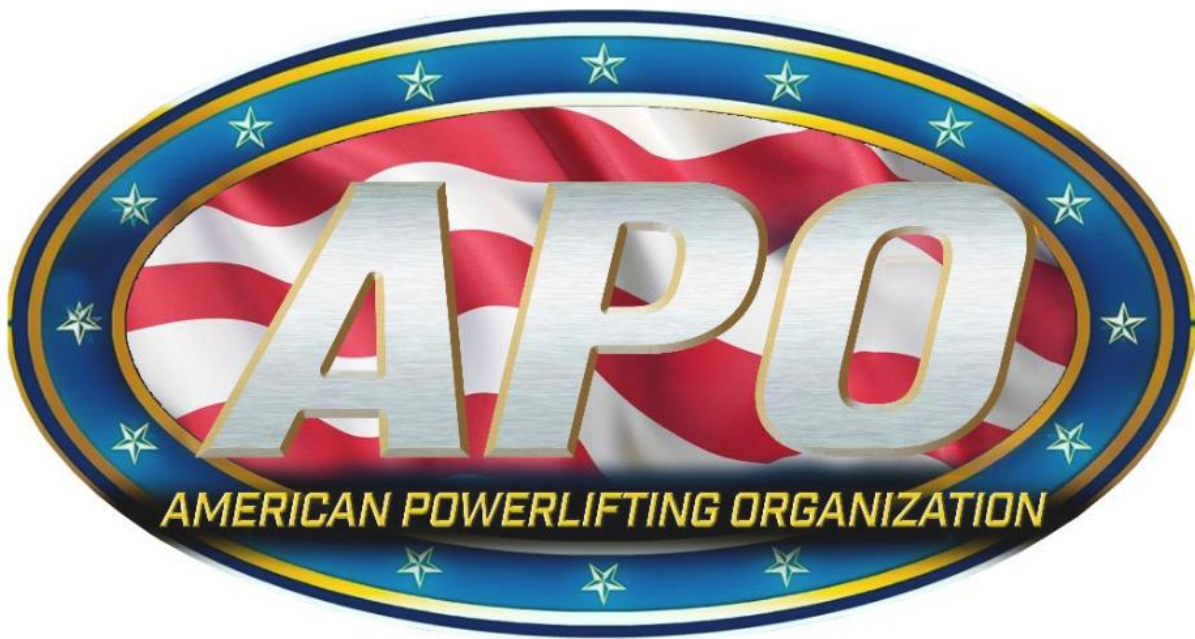


**RULE BOOK**

# **AMERICAN POWERLIFTING ORGANIZATION**

**VERSION 1.9**

**DATE OF ISSUE: 6/10/2024**



## APO General Rules

1. The American Powerlifting Organization (APO) recognizes the following lifts, which must be performed in the designated sequence in all applications conducted under APO rules:
  - a. Squat
  - b. Bench Press
  - c. Deadlift
  - d. Total: The highest total of the best successes of each lift will result in a Total. Winner of the competition will be determined by highest Total.

2. The following divisions are recognized:

Drug tested and non-drug tested versions of the following:

- a. "Multiply" full power (all 3 lifts), and single lift bench press and single lift deadlift
- b. "Single ply" full power, and single lift bench press and single lift deadlift
- c. "Classic raw" full power (using knee sleeves or wraps), single lifts fall under the "Raw" category
- d. "Raw" full power (bare knees), and a single lift bench press and single lift deadlift

Note: A "push/pull" division can be offered at the Meet Directors discretion, but any records are tabulated under the single lift records.

Note: At the Meet Directors discretion, and meet can be offered as "tested only" or "non tested only"

Special Olympics Division, full power, single lift deadlift, single lift bench press

Adaptive Lifting Division, full power, single lift deadlift, single lift bench press

Those competing in the Special Olympics or Adaptive Division may choose to lift Multiply, Single Ply, Classic raw, or Raw. No records will be kept for the Adaptive Division.

3. State records will be kept by the State Directors, and National records will be kept by the APO Secretary.
4. All National competitions under APO rules must be conducted in kilograms. State meets can be held with pounds, see "Equipment Specifications"
5. National Records can be set at State level meets.
6. All records must be broken by the next highest 2.5kg weight, i.e. no "record breaker" chips, see the "Equipment Specifications" section for records using pound plates.
7. Three lift results will not count toward single lift records and vice versa.
8. Fourth attempts are not allowed under any circumstances.
9. Should blood appear on the bar, or open wounds on lifter, it must be rectified immediately. Use 1 part bleach and 1 part water to clean the bar, or an equivalent cleaning liquid or solvent. Wound on the lifter should be cleaned and bandaged per the rules.

## Age Categories

Men and Women:

**Open:** from 13 years upward. Lifters younger than 13 are allowed to lift as a “guest lifter”, but only at the meet director’s discretion.

**Master:**

1. M1: 40 years to and including 44 years of age
2. M2: 45 years to and including 49 years of age
3. M3: 50 years to and including 54 years of age
4. M4: 55 years to and including 59 years of age
5. M5: 60 years to and including 64 years of age
6. M6: 65 years to and including 69 years of age
7. M7: 70 years to and including 74 years of age
8. M8: 75 years to and including 79 years of age
9. M9: 80 years upward

**Sub Master:** from 33 years to and including 39 years of age

**Junior:** from 20 years to and including 23 years of age

**Teenage:**

1. T1: 13 years to and including 15 years of age
2. T2: 16 years to and including 17 years of age
3. T3: 18 years to and including 19 years of age

The lifter must have attained minimum age on day of the competition. A lifter must lift in the open division or in the age group in which he or she is currently in, until they reach the stated upper limit of that category.

## Body weight Categories

Both Men and Women:

- 44.0kg Class up to 44.0kg
- 48.0kg Class from 44.01 to 48.0kg
- 52.0kg Class from 48.01 to 52.0kg
- 56.0kg Class from 52.01 to 56.0kg
- 60.0kg Class from 56.01 to 60.0kg
- 67.5kg Class from 60.01 to 67.5kg
- 75.0kg Class from 67.51 to 75.0kg
- 82.5kg Class from 75.01 to 82.5kg
- 90.0kg Class from 82.51 to 90.0kg
- 100.0kg Class from 90.01 to 100.0kg
- 110.0kg Class from 100.01 to 110.0kg
- 125.0kg Class from 110.01 to 125.0kg

- 140.0kg Class from 125.01 to 140.0kg.
  - 140.0+kg Class from 140.01 to unlimited
1. At all competitions where “Best Lifter Awards” are presented, placing will be established by the Glossbrenner Formula, and the added McCulloch formula for Masters categories. McCulloch to be used at the meet director’s discretion for an overall meet “best lifter.”
  2. Lifters entered in the event must have current federation membership cards secured prior to the event, and present the card, photocopy of the card, or phone picture of card at weigh-ins. Individuals must lift as the sex shown on their birth certificate.

