

WORLD STRONGMAN
LOOKING AHEAD
Annual Report 2023-24



Dubai, UAE 2024

FOREWORD BY WORLD STRONGMAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR BURDUN

Every year, as we look back at the journey of World Strongman, we reflect on the extraordinary moments and achievements that define our sport. The past year, 2023-2024, has been a testament to our resilience, passion, and unwavering commitment to the strongman community worldwide.

*This period has been marked by remarkable progress and significant milestones for our federation. Our athletes have showcased their unparalleled strength and determination in multiple prestigious competitions across the globe, reinforcing the growing stature of **World Strongman**. The sport has continued to expand, attracting new talent, engaging global audiences, and setting new standards for excellence.*

*However, the journey has not been without its challenges. The evolving landscape of international sports, economic fluctuations, and logistical complexities have required us to be more adaptive and strategic in our approach. Despite these challenges, **World Strongman** has remained steadfast in its mission—to elevate the sport and create more opportunities for athletes, organizers, and fans.*

Key Achievements in 2023-2024:

•Global Competitions and Expansion: Our calendar was filled with elite competitions, national championships, and international grand prix events, each pushing the limits of human strength.

•Youth and Development Programs: We have placed a strong emphasis on nurturing the next generation of strongman athletes through grassroots programs and youth competitions.

•Innovation in Competition Formats: New event structures and revised competition rules have made our sport more dynamic and engaging.



- **Stronger Governance and Integrity:** We have worked tirelessly to uphold fair play, enhance officiating standards, and strengthen our collaboration with international sports governing bodies, including AIMS.
- **Growth in Media and Sponsorship:** Our sport has received unprecedented attention from the media, setting records in digital engagement, which will lead to new partnership agreements and attract major sponsors.

A Commitment to Excellence

Looking ahead, **World Strongman** will continue to innovate, expand, and inspire. Our commitment to the values of **strength, discipline, and sportsmanship** remains unwavering. We are dedicated to ensuring that strongman remains a globally recognized and respected sport, offering a platform for the world's strongest athletes to compete at the highest level.

As we present this **Annual Activity Report**, I extend my deepest gratitude to our executive board, national federations, coaches, officials, athletes, partners, and every individual who contributes to making **World Strongman** a force to be reckoned with in the global sporting landscape. Your passion and dedication are the foundation of our success.

Together, we will continue to push the boundaries of human strength and inspire future generations to join the legacy of **World Strongman**.

Yours in Strength,

Vladimir Burdun

President, World Strongman

WORLD STRONGMAN CHAMPIONSHIP 2024 | DUBAI: A NEW ERA FOR STRONGMAN SPORT

On **March 28, 2024**, Dubai hosted the **World Strongman Championship** in a **new competition format**, designed to push the boundaries of the sport and enhance its recognition on the global stage. Held at the **Emirates Sports Hotel** in **Dubai Sports City**, this prestigious event was organized under the auspices of the **International Union "World Strongman"** and supported by the **Alliance of Independent Recognized Members of Sports (AIMS)**.

The championship gathered **42 national delegations**, welcoming **over 350 spectators**, **100 representatives of major international companies**, and **40 elite athletes from 20 countries**, including Egypt, France, Canada, Russia, the USA, Turkey, India, Brazil, and others.

This year's competition introduced an **innovative single-distance format**, where athletes competed in **random pairs**, emphasizing strategy, endurance, and raw strength. According to **Vladimir Burdun**, President of the International Union "World Strongman", this format was developed to **showcase strongman sport as a potential future Olympic discipline** and elevate its status within the international sports community.

CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

The **2024 World Strongman Championship** featured **seven disciplines across three main categories**:

Women's Category (U-75 kg)

- 1 **Brendalee Theron (UAE/South Africa)** – 10 points
- 2 **Natalya Kuznetsova (Russia)** – 8 points
- 3 **Fatma Mohamed El-Gazzar (Egypt)** – 6 points

Men's Category (U-95 kg)

- 1 **Vladlen Valyaev (Russia)** – 35 points
- 2 **Sahib Bagirov (Azerbaijan)** – 34 points
- 3 **Artem Mironov (Russia)** – 31 points

Men's Category (U-110 kg)

- 1 **Leontiy Miroshnik (Russia)** – 30 points
- 2 **Alexey Kosterin (Russia)** – 28 points
- 3 **Roman Druzhinin (Russia)** – 26 points

Additionally, the **Emirates Sports Team** hosted the **Fyodor Konyukhov Cup – "Rowing Across the Atlantic"**, a **500-meter rowing challenge**, with **Vladlen Valyaev (Russia)** securing first place with an impressive time of **1 hour, 16 minutes, and 30 seconds**.

