



# FORTIUS

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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION

JUNE 2009

## NEWS

- **Congratulations** to Sam Coffa, Pedro Sanchez and Lyn Jones on their election to the various International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Committees at the recently held Quadrennial Electoral Congress in Madrid, Spain.
- **Sam Coffa** – IWF Vice President. Sam was also elected to the IWF Hall of Fame.
- **Pedro Sanchez** – Technical Committee.
- **Lyn Jones** – Coaching & Research Committee (formerly Scientific & Research Committee).
- **The AWF** also congratulates our dear friend and colleague, Nicu Vlad on being elected as IWF President.
- **The AWF** congratulates Lyn Jones on being appointed as the 2009/10 AWF National Team Manager. This important role also includes the portfolio of Section Manager of the 2010 Commonwealth Games team.
- **Congratulations** and good luck to Malek Chamoun, Davina Hughes & George Chamoun (Manager / Coach) for the upcoming World Junior Championships to be held in Bucharest, Romania from 12 – 21 June 2009.
- **Congratulations** and best wishes to AWF President Robert Kabbas and partner Alexandra Adorni on the birth of their son, Michael Gabriel.

### IWF ELECTORAL CONGRESS



IWF Vice Presidents (L to R) Nicu Vlad ROU, Zygmunt Wasielecki POL, Dr Hasan Akkus TUR, Dr Tamas Ajan HUN (President), Ma Wenguan CHN (General Secretary), Chang Chao-Kuo TPE, Dragomir Cioroslan USA, Sam Coffa AUS.



IWF Technical Committee (L to R) Alexandrer Kurlovich BLR, Reiko Chinen JPN, Benny Johansson SWE, Pedro Sanchez AUS, Mahmoud Shoukry EGY.

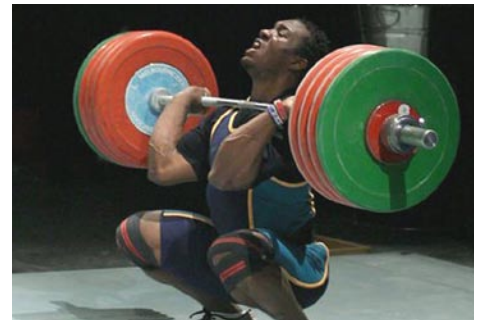


Australian delegation, CEO Matthew Curtain (right) and President Robert Kabbas (second from right).

### ARAFURA GAMES HIGHLIGHTS



Francois Etoundi, 131kg snatch Australian rec [69kg]



Simplicie Ribouem 200kg clean [85kg category]



Damon Kelly 223kg clean [105kg+]

### COMING EVENTS

**July 18**

**Australian Championships**  
Melbourne VIC

**September 18 - 20**

**National U16 Tournament & Under Age Championships**  
Launceston TAS

**October 10 - 18**

**World Masters Games**  
Sydney AUS

**October 18 - 23**

**Commonwealth Championships**  
Penang MAS



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission



AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE



# HIGH PERFORMANCE UPDATE

As reported in the last Fortius edition the AWF's High Performance Program (HPP) has had a High Performance Manager (HPM) driving its initiatives since 21 January, 2008. As such it is timely to look back and see what has been achieved.

History tells us that prior to the appointment of a HPM there were little in the way of a formally structured and planned high performance weightlifting program. The AWF was heavily criticised on a number of fronts both internally and externally in regard to its operations.

Individuals and organisations voiced their concerns for the lack of clear athlete and coach development pathways. Athletes believed it was unfair that in the majority of instances, should they achieve a published qualifying standard, that they were not recognised and rewarded with fully funded trips to contest international competitions such as regional and world championships. Athletes and coaches experienced little support with competition preparation, such as help with medical support or coach education. Coaches became disheartened because they had limited opportunity to be awarded a role on a national team due to the fact that the AWF appointed National Coaches and spots were somewhat restricted. Internal and external stakeholders felt that communication and integration could be greatly improved and that the sports public image was in need of an overhaul. Little data existed regarding the AWF's current state of play and as such it was difficult to provide solid rationale for change, even though it was clearly evident that change was needed.

Prior to January 2008, the HPP was administered by a group of dedicated, selfless individual volunteers who comprised the High Performance Management Committee (now known as the High Performance Advisory Committee (HPAC) whose role is to provide recommendations to the AWF Board of Directors (BOD) for strategic and targeted investments for the support of athletes, teams, coaches, technical programs and special projects, which can influence success at future targeted international competitions.

While the strategic direction and evaluation of the HPP is the responsibility of the HPAC, the day-to-day operational aspects of the program became the responsibility of the Australian Weightlifting Federation's

full-time employed HPM who works closely with the AWF Chief Executive Officer, AWF President and BOD.