## Equipment Specifications

1. **Platform:** All lifts shall be carried out on a platform not less than 2.46m x 2.46m (8ft x 8ft) and secure enough to ensure the safety of the lifter, spotters, and loaders. The surface of the platform must be firm, nonslip, and level with no discernible seams in the vicinity of the general lifting area. Rubber mats or similar sheeting materials are permitted. Non-stretch substantive short pile carpet is highly recommended to ensure no slipping.

No one is allowed on the platform during lifting sessions except the lifter, the designated spotters, the three referees on duty, and other meet officials as designated if the need arises. Any cleaning, mopping, brushing, or adjusting of the platform, or equipment will be handled solely by these personnel.

2. **Bars and Discs:** For all powerlifting competitions under the rules of the APO, only disc barbells are permitted. Only bars and discs that meet all specifications may be used throughout the entire competition and for all lifts. The use of bars or discs that do not conform to specifications will invalidate any records that may have been accomplished. Different bars suited to particular lifts may be utilized providing that they conform to the specifications.
3. **Bar Specifications** are as follows:
  - a. The bar shall be straight, well knurled, and grooved and shall conform to the following dimensions:
    - i. Squat Bar: Minimum diameter 28mm, maximum diameter of 35mm, maximum overall length of 2650mm (104.3”). Min weight 20kg not including collars, maximum weight 30kg (35 kg including collars). Distance between collars and bar sleeve length is to individual manufacturers specification.
    - ii. Bench Bar: Minimum diameter 28mm, maximum diameter of 32 mm, maximum overall length 2450 mm (96.5”). Minimum weight 20kg not including collars, maximum weight 25 kg (30kg including collars). Distance between collars and bar sleeve length is to individual manufacturers specification.
    - iii. Deadlift Bar: Minimum diameter 27 mm, maximum overall length 2450 mm (96.5”) Weight 20 kg (25 kg including collars). Distance between collars and bar sleeve length is to individual manufacturers specification.

- iv. There shall be a circumferential machine marking so as to measure 81cm between machining areas, to indicate maximum hand placing for bench press.

4. **Discs** shall conform as follows:

- a. All discs used in competition must weigh within 0.25% of their correct face value.
- b. The hole size in the middle of the disc shall be such that the disc fits on the bar without excessive play.
- c. Discs must be of the following range:
  - i. 1.25kg
  - ii. 2.5kg
  - iii. 5kg
  - iv. 10kg
  - v. 15kg
  - vi. 20kg
  - vii. 25kg
  - viii. 50kg
- d. All discs must be clearly marked with their weight and loaded in the sequence of heavier discs innermost with the small discs in descending weight.
- e. The first and heaviest discs loaded on the bar must be loaded face in; with the rest of the discs loaded face out as weight is loaded.
- f. The diameter of the largest disc shall be no more than 45cm.
- g. It is suggested that discs conform to the following color coding:
  - i. 10kg and below – any color;
  - ii. 15kg – yellow;
  - iii. 20kg – blue;
  - iv. 25kg – red;
  - v. 50kg- green or black.
  - vi. Note: 50kg discs are not mandatory if sufficient 25kg disks are available.
- h. Kilogram rubber bumper plates of the same diameter as standard plates may be used if a deadlift attempt is less than 65kg (20kg bar + 2 20kg plates + collars) to give the lifter the standard bar height off the floor.

**Use of pound plates:**

Pound plates may be used if kilogram plates are not available, except in National meets, where pound plates are not allowed, only kilogram plates. They must also be calibrated to +/- 0.25% of actual weight. In the case of using pound plates with kilogram bars, the bar weight shall be rounded down to the nearest 5 pound increment. Example: 30kg squat bar rounds down to 65lbs. In meets where pound plates are used, any attempt to break an APO State or National record (which are in kilograms) shall be rounded down to the nearest 2.5kg. Example A 810 lb squat will be rounded town to 365kg using the conversion factor of 2.204625, as the kilogram conversion is 367.4, just under 367.5 If the record is 365kg, then this attempt will tie, not break, the record. To break a 365kg record, one would have to squat 815lbs, which would round down to 367.5kg.

5. **Collars:** Shall always be used in competition. They can be either metal or plastic, but must securely attach to the bar.
  
6. **Squat Racks:** Squat racks shall be of a sturdy construction and provide maximum stability. The base shall be of such design that it does not impede the lifter or the loaders/spotters. A standard design "monolift" must be on the platform and recommended 1 or 2 in the warmup room depending on the mix of meet competitors. An adjustable rack with a hydraulic mechanism or a non-conventional squat rack can be used in the warmup room, but a "monolift" must be on the platform. All racks must consist of a one piece designed to hold the bar in a horizontal position.
  - a. The design of the squat rack shall allow adjustments that accommodate all lifters. Note: in the event a lifter is too short to properly unrack the bar at the monolift's shortest setting, a temporary platform, provided by the lifter and used only for lifters that need it, may be used.
  - b. Height adjustments should be at incremental stages not exceeding 5cm.
  - c. For extra safety all hydraulic racks should be capable of being secured at the required height by means of pins.
  - d. Safety straps/chains are required with the monolift. They may be moved out of the way for lifters "walking it out" on the platform. It is suggested that they stay in use in the warmup room.
  
7. **Bench:** The bench shall be of sturdy construction for maximum stability and conform to the following dimensions:
  - a. Length – not less than 1250mm (49.2") and shall be flat and level.
  - b. Width – 300 min to 330mm max (11.8" to 13")
  - c. Height – 420 min to 460mm max (16.5" to 18.1") measured from the floor to the top of the padded surface of the bench without being depressed or compacted.
  - d. The height of the uprights on adjustable benches should adjust from a minimum of 800mm (31.5") to a maximum of 1000mm (39.4") measured from the floor to the bar rest position.
  - e. The minimum width between the insides of the bar rests shall be 1100mm (43.3").
  - f. Adjustable safety arms/racks are approved.
  - g. Safety arms of some type on the bench are mandatory.
  
8. **Lights:** A system of lights shall be provided whereby the referees make known their decisions.
  - a. Each referee will control a white and a red light, representing a "good lift" or "no lift" respectively.
  - b. The lights must be configured in such a way that they light up together and not separately when activated by the three referees. It is preferable that the lights be arranged horizontally corresponding with the positions of the three referees.
  - c. For emergency purposes, i.e. a breakdown in the electrical system, the referees should also be provided with small white and red flags with which to make known their decisions, or using thumbs up or down can be used.

## **Costume and Personal Equipment – General for All Divisions**

All articles of lifter's costumes and personal equipment shall be clean, non-frayed, without holes, and generally neat and presentable. At the discretion of the referee, a lifter will not continue in the competition if this provision is not met.

