



Sport History

Weightlifting

Origins and the sport today:

Records show that men in ancient Egypt lifted weights, however it took until the mid-1800s for the practice to develop into a sport. Competition started in Germany, and by 1890 the Osterreichischer Athleten Bund was recognised as the first national governing body for weightlifting.

A year later, seven athletes from six nations gathered in London for the first Weightlifting World Championships. Great Britain's Levy LAWRENCE EDWARD was crowned inaugural world champion. In 1896, it was one of just nine sports on the program of the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, with the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) founded in 1905.

Today, the IWF has about 200 affiliated members in five continents and regulates competitions all over the world for both genders, in a range of age groups.

Weightlifting at the Commonwealth Games:

Weightlifting is one of 10 core sports at the Commonwealth Games, meaning it has to be included in the program. The other nine core sports are aquatics (diving and swimming), athletics, badminton, boxing, hockey, lawn bowls, netball, rugby sevens and squash.

Weightlifting first appeared at the Auckland 1950 Commonwealth Games and has been part of every Games since.

In terms of medal success, Australia is the number one country – with 57 gold, 50 silver and 46 bronze. England are second with 42 gold and India third with 38 gold. St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) has only won three medals at the Commonwealth Games, one of them in weightlifting – George MANNERS took bronze in the 90kg combined weightlifting event at the British 1970 Commonwealth Games.

At Gold Coast 2018, there will be 16 events, in weights ranging from 56kg to +105kg for men, and 48kg to +90kg for women – eight events each.

Weightlifting in Australia:

Australia sent its first weightlifters to the London 1948 Olympic Games, but its first Olympic medal success came four years later at the Helsinki 1952 Games, when Vern BARBERIS won bronze in the lightweight category.

It took 32 years for Australia to win another Olympic weightlifting medal, with two at the Los Angeles 1984 Games: Dean LUKIN won gold at super-heavyweight and Robert KABBAS took silver at light-heavyweight.

One of Australia's most famous weightlifters is Erika ROPATI-FROST (nee YAMASAKI), who won bronze at the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. Four years later, at the Delhi Games, she competed in the 48kg event. While she snatched 73kg (an Oceania record), she was injured during the warm-up for the clean and jerk and could not complete the competition. In 2015, ROPATI-FROST became the first female Australian weightlifter to lift double her body weight in competition. In the 53kg division at the national championships in Melbourne, she lifted 106kg in the clean and jerk.