

2024 WW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Location: Online (via Zoom)
Date: Wednesday 11th December 2024
Time: 17:30

Agenda Items

Chair, Joanne Calvino, welcomes all Weightlifting Wales members and Board Directors to the AGM and introduces herself to everyone give that this is the first Weightlifting Wales AGM for Jo to Chair. Jo reiterates that this meeting will be recorded for the benefit of minutes purposes, as well as indicating that microphones shall be muted to avoid disruption the presentation of the reports. Questions can be put into the Chat function of the Zoom meeting and will be managed by Jake Eastwood.

Jo confirms that there are no motions that have been put forward/submitted by members, or any resolutions that need to be voted on in this year's AGM.

Before any apologies are stated, a few words are delivered by Jo to give an overview of the state of Weightlifting overall this past year. Across the UK there is the challenge of a reduction in funding being available which is impacting on the sport's strategic planning. This is why it's been important for Weightlifting Wales to work hard maintain those expected standards that is required by our key stakeholders, as well as ensuing there is a strong sports governance in place for the future in order to remain strategically and financially stable in this changing climate within the sports world/systems.

Apologies – Athlete Representative, Catrin Jones, unable to attend due to prior work commitments

Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes – Approved

Chair's Report – Joanne Calvino

A huge thankyou to the previous Chair, Darren Rogers, for his commitment and service to Weightlifting Wales after deciding not to stand for re-election last year as Chair of the Board.

Increase in membership by 49% and 41% increase in competition entries since the previous AGM.

Qualification events for the Commonwealth Games 2026 are yet to be confirmed, with the Commonwealth Weightlifting Federation and International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) still working on qualification/selection policies and such qualifying events which will all be announced in due course.

A positive impact with staff recruitment with the appointments of a new Performance Pathway Manager, Christian Pszyk, and a new National Head Coach, Gareth Evans.

Stronger Welsh representation at national/GB events, alongside great success at international events, securing 4 medals at this year's Commonwealth Championships in Fiji.

Winners at the Welsh Association Sports Industry Awards 2024 for 'Most Influential Campaign' for our Raise the Bar programme, which has reached over 1,000 young people since the initiative's launch in December 2021.

Numerous licensed clubs have been able to secure funding from National Lottery and Sport Wales for junior development and social well-being programmes.

Performance Report – Gareth Evans, Head Coach

Total of 29 Welsh entries at British Championships – with 7 medals, 1 gold, 5 silver, 1 bronze.

A strong, but young squad of 7 represented Wales at the Commonwealth Championships, with a mix of athletes who had competed at Commonwealth Games/Championships previously, with others who had never competed outside the UK before. A brilliant performance overall, bringing back 2 senior bronze medals and 2 junior gold medals, alongside a number of personal records broken.

Following a challenging Celtic Championships where there were injuries and dropouts from athletes leading to last minute changes to the squad selected, Wales managed to finish a respectable 2nd place. Special mention to those athletes who came in to the squad at short notice and competed, as well as for Mikey Farmer and Chloe Hood who picked up the best senior Sinclair's.

Three Welsh masters athletes won gold medals at the World Masters Championships in Finland this year which was a great achievement – Susan Williams, Gwen Pierce, Ray Williams.

Para Powerlifters, Sean Gaffney and Evelyn Thomas competed at the Para Powerlifting National Championships (a World Para Powerlifting sanctioned event) over in Dublin, with Evelyn winning gold and achieving best rookie of the competition, as well as Sean also winning gold in his competition.

More athlete education to be aimed to be delivered in training squads for 2025, which will touch on a new app called 'Smartbase' which is being developed in conjunction with Sport Wales. A beta group has been set up, with a de-brief from those trials being discussed with the senior squad at the first training camp of 2025.

Sleep strategy has been a Sport Wales supported project that was used for the athletes flying over to Fiji for the Commonwealth Championships. Injury prevention and under-fuelling are ongoing projects to be worked on which will be aimed to be rolled out in 2025.

Strategy Report – Simon Roach, Strategy and Development Manager

Overall membership number now pushing over 300, with a healthy increase in youth athletes due to the raise the bar programme, club development, and successful funding from Be Active Wales.

Several WW licensed clubs have been supported in applying for Sport Wales funding, which have helped in areas such as coach education and weightlifting specific equipment. There has been a total of £50,000 funds awarded in the last year period by Sport Wals to WW licensed clubs.