1. A non-supportive lifting suit "singlet" of basic design must be worn, except where a squat or deadlift suit is worn as a substitute. Its construction must consist of a single ply and be a singular component. The straps must be worn over the shoulders at all times while lifting in competition. It may be of any color or colors. The length of the leg, when worn, must not extend beyond midthigh (medial point between crotch and top of knee cap). A squat suit or deadlift suit suffices for this requirement. Underwear may not stick out of the bottom of singlet or briefs.
2. One non-supportive undershirt (of a design consistent with what is commonly called a T-shirt) with or without sleeves, must be worn under the lifting suit on the squat and bench press. The bench shirt suffices for this requirement. It must be an individual article of cloth fabric. Its construction must be single ply. Sleeves must be short and remain above the elbow when worn, but also cover the top of the shoulder. No "tank tops" without sleeves may be worn. It may be of any color or colors but shall not portray indecency or be offensive to the spirit of the competition. A collared shirt may also be worn if it complies with the above requirements.
3. Plasters/Tape: With the inspection by the meet judges, the lifter may apply spot plasters, bandages, tape or band aids to visible injuries on the body. They cannot be used as preventative measures. One rotation around a finger, no rotation around the hand or other limb. Stretchy "KT" tape is not allowed on any part of the body.
4. Special Considerations Men and Women may wear additional protective underwear. Women may also wear a bra provided it contains no special support.

## **Costume and Personal Equipment – Multi-Ply**

1. **Lifting Suit – Multi Ply Division** (see separate rules for single ply and raw)
  - a. A lifting suit of the basic design must be worn.
  - b. It must be an individual full-length article of cloth fabric, polyester, denim or canvas. Its construction may consist of multiple plies to any thickness but must, as a whole, be a singular component.
  - c. The straps must be worn over the shoulders at all times while lifting in competition. Velcro straps are approved.
  - d. It may be of any color or colors, with or without logo, if a logo is presented, it must be of a non-offensive nature at the discretion of the Meet Director.
  - e. The length of the leg, when worn, must not extend beyond mid-thigh (medial point between crotch and top of kneecap).
  - f. The use of zippers are not permitted.

- g. Self-adjusting suits may use velcro or lacing but must be tucked or concealed so that they don't hang or dangle in a distracting manner to the judges.
- h. Rubber material, cords or bands or other energy absorbing and rebounding materials are not permitted.

**2. Bench Shirt Multi Ply Division** (see separate rules for single ply and raw)

- a. One bench shirt with sleeves may be worn under the lifting suit.
- b. It must be an individual article of cloth fabric, polyester, denim, or canvas. It may not contain any elastic energy absorbing/releasing material.
- c. Its construction may consist of multiple plies but must be a singular component.
- d. Sleeves must be short and remain above the elbow when worn and must cover the armpits when the bar is in the lifter's hands.
- e. Velcro or open back is permitted.
- f. It may be of any color or colors but shall not portray indecency or be offensive to the spirit of the competition.
- g. A combination of undershirt and bench shirt are not permitted.
- h. Rubber material, cords or bands or other energy absorbing and rebounding materials are not permitted.

**3. Briefs Multi Ply Division** (see separate rules for single ply and raw)

- a. A pair of briefs of any design may be worn, provided that the length of the legs does not exceed mid-thigh, and that the waist does not extend beyond approximately bottom of sternum.
- b. The briefs must be an individual article of cloth fabric.
- c. The construction may consist of multiple plies to any thickness but must be a singular component.
- d. Athletic supporters or standard non supportive boxer or "Under Armor" type underwear are permitted under the briefs.
- e. Rubber material, cords or bands or other energy absorbing and rebounding materials are not permitted.

**4. Socks** Only one pair of socks may be worn.

- a. When worn they may not extend over the knee nor on the leg so that they touch any knee wrapping or kneecap supporter.
- b. Full length leg stockings, tights, or hose are not permitted.
- c. Socks, tape, or plastic shin guards are required on the deadlift to cover the shin, up close to underneath of the knee cap.
- d. Plastic or fabric shin guards may be worn but must not extend to a point higher than the lower border of the patella and not lower than the superior border of the ankle joint.



**5. Belt** A competitor may wear a belt.

- a. If worn, it shall be on the outside of the lifting suit.
- b. Materials and Construction:
  - i. The main body shall be made of leather in one or more laminations which may be glued and/or stitched together, or of cloth, vinyl, or nylon with no metal materials allowed in belt except as noted below.
  - ii. It shall not have any additional padding, bracing, or supports of any material either on the surface or concealed within the laminations of the belt.
  - iii. A metal buckle, studs, and stitching are the only non-leather components permitted. The buckle shall be attached at one end of the belt by means of studs and/or stitching. The belt shall not have any inflatable component on or within any of its surfaces.
  - iv. A leather, cloth, vinyl, or nylon tongue loop shall be attached close to the buckle by means of studs and/or stitching.
  - v. The lifter's name, the name of the lifter's nation, state or club may appear on the outside of the belt.
  - vi. A one or two prong buckle as well as the "lever action" fastening device may be used.
  - vii. A velcro closure is allowed.
- c. Dimensions:
  - i. Width of belt to be a maximum of 10cm.
  - ii. Thickness of belt to be a maximum of 13mm along the main length.

9. **Footwear:** Something more substantial than basic socks must be worn. The only restrictions to such footwear is that no metal cleats or spikes are permitted. Open toed sandals, and/or "Crocs" may not be used. Lifter may not lift barefoot. Which may include boots, sport shoes, gymnastic slippers or any foot covering that covers the entire foot and heel that has a rigid or semi-rigid insole or sole.

10. **Wraps:** The fabric nature shall be an elastic weave primarily of polyester or cotton, in any combination. Wraps may be used as follows: Wrists – Wraps not exceeding 1m in length and 10cm in width may be worn.

- a. If wrist bands are of the wrap-around style, they may have a thumb loop, not to be attached during lift, and Velcro patch for securing them.
- b. A wrist wrap shall not exceed beyond 10cm above and 2-1/2cm below the center of the wrist joint, not exceeding a total of 12cm in both directions.
- c. Knees – Wraps not exceeding 3m in length and 10cm in width may be worn.
  - i. Alternatively, knee sleeves of a single ply of any type material, not exceeding 30cm in length, may be worn
    - i. A combination of multiple materials is not permitted.
    - ii. A knee wrap shall not extend beyond 15cm above and 15cm below the center of the joint, not exceeding a total of 30cm in both directions.
    - iii. Knee wraps shall not touch the socks or lifting suits.
    - iv. Knee sleeves may not be worn around the ankles with wraps on the knees.

- d. Elbows – Rubber or cloth sleeves may be worn only during the Squat and Deadlift competition but not during the bench press.
  - i. They may cover the general elbow area but not extend to the wrist or shoulder.
  - ii. They may be supportive sleeves of rubberized material or elastic wrap, but must be of one single unit only, with no Velcro closures.

## **Costume and Personal Equipment – Single Ply**

All equipment must be presentable and clean with no frayed material. Rubber material, cords or bands or other energy absorbing and rebounding materials are not permitted for any single ply equipment.