The appointment of the HPM has increased the AWF resources allowing the development of innovative and inclusive HPP strategies that have allowed us to achieve the AWF's identified set of objectives for the next four to ten years. The HPM activities have centred on the following prioritised tasks in order to achieve tangible AWF outcomes:

- Building relationships and trust among the high performance athlete and coach community.
- Identifying and managing resources to increase and develop the athlete pool.
- Managing and supporting National Team Coaches.
- Supporting, nurturing and providing opportunities for athletes and coaches within the program.
- Creating relationships with external partners.
- Being held accountable to measurable and published key performance indicators.
- Being the link and liaison to the high performance community through close 'hands on' involvement with athletes and coaches.

In order to build relationships the HPM has facilitated face-to-face meetings with all HPP athletes and personal coaches. In addition information in the form of letters and memo's have been sent frequently to keep people up-to-date with happenings. Many hours of dialogue have been exchanged over the telephone dealing with many matters of HPP importance.

In partnership with the NSW and WA weightlifting associations the HPM has and continues to negotiate the organisation, delivery and evaluation of pilot Talent Identification Programs in order to increase the size and quality of the talent pool and expose our sport in a more favourable light within the wider community.

In May 2008, the AWF supported coaches from every state and territory to participate in the inaugural National Weightlifting Licence, as a result the AWF increased the number of coaches holding the highest attainable coach accreditation in Australia and the information gleaned from the coach education program could be put to good use by their athletes in their respective clubs.

Athlete Shadow Team Agreements were



**Michael Keelan**

AWF High Performance Manager

introduced in August 2008 setting out the obligations of both the athlete and the AWF. HPP athletes are now expected to fulfil training and competition responsibilities and adhere at all times to the Athlete Code of Conduct. In return the AWF holds up its part of the agreement by developing clear selection criteria for squads and teams, developing a domestic and international calendar of events and providing funding to support athletes in their quest for weightlifting excellence.

The Gold Medal Incentive Program (GMIP) introduced in June 2008, comprises three distinct squads, Super Squad, Games Squad and Youth Development Squad. This current system depicts a clear athlete pathway. Lifters who achieve the respective standard of performance are acknowledged by becoming a squad member or by qualifying for a major domestic or international event. Additionally, these athletes are rewarded with AWF branded apparel and direct athlete support funding that alleviates the financial burden associated with achieving high performances results.

As the HPP is athlete centred, coach driven and administratively supported it is vital to recognise the contribution of the volunteer personal coaches. As such, the AWF now grants coaches with a small cash reward when their lifters are selected to represent the AWF in targeted international events. Pursuant to HPP aims the coaches of lifters selected in teams to contest the Olympic Games, World Championships and Commonwealth Games receive the higher monetary payments.

The HPM and other AWF personnel have spent considerable time liaising and working alongside representatives of our key external stakeholders, namely, the ACGA, AOC, ASC, federal and state government agencies. This consultation and collaboration has

resulted in the AWF being recognised as a high performance sport and our generous partners are happy with the way in which the AWF governs and manages its affairs resulting in considerable funding flowing through our federation from these generous sponsors and into the bank accounts of those athletes producing results that do not go unnoticed.

The AWF for the first time invited all HPP lifters to complete a survey. The survey collected information from athletes who achieved a minimum of AWF Youth, Junior or Senior Standard. Athlete responses to both open and closed questions gave the AWF a strong insight into athlete beliefs, values, behaviours and aspirations, as well as providing useful information about the way in which the HPP is viewed by lifters themselves.

Recently the AWF has introduced 2009 Training and Competition Plans. All Super and Games Squad athletes in conjunction with their personal coaches supplied the HPM with performance data that details how often they train, the domestic and international competitions they will be aiming to contest and what lifts they hope to register, further attention is required to this initiative.

In conclusion the AWF has made many changes over the last eighteen months. These changes have proponents and opponents. The change process includes not only generating enthusiasm and working with the early adopters and converts, but being prepared to challenge and win-over the sceptics.

### **High Performance Program Review Forum**

The High Performance Program (HPP) Review Forum that took place on Sunday 17 May, 2009 at the Victorian Weightlifting Stadium provided an opportunity for likeminded people, who have and continue to make a considerable personal investment into the HPP, more often in a voluntary capacity, to gather together and share their opinions, concerns and ideas in a collaborative way.

The Forum provided the platform for extensive consultation involving contributions from HPP athletes, personal coaches, state representatives, ASC representative, HPAC members and AWF Directors to openly reflect on their own role, needs and responsibilities in relation to achieving HPP outcomes.

Facilitated by Professor David Shilbury from Deakin University, the forum accepted diverse points of view thus

creating a positive attitude to change if and when it is needed.

As we all know, the AWF has undertaken significant planning in recent times. Planning is a must for continuous improvement to roll out, and continuous improvement can only come about via a process of collecting information and making judgements about how the HPP is currently operating.

This ongoing, at times focused, monitoring and evaluation can determine whether the HPP is meeting the needs of all internal and external stakeholders and provide an understanding of whether the AWF is remaining on course with its strategic direction and meeting its desired outcomes within stated time-frames and budget.

