



The Open Category at the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships

October 31, 2024 (M Gomes)



The WCHM 2021, Policy “Gender Diversity and Inclusion” received substantial input from a variety of stakeholders including national weightlifters and Egale Canada. Since Weightlifting Canada did not have a policy on transgender athletes or gender diversity and inclusion, our Board was hesitant to fully endorse this policy. since it was felt that it was the role of the National Sports Organization to initiate policy discussion about the inclusion of transgender athletes.

Instead, the Board, on 2021.09.21, approved the Gender Diversity and Inclusion Policy “on the condition that its review and approval by WCHM Advisory Committee would take place within sixty days of Weightlifting Canada’s policy on Transgendered Women in Canadian Weightlifting.” WCHM’s Gender Diversity and Inclusion Policy reflects its support for any forthcoming WCH Gender Identity Policy.

Currently, a transgender athlete cannot compete provincially in the gender category of their choice and therefore cannot qualify for our national championships.

I would like to welcome transgender as participants in the WCHM National Championships. This can be accomplished while at the same time respecting our current gender competition categories. I am proposing an Open Category at our National Championships. Even though there may be few athletes taking advantage of this inclusion, much like our adaptive athletes, this should not be an excuse to distance these athletes from joining our Canadian Masters Weightlifting community.

Open Category for the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships

(CMWC) (Cisgender athletes cannot compete in this category)

Description:

The Open Category of the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championship is reserved for athletes who do not qualify to compete provincially in the gender category of their choosing. Athletes who are eligible to compete in the Open Category of the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships are not required to be members of their Provincial Weightlifting Association.

The following rules will apply for Open Category athletes competing at the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships.

Open Category athletes are,

- required to contact the WCHM President with a request to participate in the CMWC Open Category and a brief explanation for their request.
- placed in either the Mens or Womens session, as per their choice, for age and bodyweight classes' session organization and follow the relative weigh-in procedures. This is solely for organizing the sessions.
- eligible for awards in the Open age and bodyweight category. These awards are separate from the cisgender athlete awards.
- aware that their Snatch, and Clean and Jerk attempts cannot be used to break Canadian Masters Weightlifting Records in the Cis categories and that there are no Open Category records.
- subject to the same WCHM rules and regulations during the CMWC as cisgender athletes, including, but not limited to, Doping Control and WCHM Code of Conduct.
- allowed to have their totals used to qualify for IMWA sanctioned international events in the Open Category.

WCHM President answers some questions about the Open Category at the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships (CMWC)

1. **Why was the Open Category created?** Since the WCH policy on transgender athletes is not yet completed, having an Open Category allows athletes an opportunity to compete in our Championships. And after a WCH Transgender Policy is adopted, the athlete can still choose between one of the Cisgender categories or the Open Category,
2. **Will the Open Category athletes receive separate awards like Para Weightlifters?** Open Category athletes will receive their own medals while competing in the Cisgender session to which they have agreed to. Open Category athletes can accumulate points towards the Hall of Fame and the President's Attollo Award but not Grand Masters since that Award is gender based.
3. **Can Open Category athletes break Canadian Masters Records?** At the present time there are no Open Category established minimum standards for records since the Open Category includes athletes that would have preferred to lift along Cisgender athletes in that category. Minimum standards would be most difficult to determine considering the physical body types of athletes competing in the Open Category.
4. **Will Open Category athletes lift in their own session(s)?** Open Category athletes will lift in a Cisgender session of their choosing instead of a small separate group of Open Category athletes. It is best to include Open Category athletes in groupings which they find most comfortable participating in.
5. **How do Open Category athletes qualify for the CMWC?** Open Category athletes do not require a qualifying total.
6. **Can any athlete compete in the Open Category?** Cisgender athletes are not allowed to compete in the Open Category.
7. **Will the weigh-in procedure change for the Open Category athlete?** The weigh in policy at our Nationals is the same for all Categories, Cisgender or Open. Open athletes will weigh in with the Cisgender group of their choice relative to the session in which they have been assigned. With athletes weighing in with their singlets, we do not anticipate the level of uncomfortableness that once existed for all athletes and officials.