

USA WEIGHTLIFTING BRINGS FIRST NATIONAL COMPETITION TO GRAND RAPIDS WITH AMERICAN SERIES OPEN 3, SEPT. 8-10 AT DEVOS PLACE

Tournament of 687 Athletes also Serves as Final Qualifying Event for 2017 World Championships

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Sept. 6, 2017 – More than 600 of America’s top weightlifters ages 11 to 72, including more than 100 from Michigan, will compete in Grand Rapids this weekend in the [USA Weightlifting Nike American Series Open 3 Powered by Rogue Fitness](#), Sept. 8-10 at DeVos Place in downtown Grand Rapids. And spectators will have a front-row seat to see athletes lift the equivalent weight of everything from a 198-pound freezer to a 507-pound marble pool table.

Weightlifting is one of the oldest Olympic sports, dating back to the first modern Olympic Games held in Athens, Greece, in 1896. The American Series Open 3 is the final USA Weightlifting qualifying event this year to determine who will represent the United States in the [2017 International Weightlifting Federation \(IWF\) World Championships](#) in Anaheim, Calif., at the end of November. The 16-person U.S. team will be announced at the conclusion of this event.

This is the first time we will hold a national competition in Grand Rapids, and we look forward to a great weekend of weightlifting at DeVos Place,” said Phil Andrews, CEO of USA Weightlifting. “Michigan has always been good to us – friendly people, great athletes and spectacular natural beauty. We cannot wait to watch our athletes succeed in the great city of Grand Rapids.”

[USA Weightlifting](#), the national governing body for the sport, created three open events this year for athletes to participate in, leading up to the American Open Finals in December in Anaheim. In total, 2,000 athletes will have gone through the three-open series, making it the highest-attended weightlifting series in the world.

The American Open Series 3 in Grand Rapids has 687 registered athletes, including two 2016 Olympians ([Morghhan King](#) and [Jenny Arthur](#)). Of the 106 Michigan athletes, 10 are from the Grand Rapids area (including three GVSU students), six are from the Kalamazoo area and three are from Hudsonville/Zeeland. The event is estimated to generate more than \$800,000 in economic impact and 1,200 hotel nights booked.

“We’re thrilled to welcome this strong group of athletes to Michigan and Grand Rapids,” said Mike Guswiler, president of the West Michigan Sports Commission (WMSC) who won the bid to host the event. “This is going to be an exciting spectator sport where you can see people of all ages and sizes lifting astonishing amounts of weight.”

USA Weightlifting has seen an explosive growth in the sport, increasing from 8,000 members 10 years ago to 27,000 today – due in large part to the popularity of Crossfit, which exposes many new athletes to weightlifting. In fact, Grand Rapids CrossFit gym [CrossFit 616](#) is allowing participants in this tournament to train at the gym at no charge. Four local weightlifting clubs

also are involved to assist in organizing the event, including [West Michigan Barbell Club](#) in Grand Rapids, [West Michigan Muscle](#) in Kalamazoo and [4 Star Strength](#) in Livonia.

Tournament and Ticket Details

The tournament runs all day Friday through Sunday starting at 8 a.m. daily and finishing at 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 8 p.m. Sunday. Athletes compete in three categories – Youth (up to age 17) Open/Senior (all ages) and Masters (35+ years). Three platforms (each holding 9 to 16 athletes) will have sessions running simultaneously, and each session lasts approximately two hours. Two events occur during each session – the Snatch, and the Clean and Jerk. Each athlete is permitted three attempts in each lift. The highest weights successfully lifted by each athlete in each event comprise the athlete’s total score. The athlete with the highest total in each weight category is the overall winner of the competition.

Event tickets are \$10 per day and \$25 for a weekend pass, and they can be purchased online at usaweightlifting.org or in person at the door. For more event information, visit usaweightlifting.org.

NOTE: Media wishing to cover the event should contact Kevin Farley, director of membership, communications & digital marketing for USA Weightlifting, at [707-362-1258](tel:707-362-1258) or Kevin.farley@usaweightlifting.org.

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About the West Michigan Sports Commission

The West Michigan Sports Commission, a non-profit 501 (c) (3), works to identify, secure and host a diverse level of youth and amateur sporting events to make a positive impact on the region’s economy and quality of life. Celebrating 10 years since its inception in 2007, the WMSC has booked 600 sporting events and tournaments that attracted more than 900,000 athletes and visitors, generating \$260 million in direct visitor spending. For more information, visit westmisports.com.

About USA Weightlifting

USA Weightlifting, a member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), is the national governing body for the Olympic sport of Weightlifting in the United States. USA Weightlifting’s mission is to enable U.S. athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence in Olympic competition and to promote and grow the sport of Weightlifting in the United States. For more information, visit USAWeightlifting.org.