



For Immediate Release
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**** MEDIA ADVISORY ****

USABA Athletes to Compete in Benchpress and Powerlifting World Championships
U.S. Blind and Visually Impaired Athletes to take on World in Miami

(Colorado Springs, Colo.) The United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) is proud to announce the 2009 International Blind Sports Association's (IBSA) Benchpress and Powerlifting World Championships will be held in Miami Florida, July 10-11 at the Hyatt Hotel Grand Ballroom.

"We are very pleased to be hosting the IBSA World Bench Press and Powerlifting Championships in Miami, and we are very proud of our great partnership with the sport of Powerlifting at both the national and international levels. We also look forward to the inspirational performances of these remarkable athletes who refuse to let a disability prevent them from competing at a very high level" said **Mike Sophia, the Executive Director of the Miami-Dade Sports Commission.**

Robert Keller, the Technical Chairman for the IBSA and competition director for this year's World Championships remarked by saying "I am quite honored to once again host the IBSA World Bench Press and Powerlifting Championships in Miami this coming July. From my experience last year in directing this event, the sport of Powerlifting can play a very encouraging and vital role in the life of a visually impaired person. Their respective athletic performances were not only remarkable feats of athleticism, but also extremely inspiring moments of some extraordinary courage."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for the USABA athletes to represent the United States at such a prestigious, international event," said Mark Sampson, USABA Powerlifting Head Coach. More than 100 blind and visually impaired athletes from 15 nations are expected to compete.

For more information about the championship, please visit championship website at www.usaplNationals.com/ibsa or contact Robert Keller, the championship director at: rhk@verizon.net

About USABA: *Since its founding in 1976, USABA, a community-based organization of the United States Olympic Committee, has reached thousands of blind individuals. The organization has emerged as more than just a world-class trainer of blind athletes, it has become a champion of the abilities of Americans who are legally blind. USABA's Mission: to enhance the lives of blind and visually impaired people by providing the opportunity for participation in sports and physical activity.*

About Miami Lighthouse for the Blind: Miami Lighthouse for the Blind is Florida's largest and oldest agency serving the blind and visually impaired. In addition to providing free vision care to thousands of financially disadvantaged children each year, Miami Lighthouse helps more than two thousand blind and visually impaired people and their families learn to live safe and independent lives while coping with vision loss. For more information visit: <http://www.miamilighthouse.org>

OUR MISSION: *To provide vision rehabilitation and eye health services that promote independence, to educate professionals, and to conduct research in related fields. Since 1931, transforming lives on the road to independence.*

