

June Newsletter Welcome

Over the last week or so, the world of weightlifting has been faced with a number of new issues on top of the on-going challenge of Covid-19. Although the release of the McLaren report which has been investigating the alleged abuse of power and misappropriation of funds and doping cover ups at the IWF was headline news, BWL, like all sports has needed to focus on a much bigger issue that shocked and challenged all our lives.

Personally, I totally detest racism and discrimination of all forms and I am proud to lead an organisation that is committed to diversity, inclusion and equality. However, I am fully aware that right now, this moment is very specifically about racism.

It doesn't mean the wider issues in diversity, inclusion and equality aren't important, it is just that right now, this has to be about racism and how we can all use this moment to make a real, sustained change in our society.

Clearly racism has no place in our sport we all know and love or in our society more broadly and we have challenged ourselves within BWL and the weightlifting community to stand together against racism and we have been pleased to see lots of discussions on social media about race and inclusion taking place.

It has been particularly interesting to talk to a number of our members and read some of the experiences, both positive and negative, that weightlifters have experienced. Thank you to Jenny Tong and Khrys Speed for contributing so positively to this newsletter and to those who have already taken the time to share their thoughts with us.

We have rightly been challenged that just posting on social media doesn't change anything, so what are we going to do? We currently run a number of projects aimed at increasing our diversity and inclusivity. However, like the rest of society, now feels the right time to ask ourselves: 'could we do more?'

We need to ask ourselves some challenging questions about what we do well and what we don't and the first step to building our understanding in this area is to listen, learn and educate all our weightlifting communities. For that reason, we are asking you to get in touch with us via our email (enquiries@britishweightlifting.org) or via our social media platforms to share your experiences, opinions or ideas.

We clearly need to listen and understand more. Only then will we be able to drive change in a meaningful way that leads to a permanent shift in all our behaviours when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

Ashley Metcalfe, British Weight Lifting CEO