**Lifting Suit:** A lifting suit of basic design must be worn. Its construction must consist of single ply polyester and be a singular component. The straps must be worn over the shoulders at all times while lifting in competition. Velcro is not permitted. It may be of any color or colors. The length of the leg, when worn, must not extend beyond mid-thigh (medial point between crotch and top of knee cap). Leotards with sleeves or high cut leg lines are not permitted.

**Bench Shirt:** One bench shirt with sleeves may be worn under the lifting suit. It must be an individual article of polyester fabric, one ply fabric, and not laminated. Sleeves must be short and remain above the elbow when worn and must cover the armpits. Velcro or open back are permitted. It may be of any color or colors but shall not portray indecency or be offensive to the spirit of the competition. A combination of undershirt and bench shirt are not permitted.

**Briefs:** A pair of briefs may be worn, provided that the length of the legs does not exceed midthigh, and that the waist does not extend beyond bottom of the sternum. The briefs must be an individual article of polyester cloth fabric. Athletic supporters or standard underwear are permitted under the briefs.

**Belt:** Same as Multi-Ply.

**Socks:** Same as Multi-Ply

**Footwear:** Same as Multi-Ply

**Wraps:** Same as Multi-Ply

## **Costume and Personal Equipment – Classic Raw**

The costume and personal equipment for Classic Raw is the same the General rules, and follows Multiply for belt, socks, footwear and wraps.

## **Costume and Personal Equipment – Raw**

The costume and personal equipment for Classic Raw is the same the General rules, and follows Multiply for belt, socks, footwear. Wrist wraps are allowed per Multiply, except no sleeves or wraps are allowed on knees/legs, or elbows, for any lift.

### **Inspection of Costume and Personal Equipment**

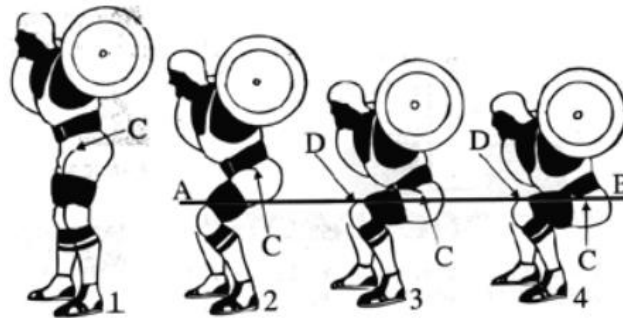
1. At all competitions there will be no official inspection of costume and personal equipment prior to lifting.
2. It will be the lifters responsibility to be present on the platform outfitted in accordance with the rules governing costume and personal equipment.
3. Any items mentioned previously under costume and personal equipment may be inspected prior to the competition if the lifter has any doubt as to the legality of that item. Such inspections should be requested during the weigh-in sessions and directed to one of the APO referees present, not an uncertified, but appointed weigh-in official. Such inspections may also be made at any time prior to lifting or upon leaving the platform by one of the appointed APO Referees. Any conjecture or doubt about the legality of any such items shall be referred to the appointed APO Referee.
4. Items of personal attire not covered in the rules governing costumes and personal equipment such as: Headbands, mouthpieces, ribbons, watches, jewelry, eyewear, and feminine hygiene articles are permitted. However, hats, bandanas, beanies, or skullcaps worn as to cover the head as a hat are not permitted to be worn on the platform, unless announced they are acceptable by the meet director in the pre-contest rules meeting.
5. Any items worn on the platform considered objectionable by virtue of being unclean, torn or tattered, indecent, or offensive to the spirit of the competition shall be rejected before the lifter is permitted to proceed.
6. If a lifter performs on the platform wearing or using any item that is illegal or not verifiably approved, the lifter shall lose credit for that lift, and at the discretion of the APO Referees, may be disqualified from the competition. Any minor oversights, or items covered in (5) above, noticed before the lifter performs, should be indicated to the lifter and rectified prior to continuing.
7. Any lifter performing on the platform may be inspected before or after a lift if any of the referees doubt the legality of the costume or personal equipment being used.
8. Any lifter successful in a record attempt must be inspected. Inspection may be solely visual when the legality of the lifter's costume and personal equipment is obvious, or otherwise more thorough. Thorough inspections should be performed off the platform, preferably in a private area, either by the three referees, or officials delegated by the referees in cases where the lifter is of the opposite sex. In all cases, an announcement shall be made by the head referee to the speaker and records processor that the record has been verified.

9. General

- a. The use of oil, grease, or other lubricants and liquids on the body, costume, or personal equipment to aid in the execution of a lift is not permitted. This does not preclude the advanced therapeutic use of liniments or rubs. However, such items must not be in evidence during platform attempts. Only powder may be used.
- b. Powder includes chalk, talc, resin, and magnesium carbonate. Spray stickum may not be used either on the equipment, or on the lifter.
- c. Nothing may be purposely applied to the platform, bench, or bars.

### Powerlifts and Rules of Performance Squat

1. After removing the bar from the racks while facing the front of the platform, the lifter may move forward or backward to establish the lifting position. The top of the bar may not be more than 3cm below the top of the anterior deltoids. The bar shall be held horizontally across the shoulders with the hands and/or fingers gripping the bar, and the feet flat upon the platform with the knees locked.
2. The lifter shall wait in this position for the head referee's signal. The signal will be given as soon as the lifter is set and demonstrates control with the bar properly positioned. The head referee's signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and audible command "Squat".
3. Upon receiving the head referee's signal, the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint (the "hip crease") (C) are lower than the top of knees (D) This is represented by the line A-B.. See Diagram below.



4. The lifter must recover at will, without double bouncing, to an upright position with the knees locked. The bar may stop, but there must be no downward motion during recovery. As soon as the lifter demonstrates a controlled final position with knees locked, the head referee will give the signal indicating completion of the lift and to replace the bar.
5. The signal to replace the bar will consist of a backward motion of the arm and the audible command "Rack". The lifter must then make a bona fide attempt to return the bar to the racks.
6. The lifter shall face the front of the platform, towards the head referee.
7. The lifter shall not hold the collars or discs at any time during the performance of the lift. However, the edge of the hands gripping the bar may be in contact with the inner surface of the collar.
8. Not more than five and not less than three loaders/spotters shall be on the platform at any time. The head referee may, at their discretion for lifter safety, in addition to or instead of Meet

Promoter designated loaders/spotters, designate additional loaders/spotters, providing the maximum of five is not exceeded. Only designated spotters may remain on the platform during the lift. A non-designated person may go onto the platform to center the lifter but must then leave.

9. The lifter may enlist the help of spotters in removing the bar from the racks; however, once the bar has cleared the racks, the spotters shall not physically assist the lifter with regards to actually getting into the proper set position. The spotters may assist the lifter to maintain control should the lifter stumble or demonstrate any evident instability.
10. The lifter will be allowed only one commencement signal per attempt. After 60 seconds has expired from the time "bar is loaded" is called, the lift will be voided if the squat command has not yet been given.
11. The lifter may be given an additional attempt at the same weight at the head referee's discretion if failure in an attempt was due to any error by one or more of the spotters.
12. No "tapping" from the judge or any other method to signal depth is allowed.

