

IMWA TECHNICAL AND COMPETITION RULES

1 IMWA RULES

The Masters follow the rules of weightlifting as defined by the current edition of the IWF TCRR except as amended in this section.

2 ADDITIONAL RULES RELATING TO THE MASTERS

2.1 Rules relating to the Masters can only be added, deleted, or amended by a majority vote of the IMWA Congress.

2.2 Age Groups

MEN

The IMWA organise lifting in eleven (12) age groups for men within each bodyweight category. Each age group spans 5 years, which statistically is the longest age span suitable to enable a true competition between athletes of differing ages. The men's age groups are:

M35	age 35-39	M40	age 40-44
M45	age 45-49	M50	age 50-54
M55	age 55-59	M60	age 60-64
M65	age 65-69	M70	age 70-74
M75	age 75-79	M80	age 80-84
M85	age 85-89	M90	and above

WOMEN

The IMWA organise lifting in eleven (12) age groups for women within each bodyweight category. The women's age groups are:

W35	age 35-39	W40	age 40-44
W45	age 45-49	W50	age 50-54
W55	age 55-59	W60	age 60-64
W65	age 65-69	W70	age 70-74
W75	age 75-79	W80	age 80-84
W85	age 85-89	W90	and above

2.3 A weightlifter can compete in Masters' weightlifting events on the 1st January in the year he or she becomes 35 years of age regardless of the fact that the birth date may be as late as the 31st December. The same principle applies when an athlete reaches the next age group.

2.4 For men and women in age groups 70 and above, the minimum weight on the bar shall be 15 kg (10- kg bar and two full-sized 2.5-kg discs, with clips instead of collars). If the desired weight is 20 kg, a 15-kg bar may be used. The qualification standards must be observed.

2.5 A) From the 1st June 2025 until 1st August 2026 the IMWLA follows and applies the 8 Male and 8 Female IWF bodyweight categories:

WOMEN: 48kg, 53kg, 58kg, 63kg, 69kg, 77kg, 86kg, +86kg

MEN: 60kg, 65kg, 71kg, 79kg, 88kg, 94kg, 110kg, +110kg

B) From the 1st August 2026 the IMWLA follows and applies the 2025 renewed 8 Male and 8 Female IWF bodyweight categories:

WOMEN: 49kg, 53kg, 57kg, 61kg, 69kg, 77kg, 86kg, +86kg

MEN: 60kg, 65kg, 70kg, 75kg, 85kg, 95kg, 110kg, +110kg

3 THE 80% RULE

3.1 80% Rule – At the IMWA World Championships, the total weight of the starting attempts declared and actually taken in the Snatch and the Clean & Jerk must equal or exceed 80% of the weight of the verified Entry Total. The jury will exclude the athlete from the competition if this rule is not adhered to. The rule is known as the 80% Rule and determines the “minimum start total”.

Note: *All fractions of 1 kilogram for an athlete’s minimum start total should be rounded up to the next highest kilogram. Example: If the minimum start total (including changes; see 3.4 below) is calculated to be 203.1 kg, the minimum start total shall be set at 204 kg.*

Example: An athlete enters a competition with a verified Entry Total of 250 kg. As 80% of 250 kg is 200 kg, the total weight of the combined first attempts in the Snatch & Clean & Jerk must equal or exceed 200 kg, e.g., 90 kg and 110 kg or 87 kg and 113 kg or any other combination. The **minimum start total** in this example is 200 kg.

Note: *At Continental Championships and other local and regional Masters championships the minimum start total can instead be set at 80% of the official Qualifying Total for the athlete’s age group/bodyweight category.*

3.2 The athlete may submit an Entry Total that is lower than the total actually achieved at their qualifying competition, but it must be equal to or greater than the official Qualifying Total for their age and bodyweight category.

3.3 No changes can be made to the Entry Total after the deadline date for entries has passed except as described in 3.4 below.

3.4 Changes to the Entry Totals and Minimum Start Totals

3.4.1 If the athlete remains in the bodyweight category entered the **Entry Total** remains unchanged and no changes are allowed.

3.4.2 If the athlete moves down to a lower bodyweight category on the date of the Verification of Final Entries or earlier, then the **Entry Total** is *decreased* by an amount equal to the difference in qualifying totals between the original category entered and the declared new category. The **Minimum Start Total** will be 80% of the new Entry Total.

Example: The athlete enters the M65/102kg category with an entry total of 200 kg and minimum start total of **160 kg** i.e., 80% of the entry total. At the Verification of Final Entries Meeting the athlete moves down to the M65/96kg category. The qualifying total for M65/96kg is 4 kg lower than for M65/102kg and therefore the Entry Total is now 196kg, and therefore the minimum start total is *reduced* to **157 kg** (80% of 196kg =156.8kg rounded up to 157kg).

