

2003 European Weightlifting Championships
15-20 April
Loutraki, Greece

PRESS RELEASE

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POLAND TO ATTEND LOUTRAKI 2003 WITH TOP NAMES

Poland attaches special importance to the 2003 European Weightlifting Championships, which begin on 15 April in the spa resort of Loutraki, 80 kilometres west of Athens. This is obvious from the names of the athletes the country has entered in the competition, which include all the best Poland has to show –with the exception of Marcin Dolega and Agata Wrobel (although the latter appears as a substitute).

Szymon Kolecki (formerly Greece's Kakhi Kachiasvilis' major opponent in the 94 kg. category) has moved up to the 105 kg. group. Kolecki holds a 2002 Sydney Olympics silver medal, two European Championships golds in the total from 1999 (when he was just 18 years old) and 2000, silver medals from the 1999 World and 2001 European Championships, and one bronze medal from the 2001 World Championships. Tadeusz Drazazga, who will be competing in the 94 kg. at Loutraki, was 2nd in the 1997 World Championships.

Several of Poland's athletes entered in this year's event have excelled in previous editions of the European Championships. Pawel Najdek (+105 kg.) was 2nd in 2001 and 2002; Mariusz Rytkowski (85 kg.) and Robert Dolega (105 kg.) have won silver medals in 2002 and 2000 respectively; Andrej Kozlowski (77 kg.) and Grzegorz Kleyszcz (+105 kg.) both own European bronze medals from 1999 and 2001 respectively.

Wrobel, in the +75kg at Loutraki, was crowned World Champion last year and also has a silver medal from the 2000 Olympic Games, golds from the 1999 and 2002 European Championships, silvers from the 1999 and 2001 World Championships and a bronze from the 1998 European Championships –at just 18 years of age.

Ashot Danielyan (in the +105 kg. category at Loutraki) is the top name in the five-athlete Armenian delegation. A World Championships medal still eludes him, but he has been crowned a European champion in 1999 and 2000.

Norway will attend the 2003 European Championships with only one athlete –although this is none other than Stian Grimseth (+105 kg.), who had won the bronze medal in the total at the 1997 European Championships. In 1996 he was first in the European Championships in the snatch.

Cyprus will be represented at Loutraki 2003 with two men and one woman. One of Cyprus' men's entrants is former Bulgarian Nayden Rusev, who under his former nationality had won a bronze in the 1998 European Championships; two years earlier he had finished fourth in the same competition. Rusev won a jerk bronze medal in the 1997 World Championships.

Austria has entered one man—the talented Matthias Steiner (in the 105 kg. category), who is 21 years of age and has a personal best of 400 kg. (180 kg. snatch + 220 kg. jerk)—and two women.

Belgium will be coming to Greece with one athlete (the distinguished Tom Goegebuer in the men's 62 kg.). Great Britain has entered five men and two women—with Michaela Breeze (58 kg.) boasting a fifth-place finish at last year's World Championships.

Moldavia will take part in the competition with one woman, while Latvia has entered one man and one woman.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

www.weightlifting.gr/loutraki2003/