### **Causes for Disqualification of a Squat**

1. Failure to observe the head referee's signals at the commencement or completion of a lift.
2. Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift.
3. Failure to assume an upright position with knees locked at the commencement and completion of the lift.
4. Movement of the feet laterally, backward, or forward that would constitute a step or stumble.
5. Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the surface of the legs at the hip crease are lower than the tops of the knees.
6. Any resetting of the feet after the squat signal.
7. Contact with the bar by the spotters between the referee's signals.
8. Contact of elbows or upper arms with the legs.
9. Failure to make a bona fide attempt to return the bar to the racks.
10. Any intentional dropping or dumping of the bar.
11. Failure to receive the squat command within 60 seconds of the "bar is loaded" call.

### **Aspects of the set up for the squat regarded as faults are as follows:**

1. Holding the collars or discs.
2. Failure to assume an upright position.
3. Failure to have knees locked.
4. Top of the bar more than 3cm below the top of the anterior deltoids.

## Powerlifts and Rules of Performance for Bench Press

1. The front of the bench may be placed in any orientation on the platform, at the Meet Director's discretion.
2. The lifter must lie backward with shoulders and buttocks in contact with the flat bench surface. The lifter's shoes or toes must be in solid contact with the platform or surface. The position of the head is optional. Buttocks need only be in contact with the bench at the time of the "press" command.
3. To achieve firm footing, a lifter of any height may use discs or blocks to build up the surface of the platform. Whichever method is chosen, the shoes must be in solid contact with the surface. If blocks are used, they shall not exceed 45cm x 45cm. Blocks can be of any height, supplied by the lifter.
4. Not more than five and not less than two loaders/spotters shall be in attendance. The head referee may, at their discretion for lifter safety, in addition to or instead of Meet Promoter designated loaders/spotters, designate additional loaders/spotters (a "three-person handoff"), providing the maximum of five is not exceeded. The lifter may enlist the help of one or more of the designated spotters or enlist a personal spotter in removing the bar from the racks. The handoff people on the sides must stay for the full completion of the lift. The handoff person can stay close as part of a 3 person handoff, but in no circumstances will they be allowed to lean over the lifter during the performance of the lift. A fourth person may not go on the platform to pull down the shirt and/or belt of a geared lifter, that should be done by the handoff person or one of the side spotters.
5. The lift off must be to arm's length with elbows locked to the extent possible, and not immediately down to the chest ("soft handoff"). A designated spotter, having provided a center lift off, must immediately clear the area in front of the head referee and move to either side of the bar, or off the platform completely at the head judge's discretion. The handoff person may not "lean over" the bar and lifter to spot. If the personal spotter in any way distracts or impedes the head referee's responsibilities, the referees may determine that the lift is unacceptable, be declared "no lift" by the referees, and given three red lights.
6. The spacing of the hands shall not exceed 81cm, measured between the forefingers. The bar shall have circumferential machine markings or tape indicating this maximum grip allowance. If the lifter should use an offset or unequal grip on the bar, whereby one hand is placed outside the marking or tape, it is the lifter's responsibility to explain this to the head referee and allow inspection of the intended grip prior to making an attempt. If this is not done until the lifter is on the platform for an official attempt, any necessary explanation and/or measurements will be done on the lifter's time for that attempt. The reverse or underhand grip is permitted.
7. After receiving the bar at arm's length with elbows locked to the extent possible, the lifter shall lower the bar to the chest and await the head referee's signal.
8. The signal shall be an audible, loud, and sharp command "Press" and given as soon as the bar is motionless in all directions on the chest. As long as the bar is not so low that it touches the lifter's belt, it is acceptable.
9. The lifter will be allowed only one commencement signal per attempt. The lifter must receive the "press" command before the 60 seconds time elapses from the call of "bar's loaded."
10. After the signal to commence the lift has been given, the bar is pressed upward. The bar shall not be allowed to sink into the chest or move downwards after the "press" command and prior

to the lifter's attempt to press upward. The lifter will press the bar to straight arm's length and hold motionless until the audible command "Rack" is given. The bar may move horizontally and may stop during the ascent but may not move downward towards the chest.

### **Causes for Disqualification of a Bench Press**

1. Failure to observe the referee's signals at the commencement or completion of the lift.
2. Any change in the elected position that results in the buttocks breaking contact with the bench, or lateral movement of the hands (between the referee's signals). Any excessive movement or change of contact of the feet during the lift proper.
3. Bouncing the bar off the chest.
4. Allowing the bar to sink into the chest after receiving the referee's signal. Note, sinking into the chest is allowed prior to the "press" command. It is suggested that the lifter explain to the judges this will occur to avoid any misunderstanding of intent.
5. Pronounced uneven extension of the arms during or at the completion of the lift.
6. Any downward motion of the bar while being pressed out.
7. Contact with the bar by the spotters between the referee's signals. If this is deemed to be in error, the lifter can choose to take the attempt over at the end of the flight.
8. Any contact of the lifter's shoes with the bench or its supports.
9. Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rest uprights during the lift to assist the completion of the press.

### **The aspects of the set up for the Bench Press that should be regarded as faults are as follows:**

1. Hand spacing exceeding 81cm.
2. Not receiving the bar handout at arm's length with elbows locked to the extent possible.

### **Aspects of the set up for the Bench Press that, if maintained beyond the referee's signal, will be regarded as faults are as follows:**

1. The lifter's shoes are not in contact with the platform or the surface of any discs/blocks that may have been requested.
2. Contact of the lifter's shoes with the bench or its supports.
3. Buttocks not in contact with the flat surface of the bench at the time of the "Press" command.

### **Powerlifts and Rules of Performance Deadlift**

1. The bar must be laid horizontally in front of the lifter's feet, gripped with an optional grip in both hands, and lifted until the lifter is standing erect. The bar may stop but there must be no downward motion of the bar.
2. The lifter shall face the front of the platform.
3. On completion of the lift, the knees shall be locked in a straight position, and the lifter shall be standing erect.

4. The head referee's signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command "Down". The signal will not be given until the bar is held motionless and the lifter is in an apparent finished position.
5. Any raising of the bar or any deliberate attempt to do so will count as an attempt. This includes pulling the slack out of the bar in a way that the plates leave the ground.

### **Causes of Disqualification of a Deadlift**

1. Any downward motion of the bar before it reaches the final position.
2. Failure to stand erect.
3. Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.
4. Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. 'Supporting' is defined as a body position adopted by the lifter that could not be maintained without the counterbalance of the weight being lifted.
5. Movement of the feet laterally, backward or forward that would constitute a step or stumble.
6. Lowering the bar before receiving the head referee's signal.
7. Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands. Slamming the bar down while still holding on with both hands is not "control" and will result in a "no lift".