3.4.3 If the athlete moves up to a higher bodyweight category on the date of the Verification of Final Entries or earlier then the **Entry Total** is *increased* by an amount equal to the difference in qualifying totals between the original category entered and the declared new category. The **Minimum Start Total** will be 80% of the new Entry Total.

Example: The athlete enters the W35/59kg category with an entry total of 200 kg and minimum start total of **160 kg**, i.e., 80% of the entry total. At the Verification of Final Entries Meeting the athlete moves up to the W35/64kg category. The qualifying total for W35/64kg is 5 kg higher than for W35/59kg

therefore the Entry Total is now 205kg, and therefore the minimum start total is *increased to 164 kg* (80% of 205kg =164kg).

4 MASTERS BODYWEIGHT CHANGE RULE

4.1 At the Verification of Final Entries Meeting and before the start of IMWA World or Continental Masters Championships, each National Federation confirms the final entry list of their athletes including name of the athlete, age group, and bodyweight category.

4.2 After the Verification of Final Entries Meeting athletes cannot move up to a higher bodyweight category or down to a lower bodyweight category.

Note – Rules 3.1 and 3.2 ensure that an athlete can achieve the qualifying standard. ONLY one (1) change of bodyweight category is permitted unless the athlete wants to return to the original first registered bodyweight category. This may be communicated in advance of the Verification of Final Entries Meeting to the Secretariat by e-mail or other means.

4.3 Athletes cannot move to a higher or lower bodyweight category at the time of the weigh-in.

4.4 After information is verified at the Verification of Final Entries Meeting, the entries are considered final. There cannot be any modification of the names or bodyweight categories of the athletes.

4.5 It is possible to notify the IMWA of changes before the Verification of Final Entries Meeting up to 5 days before the start of Championship. In this case each National Masters Chair will be notified by an email from the IMWA Secretariat regarding the official opening date of the registration as well as a deadline date for changes to be submitted prior to the Verification of Final Entries Meeting.

4.6 Weigh-in

- Athletes may be weighed in either completely undressed or in undergarments (articles of the athlete outfit: costume, unitard, shorts and T-shirt are not considered as undergarments). Athletes must not wear shoes or socks or any other footwear during weigh-in.
- Athletes with prosthetic limb(s) must be weighed with the prosthetic limb(s). The weight of the athlete, while wearing the prosthesis, is considered to be the athlete's bodyweight.
- Athletes are entitled to wear jewelry, hair adornments, and religious head gear during weigh-in. Athletes must not wear watches during weigh-in.

5 MASTERS AGE AND BODYWEIGHT FORMULAS (MEN AND WOMEN)

5.1 A system called "Q-Masters points" is used to account for bodyweight and age differences. Q-Masters points are calculated using the Q-Points bodyweight formula together with the relevant age coefficients. Q-Masters points are used at IMWA World and Continental Championships to decide the best lifters in each age group and the best overall lifters in the Championship for men and women, referred to as the Grand Master of the men and women, respectively.

5.2 Q-Masters points are calculated by multiplying Q-points by the appropriate age coefficients. Q-points are calculated separately for men and women, and there are separate lists of age coefficients for men and women. The bodyweight formula and age coefficients remain static unless and until changes are approved by the IMWA Congress and/or Executive Board.

5.3 The Q-Points for men are multiplied by the current version of the men's age coefficients to calculate the Q-Masters points for men. The Q-Points for women are multiplied by the current version of the women's age coefficients to calculate the Q-Masters points for women.

6 IMWA NATIONAL TEAM COMPETITION

6.1 At IMWA World and Continental Championships each country may enter a team into the Men's National Team Competition and/or the Women's National Team Competition. The men's team consists of a maximum of ten (10) athletes and women's team ten (10) athletes, plus 3 reserves in each case. A team may have less than the stipulated number. No more than two competitors from each nation may be named as team members in a single age group/ bodyweight category, e.g., no more than two USA team members are allowed in the W40/64-kg category. Three or more representatives from a single nation may compete in any category, but only a maximum of two may be named as team members.

- This competition is for team points only and team points are applied according to the IWF Rules (except as noted in 6.2 below), for the total only (*not* including points separately for Snatch and Clean & Jerk).
- A team may include only a single individual, or a maximum of ten, or any number from one to ten.
- Should a team member be unable to participate, or be excluded due to two other team members being in the same age group and bodyweight category, the first reserve will take the place of the absent team member. (Note that this exclusion rule also applies to team members who move up or down into a category that is already occupied by two other team members from the same nation.) Should two (2) team members be unable to participate, the first two reserves will take the place of the absent team members. Should three (3) team members be unable to participate, all three reserves will take the place of the absent team members.
- A reserve can only be used as a substitute in a team if a named team member is withdrawn from the competition prior to the first attempt on the snatch, except as noted above.