STRONGMAN ON THE PATH TO OLYMPIC RECOGNITION

A defining moment of the **World Strongman Championship 2024** was the **discussion on the sport's Olympic prospects**, held during the **Annual General Meeting of the International Union "World Strongman"**. The event was attended by **prominent leaders in global sports governance**, including:

- **Ivo Ferriani** – Member of the IOC Executive Committee, President of SportAccord
- **Stephan Fox** – President of AIMS, Vice-President of SportAccord, Secretary General of IFMA
- **Julia Govinden** – CEO of United Through Sports (UTS)

During the meeting, these distinguished figures provided insights into **the process of Olympic inclusion**, outlining **key stages, requirements, and principles for World Strongman to gain official recognition**. With the full support of AIMS, **World Strongman** is taking significant steps toward achieving **international legitimacy and future Olympic inclusion**.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORS

The success of the **2024 World Strongman Championship** was made possible through collaboration with key **partners and sponsors**, who contributed to the event's organization and prestige:

- 🏆 **Dubai Sports Council** – The official governing body supporting sports development in the UAE
- 🏆 **Emirates Sports Group** – Organizational partner responsible for logistics and event operations
- 🏆 **The Scandalist** – Official energy drink sponsor, fueling athletes throughout the championship
- 🏆 **Waterrower & NOHRD** – Official equipment partner for the **Fyodor Konyukhov Cup**
- 🏆 **Strong Gym** – Provider of a **team of professional referees** for the event
- 🏆 **MedX Pharmacy & Nutrition** – Supplier of high-quality **sports nutrition and recovery products**
- 🏆 **Paragon Properties** – Real estate partner, ensuring premium hospitality for international guests
- 🏆 **ISD Sports Science** – Strength training and recovery center supporting athlete performance
- 🏆 **Emirates Sports Hotel** – Official accommodation and venue partner
- 🏆 **Virtuozity & FanApps** – Enhancing the **digital experience** for athletes and fans worldwide

THE FUTURE OF WORLD STRONGMAN

The **World Strongman Championship 2024** set a new benchmark for the **sport's evolution and global reach**. With its **unique competition format, expanding international participation**, and a **clear pathway to Olympic recognition**, **World Strongman** is poised to become a **leading force in strength sports worldwide**.

The event's overwhelming success highlighted the **UAE's commitment to sports innovation**, reaffirming Dubai as a **premier destination for international sporting events**.

🚀 **With the full backing of AIMS and growing recognition within the Olympic movement, the future of World Strongman has never been stronger.**

🏆 **THE FUTURE IS STRONG. THE FUTURE IS WORLD STRONGMAN.**

FUTURE OF WORLD STRONGMAN

As **World Strongman** continues to grow and evolve, several key initiatives and developments have been planned to ensure the sport's continued expansion and success on the global stage. The 2023-2024 period will be a defining moment for the strongman community, as we focus on key areas of **competition, athlete development, education, integrity in sport, and international recognition**.

Continuation of the World Strongman Youth Championships

One of the primary objectives for the future of **World Strongman** is the continued organization and expansion of the **Youth World Championships**. These competitions provide young athletes from around the world with the opportunity to **showcase their talent, test their strength, and compete at an international level**. Investing in the youth divisions ensures a strong pipeline of future champions and further globalizes the sport.

Qualification Events for Major International Competitions

To elevate **World Strongman** to new heights, we are introducing **structured qualification events** for major international tournaments. These include pathways for elite strongman athletes to secure their place in **prestigious global competitions**. As the sport grows, it is crucial to establish a well-defined qualification system that ensures the best athletes have an opportunity to compete on the world stage.

