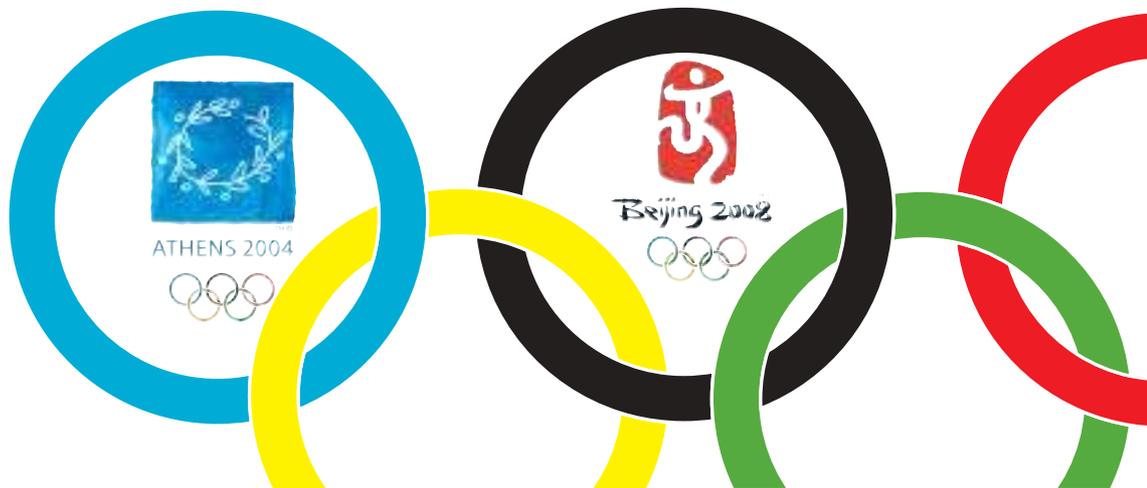


On the road

From Athens to Beijing



The span between two Olympic Games can be looked at as a four-hundred meter sprint. In terms of weightlifting, the start line of the race was in Doha, then the second hundred-meter leg was run in Santo Domingo.

This year in September, Chiangmai will mark the last turn on the track before the champion-candidates are headed to the finish line.

The last, final leg of one hundred meters will then be covered in Beijing in August next year.

It will mark the 23rd appearance of weightlifting in the Olympic Games. These "hundred-meter legs" seem to have dashed by – just as rapidly as time

seems to have run since the last Olympic Games.

As customs went, on 25th August 2004 in Athens, it was Iranian Hossein Reza Zadeh's task to say the concluding words: he was able to round up the fantastic weightlifting festival with his 263.5kg clean and jerk world record. He reclaimed the right of last speech for 2005 in Doha, and also later in Santo Domingo. Apart from that almost everything has changed.

For instance, the half-kilo weight progression stopped to be applied.

Long-

admired icons, Olympic and world championship medal winners, world record holders disappeared from the stage. Some winning streaks suffered sudden breaks, international power relations have shifted. At the same time, we could realize with some relief that even after the Konos, the Miyakes, Alexeevs, Suleymanoglus, Dimases and Kakhiasvilis weightlifting can produce new superstars.



The last act of the Athens Games on 25 August 2004: Hossein Reza Zadeh jerked a new world record 263.5kg



2005, Doha: new world champion, junior and senior in the same year, Best Lifter of the Year, Ilya Ilin

It is only normal for the old champions to cede their place to the new comers and the younger generation of contenders duly came into view. They are the ones, winners of Olympic and world titles, that we are going to miss following the next Olympic Games. Anyway, let us not get too sentimental, since the first two hundred meters are behind them and the last turn is just ahead of us.

World Weightlifting would like to give you a picture of the past and would-be champions on the following pages under the title "On the road From Athens to Beijing".

2006, Santo Domingo: after a break of 84 years, France once again has a world champion, Vencelas Dabaya



On the road

From Athens to Beijing

The Beihang Gymnasium in Beijing: the 'Arena of Dreams' – all weightlifters' ultimate destination