6.2 Team selection is from the version of the Start List published before the beginning of the Verification of Final Entries Meeting at which time a new competition Start List will be produced.

- In the team competition (men's and women's teams) if there is only one lifter listed on the final competition results in an age group/bodyweight category and that lifter is selected for a team, the maximum points that can be earned is 23 (equivalent to 3rd place). If there are two (2) people listed on the final competition results in the age group/bodyweight category, the winner, if a team member, would earn 25 points and the second, if a team member, would earn 23 points (equivalent to 2nd and 3rd places).
- Team entries should be submitted and paid at the Verification of Final Entries Meeting and will not be accepted after the start of the competition.

6.3 The Team Points for each athlete are calculated based on the athlete's final position in the competition within the athlete's age group and bodyweight category. Team Points are based on the IWF Team Points System, except as noted in 6.2 above. Q-Masters points for each athlete are also computed based on their total weight lifted, bodyweight and age. The Team Points of each team member are added together to give the total Team Points. The team with the highest total Team Points is the winner.

6.4 If two (2) or more teams have equal totals of Team Points, the winner will be selected on basis of medals won, i.e., most gold, silver, bronze, as follows: The team with the most gold medals is placed higher; if number of gold medals is equal, the team with the most silver medals is placed higher; if number of silver medals is also equal, then the team with the most bronze medals is placed higher.

6.5 If two (2) or more teams have identical medal distributions, then the Q-Masters points earned by each team member are added together to give a total Q-Masters points for the team. The team with the greater total of Q-Masters points is placed higher.

2025 New IMWA Technical and Competition Rule: Continuing in Clean & Jerk after Failure in Snatch

6.6 In all IMWA Events, athletes having no valid lifts in the Snatch cannot post a total and will not be allocated team classification points. **However, they may continue to participate in the Clean & Jerk competition and will be granted the usual three attempts in that competition.** If the meet organizers decide to award separate medals for Snatch and Clean & Jerk (in addition to the official IMWA medals for total only; see 7.1), these athletes may be eligible to compete for medals in the Clean & Jerk only.

7 MEDALS

7.1 Medals are awarded to the first three places in each bodyweight and age category for totals only.

7.2 In the event of a tie the lifter who achieved the total first is the winner, regardless of age or bodyweight.

7.3 Regardless of an athlete achieving a finish in the first three, failure to achieve the qualifying standard will result in the athlete not being awarded a medal.

8 BEST LIFTER AWARDS

8.1 Best Lifter awards will be given for each age category, men and women.

8.2 All Best Lifter awards are based on the highest number of Q-Masters points amongst the gold medalists within each age group. Athletes who are not first in their age and bodyweight category are ineligible for the Best Lifter and Grand Master awards.

8.3 “**Grand Master**” awards for men and women may be awarded to the best overall man and woman having achieved the highest overall Q-Masters points in a Championship, chosen from among the age group winners.

9 INTERNATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

9.1 General Provisions

9.1.1 The format of a Championship can only be changed by agreement with the IMWA or Continental Masters Committee.

9.1.2 The format of a Championship is the format specified when the Championship Competition Schedule is produced. No additional days, no special award ceremonies, no “non-competition rest days”, and no other variations can be introduced without the sanction of the appropriate International Masters Committee.

9.2 IMWA World Championships
The **IMWA** World Championship will be held every year in the approximate period of late August to early October. At this Championship athletes may set World Masters records and Continental records relative to the country and continent in which an athlete holds a passport or complies with rules on residency. Doping controls must be applied to enable ratification of records.

9.3 World Masters Games (WMG)

A WMG is normally held every 4 years and the IMWA will decide if the WMG will be sanctioned to include the IMWA World Championship within the WMG. If sanctioned the following rules will apply:

- At this Championship athletes can set World Masters records and Continental records relative to the country and continent in which an athlete holds a passport or complies with rules on residency. Athletes can also set new WMG records.
- Doping controls must be applied to enable ratification of records.
- In addition to the official WMG entry fee and method of registration, the IMWA require an additional fee to cover costs of the organising committee, including administration and anti-doping. Arrangements will be made for additional fees to be paid by each national Masters Chairman to cover all their competing athletes.

9.4 Continental Masters Championships

At Continental Masters Championships athletes can set World Masters records and Continental Masters records relative to the country and continent in which an athlete holds a passport or complies with rules on residency. Doping controls must be applied to enable ratification of records.