Establishment of a World Strongman Academy

To further develop and professionalize the sport, **World Strongman** is set to launch the **World Strongman Academy based in UAE**—a dedicated training and education center for athletes, coaches, and officials. This academy will serve as the **foundation for the future of strongman**, offering structured programs in:

- Strength and conditioning training**
- Technical skill development for competition**
- Coaching certification courses**
- Judging and refereeing education**
- Sports nutrition and recovery**

The **World Strongman Academy** will provide **standardized training methodologies**, ensuring that all athletes, regardless of location, have access to world-class knowledge and preparation. This initiative will contribute to raising the overall level of competition and solidifying **World Strongman** as a leader in the strength sports community.

Path to Full AIMS Recognition and Olympic Aspirations

A major goal for **World Strongman** is to achieve **full recognition from the Alliance of Independent Recognized Members of Sport (AIMS)**. This recognition will solidify our status as an official global sport and open the door for further development on an international level.

With AIMS recognition, **World Strongman** will take a crucial step toward inclusion within the **Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF)**, bringing strongman one step

closer to becoming a recognized **Olympic discipline**. The ultimate vision is to see **strongman as part of the Olympic Games**, where the world's strongest athletes compete on the grandest stage in sports history.

Promoting the Values of Strength Sports

Beyond physical strength, strongman embodies **dedication, perseverance, and sportsmanship**. A key goal of the academy and future initiatives is to emphasize the **core values of strongman**, promoting:

- **Discipline and respect** within the sport
- **The cultural significance of strength athletics**
- **Integrity, fair play, and community engagement**

Through **structured learning and mentorship**, we aim to **foster a deeper understanding and appreciation** of strongman as both a sport and a lifestyle.

Development of an Anti-Doping Program

Integrity in competition remains a top priority for **World Strongman**. To protect the sport's credibility and ensure fair play, we are advancing our **anti-doping initiatives**, reinforcing our commitment to **drug-free competition**.

This includes:

- **Collaboration with global anti-doping organizations** to implement strict testing protocols
- **Training and accreditation of doping control officers**
- **Education programs for athletes and coaches** about banned substances and the dangers of performance-enhancing drugs

By taking a firm stance on **clean competition**, **World Strongman** ensures that all achievements in the sport are based on **genuine strength, skill, and dedication**.

A Vision for the Future

The future of **World Strongman** is built on **growth, innovation, and a commitment to excellence**. Through the expansion of competitions, the establishment of the **World Strongman Academy**, structured qualification events, and a strong stance on fair play, the sport is set to **reach new heights**.

With **full AIMS recognition on the horizon and Olympic ambitions within our sights**, **World Strongman** is dedicated to shaping the sport's future and bringing strongman to the **highest level of global sports recognition**.

With the support of **athletes, organizers, sponsors, and fans**, **World Strongman** will continue to **push the boundaries of human strength** and inspire new generations to join the sport.

The future is strong. The future is **World Strongman**.

ATHLETES | WORLD STRONGMAN: DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS ON AND OFF THE FIELD

At **World Strongman**, we are committed to the **holistic development** of our athletes—both in their competitive careers and beyond. Strength sports demand **exceptional physical and mental resilience**, and we recognize the importance of supporting athletes in all aspects of their journey.

To achieve this, **World Strongman** will launch a range of **athlete development programs**, providing **education, training, and career planning** to ensure that our competitors are not only **elite athletes** but also **prepared for life after sport**.

ATHLETE CAREER PROGRAM

The **World Strongman Athlete Career Program** is designed to help athletes build **skills and knowledge** that will support them in their transition after their competitive careers. This program covers:

- ☑ **Career Planning** – Guidance on post-competition career opportunities
- ☑ **Resume Writing & Job Search Strategies** – Professional skills to support career advancement
- ☑ **Public Speaking & Media Training** – Helping athletes build their personal brands and engage with sponsors and fans
- ☑ **Entrepreneurship in Sports** – Providing insights on business opportunities within the fitness and strength industry

By equipping our athletes with these essential tools, **World Strongman** ensures that they can transition **seamlessly** into new careers while remaining **ambassadors of strength sports**.

ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Success in **World Strongman** requires more than just physical power. The **Athlete Development Program** focuses on **physical, mental, and emotional well-being** to ensure long-term success in the sport.