More delivery centres attained within the group of WW licensed clubs that have been able to deliver the raise the bar programme, as well as future community programmes moving forward to next year.

WW hosted competitions have continued to be organised equally from North/South Wales geographically, as well as several successful academy open events hosted by WW licensed clubs.

Highly appreciative and thankful for our volunteer workforce – including Welsh Technical Officials.

Varied opportunities for members to complete valid safeguarding qualifications throughout the year. Over 50 total members have completed relevant safeguarding training to allow them to apply for coaching license.

Safeguarding pages on WW website are continually developed.

Ongoing work in fulfilling the annual UKAD assurance framework and its corresponding requirements.

WW has been involved in various safeguarding campaigns, and also onset of Para-Powerlifting Talent ID programme in collaboration with key partners.

Key areas of the Sport Wales Governance Improvement plan have been developed.

Finance Report – Jake Eastwood, Business Support Officer (maternity cover)

Accounts have been prepared up until the 31st March 2024 and have been filed with Companies House in November 2024.

There are two main parts to the report – the **income statement** and the **balance sheet** – now known as the **statement of financial position**.

Questions:

Matthew de Filippo: Will there be south and north regional squads in 2025?

Gareth Evans answers on behalf of the WW performance team that the development and senior squads will remain as previously ran, but the standard to gain a place on the squads will be looking to be raised by around 3%. For athletes falling just short of achieving entry to these squads, this will be where the regional squads will come in to

play, and as a result north and south regional squads will be invitational only. This still needs to be passed to the relevant board sub-committee for approval.

Lindsay Atkinson: Regarding Welsh Championships, will we be going over to the new IWF weight categories? If so, will qualification be based on body weight when you're actually competing?

Jo firstly makes comment to answer by saying that the Masters Weightlifting Federation's are not part of IWF events, and so there will be discussions internally as to when we adopt the new weight categories for Wales. An announcement on this will be made everyone once this is confirmed.

Gareth adds to this by implying that we will hopefully introduce this through having a slightly lower base standard and then given the results from the Welsh Championships to put a more structure qualification process in place.

Lewis Wong: Will there be opportunities for competitions to be held in Cardiff?

Jo mentions how WW are looking at various venues in Cardiff to host a competition, but the problem is that there is no venue currently in the area that has the suitable capacity to be able to host national events. We are aware with Cardiff being the central hub for Wales it's an important geographical location for us, and we will continue to look for appropriate opportunities, with discussions taking place currently with the internal performance team to try and resolve this.

Taylor Proberts: Will the coaches development work be viable for newer younger coaches that are still working towards their qualifications or just the already established and qualified coaches/how will coaches apply for this and will it be held north and south or just online?

Gareth answers the first point of the question by indicating that the coach's education programmes looking to take place next year will be for existing qualified coaches only. Secondly, we are keen to be considered as Wales (and not separate north/south Wales), with coaching education sessions to be held online, delivered in an open forum meeting format. As Gareth presented in the performance report, the coach's education will aim to be quarterly meetings for existing coaches across Wales as a discussion group whereby everyone can share ideas and experiences, with club and coaches supporting each other to help develop coaching skills as a collective group.

Rhodri Jones: Have there been discussions with BWL allowing athletes who hit Commonwealth Pathway totals to self-fund to European Championships?

Jo says there is no answer we can give on that at the moment. The performance sub-committee will be reviewing what that pathway will look like and the opportunities available to self-fund. This will be something we will be able to answer once those reviews have taken place with the sub-committee next year.

Taylor Proberts: Will the Welsh rankings and records remain the same, or will there be any changes as there had been a few complaints from people having to self-submit them?

There are no changes to how WW conduct the Welsh Rankings and Lifting Records. The staff update the rankings twice per year. The second update takes place at the end of the year and after BWL have logged the final competitive results on Sport 80. The Welsh Lifting Records are updated by the events manager as and when competition results are updated and confirmed on Sport 80.

The Welsh Rankings will be an item to be reviewed in the next performance sub-committee meeting of the back of this query.

No further questions.

Jo thanks everyone for their attendance and looks forward to meeting members hopefully in person across next year, and declares the AGM closed.

End of Meeting.