9.5 Other International Masters Championships

9.5.1 Doping control and sanctions

- Doping controls must be applied to enable ratification of IMWA World Masters records.
- Doping Controls will only be processed by a WADA approved laboratory.
- Any International Masters Championship event other than those listed in 9.2, 9.3, and 9.4 above must be sanctioned by the IMWA to enable ratification of IMWA World Masters records at that event.
- To enable the IMWA to sanction international Masters weightlifting events, other than Continental Championships, the Organising Committee must invite members from the IMWA Executive Board to attend, oversee, and agree that the event complies with all IMWA rules.
- All sanctioned non-IMWA events must provide (sent by email) a list of selected athletes for doping control and inform the IMWA Anti-Doping Panel immediately of any positive result.
- The result management of doping results at non-IMWA events shall be conducted by the respective NADA who carried out the doping control.

10 TOTAL INCLUSION

10.1 The IMWA now have a policy of “total inclusion” meaning that every effort will be made to allow anyone, with justifiable reason, to compete in IMWA Championships.

10.2 If the National Masters Chairman of any country has doubts about the international qualification of an athlete from another country who is now working and living in their country, they must do their utmost to ensure that rule 11 is observed. If they do have any doubts, they must contact the IMWA Secretariat for a solution.

10.3 Currently the IMWA recognise two new categories within our Championships. It has also been necessary to adapt the Registration System to allow these two new categories.

- a. Adaptive Weightlifting for lifters with different standards of impairment which have been listed and agreed with Nalani Perry (CAN).
- b. Masters with a different Gender Identity, which would not be possible without medical and legal support provided by Dr. Mark Lavallee (USA).
- c. The Registration System has now been modified to deal with the two new categories.

11 NATIONALITY AND RESIDENCY (NEW RULE PASSED BY 2024 CONGRESS)

11.1 Rules Relating to Nationality, Residency, and Permits for All Competing Athletes.

The purpose of the rules is to provide compliance with the IMWA ideology of total inclusion of all Masters in IMWA sanctioned championships.

Athletes wishing to compete in the Masters are allowed to compete for the nation issuing their passport or for the nation issuing their residency permit when residing for at least 10 years at the date of registration for our championship.

11.2 Nationality Rules

- 11.2.1** Athletes who have dual nationality, i.e., two passports, and reside in a different country to the one which issued the passport, must decide which nationality they will represent when competing.
- 11.2.2** If an athlete with dual nationality has been competing for one nation and later decides to compete for the second nation, it can only be done by obtaining release documents from the first nation and sending them to the IMWA Secretariat by email.
- 11.2.3** In the event of the first nation being suspended from international competition by the IMWA because of doping offences, athletes may only compete for the second nation if they have not competed in any competition for the first nation in the previous 12 months.
- 11.2.4** An athlete is only allowed to change nationality for competition purposes once. In doing so the athlete must stay with the second nation.

11.3 Residency Rules

- 11.3.1** Athletes who have a Permanent Residence permit with at least 10 years residence can change **once only** to a different nationality and cannot change again.
- 11.3.2** Athletes who have a Temporary Residence Permit with at least 10 years residence can change **once only** to a different nationality and cannot change again.
- 11.3.3** Athletes who have an Immigration Residence Permit with at least 10 years residence (self-employed, investors, granted refugee status) can change **once only** to a different nationality and cannot change again.
- 11.3.4** Athletes who have been granted refugee status with at least 2 years residency can change **once only** to a different nationality and cannot change again.

12 SINGLETS RULE

12.1 Weightlifting costumes for IMWA are the same as those described in the IWF TCRR except as follows:

The design on the upper thigh must be cut in a horizontal fashion such that the gluteal fold always remains covered. Ideally, the weightlifting costume worn by a Masters athlete should be similar to that worn by senior athletes of their home country at IWF international events. Bikini cut designs are unacceptable on IMWA competition platforms for both genders.

13 CHAMPIONSHIP AND WARM-UP RULES

- 13.1** The IMWA allows a maximum of two coaches for each lifter in the warm-up area.
- 13.2** If coaches ignore the maximum of two the additional coaches will be asked to leave the warm-up area immediately by the Technical Controller.
- 13.3** Lifters will be allowed to wear Smart watches on the platform to enable them to monitor their heart rate.

14 VIDEO PLAYBACK TECHNOLOGY AND CHALLENGE CARDS

- 14.1** The IMWA does not employ Video Playback Technology (VPT) or Challenge Cards to review Referees' or Jury's decisions. Neither Athletes nor Teams are permitted to challenge the decisions of the Referees or Jury; those decisions are final.