📌 Key Areas of Focus:

- 🏋️ **Strength & Conditioning** – Advanced training methodologies for peak performance
- 🧠 **Mental Training** – Focus, visualization, and stress management techniques
- 🥗 **Nutrition & Recovery** – Personalized meal plans, injury prevention, and rehabilitation strategies
- 🎯 **Performance Analytics** – Utilizing technology and data to optimize training and competition strategies

With access to **top-tier coaches, sports psychologists, and nutritionists**, our athletes receive **comprehensive support** to maximize their performance and career longevity.

ANTI-DOPING EDUCATION

Integrity is the foundation of **World Strongman**. We are fully committed to **clean sport and fair competition**, aligning with international anti-doping regulations.

📌 Our **Anti-Doping Education Program** includes:

- ☑ **Education on Prohibited Substances** – Ensuring athletes are aware of banned substances and their consequences
- ☑ **Testing Procedures & Compliance** – Informing athletes on how anti-doping tests are conducted
- ☑ **Ethical Competition & Fair Play** – Reinforcing the values of competing with **honesty, dedication, and integrity**

By educating our athletes on the risks and repercussions of doping, we uphold the **credibility and professionalism** of **World Strongman** on the global stage.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP

Beyond competition, **World Strongman** encourages athletes to **grow as leaders and role models** in the community. Our **Personal Development Program** includes:

- 🔥 **Leadership Training** – Developing skills to mentor and inspire future athletes
- ☀️ **Confidence Building** – Encouraging self-belief and resilience in high-pressure environments
- 🤝 **Ambassadorship & Public Engagement** – Teaching athletes how to represent **World Strongman** at global events

By fostering **strong values and leadership skills**, we help our athletes become **ambassadors of strength, discipline, and sportsmanship**.

CODE OF ETHICS & SPORTSMANSHIP

At **World Strongman**, every athlete is expected to uphold the highest standards of **sportsmanship, respect, and integrity**. Our **Code of Ethics** outlines:

- ☑ **Fair Play & Respect** – Competing with honor and treating competitors with dignity
- ☑ **Integrity in Sports** – Upholding strong moral principles and commitment to clean sport
- ☑ **Ambassadorship** – Representing **World Strongman** as role models for future generations

Through our **athlete education programs**, **World Strongman** is not just building champions on the competition stage, but also **strong leaders and role models** in the sports world and beyond.

- 🏆 **THE FUTURE OF STRENGTH SPORTS BEGINS WITH OUR ATHLETES.**
- 👊 **WORLD STRONGMAN – POWER, INTEGRITY, AND EXCELLENCE.**

WOMEN IN WORLD STRONGMAN | GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality in **World Strongman** has been a crucial area of focus, with continuous efforts to ensure equal opportunities and recognition for female athletes. Historically, strength sports have been dominated by male competitors, with limited visibility and resources allocated to women in the field. However, in recent years, **World Strongman** has taken significant steps to bridge this gap and promote inclusivity in the sport.

Recognizing the importance of gender equality, **World Strongman** has actively worked towards creating **more competitive opportunities** for female athletes. This includes the introduction of **women's divisions** in major competitions, the establishment of **specialized training programs**, and initiatives to highlight **female strength athletes** as role models for younger generations.

Additionally, **World Strongman** is committed to ensuring **fair treatment and equal support** for women in the sport. Policies are being developed to guarantee that **female athletes receive the same level of resources, media exposure, and financial incentives** as their male counterparts. The federation is also actively promoting gender equality by encouraging more **female participation at all levels**, from amateur to professional strongman competitions.

Despite the progress, there are still challenges ahead. Changing **public perception and cultural attitudes** towards women in strength sports remains a key priority. Expanding access to **professional coaching, sponsorships, and competition opportunities** for female strongman athletes is essential to achieving true equality.

World Strongman firmly believes that strength knows no gender. By continuing to advocate for **equal representation, fair opportunities, and increased visibility** for female athletes, we are shaping a future where strongwomen compete on the same stage as strongmen, inspiring generations to come.

Through **dedication, commitment, and collaboration** with athletes, coaches, organizers, and fans, **World Strongman** is determined to create a truly **inclusive and empowering** environment for all.

WSM 2023-24 Annual Report

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