



News

(/sports/summer/weightlifting#content)



Lift The World

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/lift-the-world#content)



Development and Education

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/development-programme#content)



Competitions

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/competitions#content)



The Two Lifts

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/the-two-lifts#content)



Past Olympics

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/history#content)



IWF TV and Social Media

(/sports/summer/weightlifting/iwf-tv#content)



IWF World Championships 2017 Medal Table

	Country	●	●	●
	Thailand	5	7	3
	Iran, Islamic Republic Of	5	3	6
	Georgia	5	1	1
	Vietnam	4	2	1

[View full table \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/games/29/medals\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/games/29/medals)

IWF World Championships 2017 Results

Men's over 105kg overall
6 Dec 2017 03:21

Weightlifting Weightlifting

●		Lasha Talakhadze	477kg WR
●		Saeid Alihosseini	454kg
●			



insidethegames.biz
WINNER Best in Sports Media

[View all results \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/games/29/results\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/games/29/results)

Chile unveil the "Lionel Messi" of weightlifting

[Add comment](#)

By Brian Oliver (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/writers/24088/brian-oliver>) at the Anaheim Convention Center

© Monday, 4 December 2017 ()



[insidethegames.biz](https://www.insidethegames.biz)
WINNER Best in Sports Media



For four years Chile's weightlifting federation have known they had somebody very, very special in their midst, a potential world and Olympic champion - if only they could get him a Chilean passport.

Arley Mendez finally got that passport this year "by grace of the state", and on Sunday he showed just how good he is when he became world champion at 85kg in Anaheim, seeing off the challenge of Iran's Kianoush Rostami, the world record holder, Olympic champion and world weightlifter of the year.

"He is the Lionel Messi of weightlifting," said Mendez' coach Giorgi Panchev, the Bulgarian who helped Colombia to become a world power in the sport and is now technical director of the Chilean Weightlifting Federation.

Rostami had both knees strapped and was struggling, but Mendez, who had impressed everybody who saw him in the training hall in Anaheim last week, insisted he would have won regardless of what others did.

"I was feeling so strong, I knew I would win," he told *insidethegames*.

Had he made his final lift of 221kg on Monday Mendez would already have taken one of Rostami's two world records, in the clean and jerk.

"Wait till next year and you will see, the world records will come," he said.

"South American Championships, Pan Americans, World Championships, and world records – that's the plan."

"I'm setting myself up for the Olympics and I will win a medal, but I'm not going to say here and now what colour it might be."

Only in tennis has Chile ever won Olympic gold, doing it twice in 2004 when Nicolas Massu won the singles, and teamed up with Fernando Gonzalez to take the doubles too.

If he sounds arrogant, he is not – just very, very positive, and his positivity is infectious in Chilean weightlifting.



Chile's Arley Mendez celebrates after obtaining the gold medal in the men's 85kg weightlifting event, during the XVIII Bolivarian Games 2017, in Santa Marta, Colombia last month ©Getty Images

Today (Monday) Chile has a good chance of more success, maybe even another gold, when Maria Valdes competes in the women's 90kg.

Mendez, 23, has waited a long time for his chance.

He never returned home after winning for his native Cuba in the Pan American Junior Championships in Santiago in 2013, staying in Chile, where he now has a partner and a son.

He has been competing locally, coaching, and inspiring local lifters.

"Motivation was not a problem because I love this sport, I like to train hard," he said.

He was accepted in non-international events and in early 2016 he won the Chilean national championship with a total of 380kg – 2kg more than he needed to win in Anaheim.

At a press conference in March, when Chile's Olympic Committee backed Mendez' case for citizenship, he demonstrated his prowess by lifting 375kg – no problem.

He competed in the Bolivarian Games in Colombia only 12 days before winning in the United States, winning easily with 382kg but was disqualified after a protest by Venezuela, whose lifter was second.

The rules of the Bolivarian Games are different to those of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), and Mendez had not held his Chilean passport long enough to be eligible.

After that March press conference the Chilean publication El Deportero said of Mendez, "His sports development in Chile has had a very positive influence on our athletes.

"His charisma, professionalism and camaraderie, have elevated him to idol status among his peers.