### **Weigh-In:**

1. Weigh-in of the competitors shall be initiated 24 hours before the start of the competition for a particular category. There shall be another evening weigh-in session. These two weigh-in sessions are mandatory. Additional interim weigh-in sessions may be provided at the discretion and agreement of the competition organizer and appointed APO Referees. All weigh-in sessions and their durations must be posted and communicated to all lifters and coaches.
2. All lifters in the category must weigh-in during one of the mandatory or additional (if provided) weigh-in sessions, which will be carried out under the authority of an APO referee, Meet Director, or Meet Director designate.
3. The weigh-ins must be in a private area, where only the competitor, the competitor's coach, coach appointee, or manager, and the referees or appointed officials are present. The lifter's recorded body weight must not be made public until all lifters competing in that particular category have been weighed.
4. Lifters generally must be weighed nude or in standard underwear (briefs for men, bra and panties for women). Stripping completely naked is allowed, providing the lifter is comfortable with the presence of the weigh-in official. The weigh-in procedure must ensure that lifters are weighed only in the presence of their own sex if so requested by the lifter. Additional officials may be appointed for this purpose.
5. During the weigh-in sessions, lifters uncertain about items of costume or personal equipment that may be used should have items inspected and verified by the APO referees.



6. A signup sheet or clear queue line of some sort must be used to establish the order of the initial weigh-in. The weigh-in order will also establish the order of the lifting throughout the competition when lifters require the same weights for their attempts.
7. Lifters trying to make weight may be reweighed as often as they wish within the allowances of time and the posted weigh-in schedule.
8. Official body weights shall be recorded to the nearest tenth of a kilogram.
9. In cases where inclement weather and/or hazardous conditions exist in the area of the venue, extension of weigh-in time shall be determined upon the discretion of the technical officer or appointed APO Referee or Meet Director.
10. If two lifters register the same body weight at the weigh-in and eventually achieve the same total at the end of the competition, they will be re-weighed and the lighter person will take precedence over the heavier person. However, if they still weigh the same after re-weighing, they will share the placing, and each receive any award that is being presented. In such circumstances, should two lifters be in first place, the next lifter shall be placed third and so forth.
11. Lifters should, if required, check Squat and Bench Press rack heights and foot block requirements during these periods prior to the start of the competition. Additionally, the first attempts will be required of the lifters at the time of weigh-in, written down by the lifter or their coach in kilograms.
12. Minors under that age of 18 must be weighed-in with the presence of a parent or adult of the minor's choosing as a witness.

## **Order of Competition**

1. The "Round System"
  - a. At the weigh-in, the lifter must declare a first attempt for all three lifts.
  - b. 20 or less lifters may lift in one Flight. They can be divided into two flights, though one Flight is preferable. Over 20 lifters must be split into appropriate Flights. Decisions on such divisions shall be made by the appointed Meet Director. Wherever possible, lifters in the same body weight category should all compete in the same Flight. Flights should be classified 'A', 'B', 'C', etc. Flight 'A' will normally consist of lifters in one body weight category. Flight 'B' the next higher body weight category and so on. Should the amount of lifters in any particular category necessitate that category being split into more than one Flight, then the first Flight should consist of lifters with lower totals than the second Flight and so on, based on previous best total results. Competitions combining men and women lifters may make different determinations. Where there are multiple Flights, Flight 'A' will complete all three rounds of the Squat (all three attempts), then Flight 'B' will make all three rounds of the Squat, and so on, repeating the same process for the Bench Press and Dead lift.

Three unsuccessful attempts in any lift will automatically eliminate the lifter from the competition. Lifters will be permitted to re-enter the meet as a guest lifter at the discretion of the Meet Director. In no way will a subsequent lift count as any kind of a record. In the

event that the number of lifters in a flight drops to ten or less, there will be an automatic 5 minute rest following the completion of all first attempts.

- c. All lifters will take their first attempt in the first round, their second attempt in the second round, and their third attempt in the third round.
- d. The bar must be loaded progressively during a round on the principle of a rising bar. At no time will the bar be reduced within a round except for errors as described herein, and then only at the end of the round.
- e. Lifting order in each round will be determined by the lifter's choice of weight per attempt. On the occasion of two lifters choosing the same weight, the lifter with the earliest weigh-in order will lift first.
- f. A lifter will not be allowed to call for a weight lower than that attempted in the previous round.
- g. All attempts taken over due to a scorekeeper's error, loaders or spotter's error, or for any other reason, except failure for the lifter to be announced, will occur at the end of the round in which the error occurred, regardless of the progressive advancement of the bar. If such an error occurs to the last lifter in the round, the error will be corrected immediately, and the lifter will be given the opportunity to take the attempt over within four minutes of the bar being loaded. Four minutes is from the end of the last lift until the call of "bar is loaded". Also, if such an error occurs to the first lifter in a round and the attempt is repeated at the end of the round with the lifter again the first lifter in the next round, four minutes will be allowed between the repeated attempt at the end of the round and the next attempt by the same lifter at the beginning of the following round. These are two of the rare occasions when lifters will follow themselves.
- h. A lifter is permitted one change of weight on the first attempt of each lift. If the lifter is in the first Flight to lift, this change may take place at any time up to five minutes before the start of the first round of that lift. Lifters in following Flights are accorded the same privilege up to five attempts from the end of the previous Flight's final round. Prior notice of these deadlines will be announced by the speaker. Oversights in making these announcements should not be at the jeopardy of the lifter. The three platform APO Referees shall rule on such discrepancies that arise.
- i. Lifters must submit their second or third attempts within one minute of completing the preceding attempt. If no weight is submitted within the one-minute time allowance, the lifter will forfeit the next round attempt.
- j. Weights submitted for second and third attempts on the Squat and Bench Press cannot be changed.
- k. In the Deadlift, change of weight is permitted. The lifter may not change an attempt if the bar has been called as "ready" or "loaded". On second attempts, the lifter shall be allowed one change in weight, and on third attempts, the lifter shall be allowed two changes in weight if the bar has not been called as "ready" or "loaded". In no cases will an attempt request be less than a previous attempt request.
- l. In single lift meets, an opening attempt may be changed up to five minutes prior to the start of that lifter's flight. Third attempts may be changed as many times as the lifter desires, as long as his or her name has not been called to lift.

- m. When there is more than one Flight in a session (two platforms), the lifting will be organized on an alternating Flight basis. Consequently, a time interval between flights is not required other than the time necessary for arranging the platform.

