. In rugby, there are 30 players colliding with each other at alarming speeds and **three** on-field officials in the middle of the chaos. Then there is weightlifting. We place one athlete, on a 4m x 4m platform. No opponents. No tackling. No offside. No scrums. No stampedes. Just one person lifting a barbell a mere few metres in front of **seven** fully qualified officials to decide whether his/her elbows stayed locked. Mmmmm!!!

Until next time, keep lifting, keep smiling, and keep the Coconut Wireless buzzing throughout Oceania!

From the office of the OWF