The information generated from the Forum will allow the AWF Board to identify strengths and weaknesses and target areas for future improvement or change in accordance with the budget that it has at its disposal.

The outcomes of the forum will be made public once the AWF Board of Directors, have had chance to analyse the data gathered.

### **Why Does the AWF need Performance Benchmarking?**

In this modern day and age AWF sponsors require updated information about how their generous funding is being used to achieve negotiated outcomes. For example, the ACGA has provided the AWF with over \$365,000 between the Commonwealth Games of 2006 until 2010 as an investment to ensure weightlifting wins 12 medals at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games. The ASC through its Australian Sports Government Training Grant recently allocated eleven (11) of our top Commonwealth ranked athletes with \$14,000 each to assist them in their preparations for the Games.

In order that the AWF can fulfil its governance obligations it is necessary to furnish the sponsors with reports. These reports have to have substance and be as factual as possible. Consequently, the AWF needs to have the information at hand, the reason why data has been collected via submissions of completed surveys from all HPP athletes and 2009 Training and Competition Plans from Games and Super Squad members.

Fundamentally, the AWF wishes to have its teams made up of the best physically, psychologically and technically prepared athletes in order to produce the highest possible placing and medal-winning performances at targeted events.

The AWF HPP recognises those athletes who can assist the 'team' to earn points at future World Championships that net more AWF athletes a place in future 2012/2016 Olympic Games teams and can demonstrate future medal capability at the 2010/2014 Commonwealth Games and other targeted international events.

The AWF and sponsors are looking for athletes who perform consistently. In most situations athletes who perform consistently and win medals are easily identified. On the other hand, one of the greatest challenges in the talent identification and selection process is discriminating among athletes currently performing below potential and under the level of medal capability. Ideally, the AWF would like to identify those who represent an investment in future medal performances over those that do not. In an effort to make such discrimination possible, the AWF is in the process of developing performance trends as a key component in talent ID, athlete development and possible future selection processes

It will be possible, using submitted data to plot each athlete's historical performances on a graph where the x-axis is time (months, years) and the y-axis is event specific performances (number of successful lifts, lift results, placing etc). These graphs can then be used to identify trends in athlete performance in order to predict future performance potential. For example, an athlete who is trending up (positive slope) is suggestive of the potential for future improvements in performance. On the other hand, an athlete with a decreasing performance trend (negative slope) or stable trend (zero slope) over time indicates little or no potential for future improvements

Projected data also increases the AWF's awareness of not only our athlete's ambitions to contest targeted international events but to also gain an appreciation of their predicted performance allowing the AWF to make comparisons with other international competitors and specific ranking lists, for example, Commonwealth or World rankings.

So although coaches and athletes have been somewhat reticent to submit data, readers are now aware of the reasons why data collection and forecasting will remain. Benchmarking assists us to gain a competitive advantage and to compile meaningful reports back to the AWF BOD and other supporters of the AWF HPP demonstrating that progress is being made and their investments are paying dividends.

# Davina HUGHES & Malek CHAMOUN

Featuring profiles of leading Australian weightlifters



## Davina Hughes

### Born:

1989, Roma Queensland.

### Occupation:

Mail Contractor Australia Post.

### When and where did you start weightlifting?

2003 Toowoomba. I was identified through TID search at school.

### Personal Best :

Best Competition Snatch - 67kg at 58kg  
Best Competition C&Jerk - 89kg Total at 58kg

### Club:

Toowoomba Weightlifting Club.

### Coach:

Greg Hobl.

### Favourite Exercise:

Back Squat.

### Biggest influence on your career:

Probably my mum, Lee and dad, David.

### Greatest Achievement(s):

Being Australian team captain and qualifying for junior worlds.

### Best Lifter ever seen:

I only watch Australian lifters, so Deb Lovely and Damo (Damon Kelly).

### Favourite pastimes / hobbies:

Dancing, listening to music and watching movies.



## Malek Chamoun

### Born:

3 January 1989, Sydney NSW.

### Occupation:

Studying remedial massage.

### When and where did you start weightlifting?

2001 at Earlwood Weightlifting Gym.

### Personal Best :

Best Total - 305kg  
Best Competition Snatch - 135kg  
Best Competition C&Jerk - 170kg

### Club:

Summer Hill Weightlifting Club.

### Coach:

George Chamoun.

### Favourite Exercise:

Front Squats.

### Biggest influence on your career:

My father/coach George Chamoun.

### Greatest Achievement(s):

2006, 2007 and 2008 junior Commonwealth champion.

### Best Lifter ever seen:

Pyrros Dimas.

### Favourite pastimes / hobbies:

Chilling out with mates, movies, cafes, music.

#### AUSTRALIAN WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION INC.

Affiliated with International Weightlifting Federation  
Commonwealth Weightlifting Federation  
Oceania Weightlifting Federation  
Member of Australian Olympic Committee  
Australian Commonwealth Games Association

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