"His contribution to

Mendez has worked as an adviser with Panchev on recruiting and training youngsters, and when Chile's Chamber of Deputies approved his nationality "by grace" in May they gave special consideration to his "remarkable contribution to the development of sport".

He thanked Chile's International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Neven Ilic for his support, and said his World Championships medal "partially belongs to Giorgi Panchev" because the coach had spent so much time with him since they teamed up "a couple of years ago".

Before Sunday Mendez' best performance on the IWF results database was at the 2013 Junior World Championships, where he finished third with a total of 342kg.

Rostami's world record total is 396kg. Mendez is confident he can take it.



insidethegames.biz
WINNER Best in Sports Media

Related stories

- **December 2017:** Olympic champion Moradi breaks two men's 94kg world records on golden day at 2017 IWF World Championships (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1058705/olympic-champion-moradi-breaks-two-mens-94kg-world-records-on-golden-day-at-2017-iwf-world-championships>)
 - **December 2017:** IOC member Pengilly gives backing to weightlifting retaining Olympic status (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1058706/ioc-member-pengilly-gives-backing-to-weightlifting-retaining-olympic-status>)
 - **December 2017:** World records tumble on day six of 2017 IWF World Championships (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1058704/world-records-tumble-on-day-six-of-2017-iwf-world-championships>)
 - **December 2017:** Mahmoud cruises to men's 77kg title as Maurus ends US's 20-year medal drought at IWF World Championships (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1058665/mahmoud-cruises-to-mens-77kg-title-as-maurus-ends-uss-20-year-medal-drought-at-iwf-world-championships>)
 - **December 2017:** South Korea's Won claims men's 69kg title as home hope Cummings Jr bombs out at 2017 IWF World Championships (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1058620/south-koreas-won-claims-mens-69kg-title-as-home-hope-cummings-jr-bombs-out-at-2017-iwf-world-championships>)
-



About the author

Brian Oliver (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/writers/24088/brian-oliver>)

Follow @brianroliver

232 followers



Brian Oliver, author of "The Commonwealth Games: Extraordinary Stories Behind the Medals", and a former sports editor of The Observer, was weightlifting media manager at London 2012 and Glasgow 2014.

✉ Contact Brian (<mailto:boliver.media@gmail.com>)

👁 Read more of Brian's articles (<https://www.insidethegames.biz/writers/24088/brian-oliver>)

🐦 Follow @brianroliver on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/brianroliver>)



insidethegames.biz
WINNER Best in Sports Media

Tags

[weightlifting \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/504/weightlifting\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/504/weightlifting)

[weightlifting chile \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27152/weightlifting-chile\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27152/weightlifting-chile)

[International Weightlifting Federation \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/187/international-weightlifting-federation\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/187/international-weightlifting-federation)

[South American Weightlifting Confederation \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/9924/south-american-weightlifting-confederation\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/9924/south-american-weightlifting-confederation)

[Arley Mendez \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27153/arley-mendez\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27153/arley-mendez)

[Giorgi Panchev \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27154/giorgi-panchev\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27154/giorgi-panchev)

[Chile Weightlifting \(https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27155/chile-weightlifting\)](https://www.insidethegames.biz/tags/27155/chile-weightlifting)

Share this page

Recommend 9

Tweet



Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Name

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON INSIDETHEGAMES.BIZ

IHF warned it is up to IOC on whether Russian national anthem can be sung at ...

1 comment • 11 hours ago

dsafd asdfasdf — IOC is desperate for a Russian boycott!

Mutko claims Russia will only pay \$15 million fine to IOC if they promise to ...

8 comments • a day ago

PhilOiseaubay — Mutko sounds like a man who has learned nothing. He has not shown one ounce of remorse despite reams of



See our comment guidelines here (</comment-guidelines>)

© Dunsar Media Company Limited

[About us \(/about-us\)](/about-us)

[Contact us \(/contact-us\)](/contact-us)

[Privacy Statement \(/privacy-statement\)](/privacy-statement)

[Acceptable Use Policy \(/acceptable-use-policy\)](/acceptable-use-policy)

[Terms and Conditions \(/terms-and-conditions\)](/terms-and-conditions)



insidethegames.biz
WINNER Best in Sports Media