**The competition Organizing Committee or Meet Director will appoint the following officials:**

1. Speaker-Announcer
2. Time Keeper (Preferably a APO referee). The head judge for the lift can be the Time Keeper if the clock is easily visible. The Scorers can be the Time Keeper if designated by the Meet Director.
3. Marshal/Expeditors, needed at the discretion of the Meet Director
4. Scorers, to record lift completions and next attempts.
5. Records Processor, should be identified who this is during the rules briefing.
6. Loaders/Spotters

**Responsibilities of these officials are:**

1. The Speaker is responsible for the efficient running of the competition and acts as Master of Ceremonies. Additionally, the speaker announces, in order, the three lifters succeeding the lifter on 'deck'. When the bar is loaded and the platform cleared for lifting, the head referee will indicate the fact to the speaker, who will in turn announce that the bar is ready and call the lifter to the platform. Attempts announced by the speaker should ideally be displayed upon some type of scoreboard erected in a prominent position. The speaker is also responsible for announcing the deadlines that pertain to the 'Round System' – the approach of the time limit for changing first attempts, 5 minutes before the commencement of a first Flight, 5 attempts before the commencement of a following Flight.
2. The Time Keeper is responsible for accurately recording the time lapse between the announcement that the bar is ready and the referee's signal for the commencement of the attempt by the lifter. The Time Keeper is also responsible for recording other time allowances whenever required, e.g. after an attempt the lifter shall leave the platform within 30 seconds (Refer to item 8. (i), this section). The lifter is allowed one minute in which to start the attempt after being called to the platform. If he/she does not start the attempt within this time allowance, the Time Keeper will call time and the center referee shall give the audible command "rack" or "down" depending on the lift. The lift will be declared "no lift" and the attempt forfeited. When the lifter starts the lift within the prescribed time allowance, the clock will be stopped. Once the clock is running for an attempt, it can only be stopped by the completion of the time allowance, the start of the lift, or at the discretion of the head referee who shall inform the Time Keeper immediately. Consequently, it is of great importance that the lifter or lifter's coach check the height of the squat racks and any bench pressing requirements, if details have not previously been collected, prior to being called, as once the bar is announced as being ready, the clock will be started. Any further adjustments to the equipment must be made within the lifter's one minute allowance. The definition of the start of an attempt depends upon particular lift being performed. In the Squat and Bench Press, the start coincides with the referee's commencement signal ("squat" or "press"). In the Deadlift, the start is when the lifter makes a determined attempt to raise the bar. It is the Time Keeper's duty to stop the clock at these

defined starts so that any buzzer that may be connected to the timing device will not distract the lifter.

3. Marshals/Expeditors, if used, are responsible for collecting the weight required for next attempts from the lifters or their coaches and passing the information without delay to scorer's table and speaker. The lifter is allowed one minute between completion of one attempt and submitting to the marshal/expeditor the weight required for the next attempt.
4. Scorers and/or computer operators are responsible for accurately recording the progress of the competition, and on completion, ensuring that the three referees sign the official score sheets.
5. The Records Processor is specifically accountable for being the repository and handling the forms for all records broken. Lifters are responsible for filling out their own record forms.
6. Loaders/Spotters are responsible for loading and unloading the bar, adjusting squat or bench rack requirements as necessary, cleaning the bar or platform as necessary and with agreement of the head referee, and generally ensuring that the platform is well maintained and of a neat and tidy appearance at all times. At no time shall there be less than three or more than five loaders/spotters attending to the platform.
  - a. When the lifter prepares for an attempt, the loaders/spotters may assist in removing the bar from the racks. They may also assist in setting up for a squat should the lifter stumble or lack good control, and in replacing the bar after the attempt. However, they shall not touch the lifter or the bar during the actual attempt. The important exception for the spotters to this rule is if the lifter has obviously failed with the attempt, is in jeopardy of injury, or the head referee or lifter has requested intervention, then the spotters should assume control of the bar and weights and assist the lifter in replacing the bar back on the racks.

## **Meet Procedures**

1. During a competition taking place on a platform or stage, only the lifter, the lifter's coach, the three referees on duty, other meet officials recognized by need, and the loaders/spotters will be allowed around the platform or stage. During the execution of a lift, only the lifter, designated loaders/spotters, and the three referees on duty are permitted to be present on the platform. Coaches shall remain back from the platform, behind the judges at the judges discretion. A coaching area should be defined by the appointed APO Referees. Personal, non-designated spotters are not permitted on the platform for the Squat or Deadlift. One personal non-designated spotter is permitted to lift-off on the Bench Press, this person must stay to spot the lift at the Head Judges discretion.
2. Lifters shall wrap and ready themselves for lifting off the platform. Only minor adjustments requiring no assistance may be made on the platform. Likewise, removing wraps, belts, and costume shall be performed off the platform. Items such as chalk, inhalants, talc, etc. should be used off the platform.
3. In competitions under APO jurisdiction, the weights used must be in kilograms, and the barbell must always be a multiple of 2.5kg. The weights shall be announced in kilograms and may,

additionally, be announced in pounds. See “Equipment Performance” section for usage of pound plates.

4. In all competitions the weight of the barbell shall consist of the heaviest discs available that make up a particular weight.
5. The head referee shall communicate all decisions taken in cases of loading errors, incorrect announcements, spotter errors, or other platform altercations to the speaker to make the appropriate announcement. Such decisions shall be first discussed with the other platform referees.
  - a. **Examples of Errors in Loading:**
    - i. If the bar is loaded to a lighter weight than originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter may accept the successful attempt at the weight lifted or elect to take the attempt again at the originally requested weight. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the originally requested weight.
    - ii. If the bar is loaded to a heavier weight than originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter will be granted the attempt at the weight lifted. The weight will be subsequently reduced if required for other lifters. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the originally requested weight.
    - iii. If the weight is not the same on each side of the bar and the lift is successful, rules for overloaded and underloaded bars, as above apply. However, if the attempt is credited to the lifter, and the weight of the bar lifted is not a multiple of 2.5kg (ie, a 1.25kg plate was on one side only) the weight will be recorded at the lower multiple of 2.5kg. If the lift was unsuccessful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the weight originally requested.
    - iv. If any change occurs with the bar and discs during the execution of the lift and the lift is successful, provided no weight fell off the bar, the attempt will be accepted. If the attempt is unsuccessful, or weights fell off, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the same weight.
    - v. Should the platform or equipment become disarranged during an attempt and the attempt is successful, the attempt will be accepted. If the attempt is unsuccessful, the lifter may be granted a further attempt at the same weight, at the discretion of the referees on duty.
    - vi. If the speaker makes a mistake by announcing a weight heavier or lighter than that requested by the lifter, the referees will make the same decisions as for loading errors.
    - vii. All attempts that are repeated for the above reasons will be at the end of the round in which the error occurred.
    - viii. If a lifter misses an attempt because the speaker failed to announce the lifters’ name at the appropriate time or weight, the weight will then be reduced to allow the attempt within the round. Should this discovery disrupt the anticipation of any preparing lifters, such lifters may be granted extra time in which to prepare again, this shall be at the discretion of the referee on duty.
6. The minimum increase between any attempts shall be 2.5kg.

