

Masters Council Meeting – 10/16/2024

Time: 9:06 PM – 9:49 PM

Attendees: Carlos Hernandez, Gwen Chamberlain, Mira Kwon, Tom Sroka (joined later), Bob Takano (joined later)

Board Liaison: Mike Choi

Absent: JP Nicoletta, Melissa Doherty, Aimee Everett

UMWF Fiji Update

Event Overview:

- Ran alongside Commonwealth WLC, leveraging existing infrastructure.
- High production value: live TV and livestream.
- Venue: Vodaphone stadium with 30-platform training hall and 14-platform warm-up room. Had a world class feel like the 2019 IWF World Championships in Thailand.
- Fijian Ministry of Sport contributed \$592K for both events.

Key Meetings:

- Discussions with IWF Executive Board members, UMWF President Coral Quinell, and representatives from Australia, New Zealand, and other Oceania federations.

Choi's Role in UMWF:

- General Secretary, responsible for defining the organization's infrastructure and staffing. Operational lead. Event bids solicitation.

UMWF Objectives:

- Reintegrate with IWF as a committee/group (supported by Sam Coffa and Ursula Papandrea).
- Maintain a strong anti-doping stance aligned with WADA code.
- Plan to host two annual events: World Cup and World Championships.
 - UMWF intends to host meets between 350 and 500 athletes maximum.
 - Attach to existing national infrastructure whenever possible to achieve scale.
- Draft constitution pending approval at 2025 Congress.

Event Goals:

- Build bridges between Oceania and the USA.
- Alternate event locations between hemispheres.
- World Cup host city to be announced soon.
- In very preliminary discussions to attach a UMWf event to a USAW national meet.

Discussion Points

Event Scheduling:

- **Mira:** If USAW hosts, would it be before or after a national event?
- **Mike:** Preferably run concurrently on separate platforms (similar to 2017 Las Vegas Open & IWF Youth Worlds).

Separate Masters Events:

- **Mira:** Should we continue having separate Masters Nationals?
- **Mike:** USAW is committed to keeping Masters Nationals separate, as we promised, unless the community requests otherwise.
- **Gwen:** Older masters prefer separate events, but younger masters might want them integrated.
- **Mike:** Masters shouldn't be grouped with youth athletes but should have separation within national events.

Recognition & Experience:

- **Mira:** Masters need better recognition—awards should feel more special. I was told to get my own medal out of a box at a meet.

Qualifying Standards:

- **Tom:** Bring back qualifying standards for World Championships to avoid the feeling of a USA "invitational" (like Orlando).
- **Group:** General agreement.

Session Spacing:

- **Gwen:** Too much downtime between sessions. Sometimes we did nothing for 90 minutes.
- **Tom:** Sessions need better spacing. It's costly to attend meets with scattered schedules.

- **Mike:** The goal is 12–14 athletes per session, ending by 6 PM for better socializing and rest opportunities.

Weight Classes:

- **Mike:** There is consensus to align UMWF weight classes with IWF. The tricky part is whether we do it now or wait until the rumored new classes are accepted for the LA Games. We also want to respect new record holders by letting them enjoy their records for a little while.
- **Tom:** If they're announced sooner, rip the bandaid off. They're going to change anyway.
- **Group:** Agreement and support for aligning weight classes. Choi to bring this feedback to UMWF.