7. Three unsuccessful attempts in any lift will automatically eliminate the lifter from the competition.
8. Other than initial removal of the bar from the racks, the lifter should not receive any additional help from the spotters in establishing position for an attempt. However, should a lifter stumble or become unstable in setting up for the Squat, the spotters should assist in steadying the lifter until control has been regained.
9. On the completion of an attempt, the lifter shall leave the platform within thirty seconds. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disqualification of the attempt at the discretion of the referees.
10. Any physical abnormality, handicap, or incapacity of a lifter that may cause, or potentially cause, an inability to fully comply with the rules should be brought to the attention of, and explained to, the appointed APO Referees. This should be in advance of the start of the lifter's Flight and again at with each lifting attempt. The lifter and the APO platform referees for the particular lift will then confer on the matter to best accommodate any special considerations for the lifter. Deafness, blindness, limb or joint abnormalities that prevent proper straightening or extension, are examples of such special considerations. See the section below about Adaptive Lifting Rules for additional guidelines. Note that deafness or blindness do not qualify for the Adaptive Division.
11. If, by reason of misconduct upon or near the competition platform, any lifter or coach is considered to have discredited the sport, such person or persons shall officially be warned. If the misconduct continues, the appointed APO Referees, together with the referees on duty, have the authority to disqualify the lifter and order the coach and the lifter to leave the venue. The team manager must be officially informed of both warning and disqualification. Excessive "psyching up" techniques (i.e. swearing, hitting) shall not be allowed.
12. All appeals against the referee's decisions or conduct, complaints regarding the progress of the competition, or against the behavior of any person or persons taking part in the competition will be made to the appointed APO Referees. This must be done immediately following the action of which there is a complaint or appeal. At the calling of "bar is loaded" for the next lift, an objection cannot further be pursued. The appeal must be backed by the team manager and/or coach and presented in the presence of either or both. The appointed APO Referee will consider all such complaints. If deemed necessary, the appointed APO Referee may temporarily suspend the progress of the competition to consider the situation fully. After due consideration, the complainant will be informed of any decision, and any appropriate measures that may be taken. The verdict of the appointed APO Referee will be considered final and there will be no right or appeal to any other body.

## **Referees**

1. The referees shall be three in number, the head referee and two side referees.
2. Referees must be approved by the Technical Officer of the APO, and listed on the APO website.
3. The head referee for each lift is responsible for giving the necessary signals for all lifts, for indicating to the speaker and Time Keeper when the bar is ready, for communicating to the speaker the verification of records, and any special decisions upon performance decided by the referee.

4. Signals required for the three lifts are as follows. Squat: downward motion of the arm along with audible “squat” command, and an upward/backward motion of the arm along with an audible “rack” command. Bench: a loud, sharp “press” command at the motionless touch of the bar to chest and a loud, sharp “rack” command after lockout has been completed. Deadlift: no command to initiate the lift, but there is a downward motion of the arm along with an audible “down” command.
5. Once the bar has been replaced in the racks or on the platform at the completion of the lift, the referees will announce their decisions by means of the lights. White for a ‘good lift’ and red for ‘no lift’.
6. The three referees may seat themselves in what they consider to be the best viewing positions around the platform. The head referee must bear in mind the need to be easily visible to the lifter performing the Squat and Deadlift and be positioned accordingly. To avoid any distractions to the lifter, the head referee should remain motionless between signals. The side referee should not impose upon the spotters’ duties but should adjust their own seating position and may lean sideways or forward during a lift to obtain the best viewing vantage. Side referees during the squat must be positioned to the side of the squatter and not to the rear. Spotters for the squat must provide a “window” for the side referee to view the Squat. Obstructions to viewing must be corrected before the lift begins, i.e., side referees may ask spotter/loaders to move slightly to give them a better view, but in no way will the safety of the lifter be compromised.
7. Before the competition, the appointed APO Referee or additionally appointed officials shall have ascertained that:
  - a. The platform and competition equipment comply in all respects with the rules. Bars and discs are checked for weight discrepancies and defective equipment discarded.
  - b. Scales work correctly and are accurate.
  - c. The lifters weigh-in within the limits of the body weight categories, and within the time frame of the posted weigh-in sessions.
  - d. Any lifter’s costume or personal equipment, if requested, is inspected and approved or rejected. That speaker-announcer, Time Keeper (if not a referee), marshals/expeditors, scorers, records processor, and loaders/spotters understand their duties and the rules that may pertain to them.
8. During the competition the three referees on duty must jointly ascertain that:
  - a. The weight of the loaded bar agrees with the weight announced by the Speaker. Referees may be issued loading charts for this purpose.
  - b. Lifts are credited as “good lift” or “no lift” and all other aspects of the competition run in accordance with the rules of performance.
  - c. On the platform, the lifter’s costume and personal equipment visually meets acceptable standards and are within the rules.
9. If, during the execution of a lift, a referee observes a fault sufficient to give cause for disqualification of the lift, the procedure is as follows:
  - a. The referees may stop the lift for discretionary safety. The head referee shall signal the lifter with a downward motion of the arm and the audible command of “Down” for the Deadlift and shall instruct the spotters to take the bar on the Squat and Bench Press only if safe and appropriate to do so.

10. Prior to the commencement of the Squat or Bench Press, if any of the referees do not accept any aspect of the set-up of the lifter, they will call attention to the fault. If there is a majority opinion among the referees that a fault exists, the head referee will not give the signal to commence the lift and will inform the lifter to “Rack” the bar. A head referee seeing a fault that may not be visible to the side referees, e.g., hands holding the collars or discs on the Squat or a grip in excess of 81cm on the Bench Press, may act alone in informing the lifter to “Rack” the bar. If requested, it is required of the head referee to quickly confirm the nature of the fault and to explain this to the lifter or coach. The lifter has the remainder of any unexpired time allowance to make the attempt with the fault corrected and receive the commencement signal.

**Note:** for the above reasons it is important that the Time Keeper stop timing attempts on the Squat and Bench Press only when the lifter has received the commencement signal.

Any of these potential faults should be drawn to the attention of the lifter by any of the referees observing them.

11. Prior to the commencement of a lift, if either of the side referees observe an obvious infraction of the rules regarding costume or personal equipment, they will call attention to the fault to the head referee. The head referee observing an infraction may act alone. In either case the referees will be called together to inspect the lifter. If the fault is considered a purposeful intention to cheat, the lifter will be disqualified from the competition. If the fault is considered an oversight or genuine mistake, the lifter shall correct the fault before being permitted to proceed with the attempt. The lifter’s time allowance will not be stopped to effectuate the correction. The way the fault is considered and the action taken will be at the discretion of the referees on duty.

**a. Faults that should be considered as a purposeful intention to cheat are:**

- i. The use of more than one lifting suit or an illegal lifting suit.
- ii. The use of more than one supportive undershirt or illegal undershirt.
- iii. The use of more than one pair of wraps or wraps substantially over regulation length.
- iv. Any additions in excess of the prescribed costume and personal equipment rules, e.g., body wraps, towel inserts, bracings etc.
- v. Presence of oil, grease, liquids or lubricants other than powder on the thighs for the Deadlift.
- vi. Other infractions of similar gravity.

**b. Faults that should be considered as oversights or genuine mistakes are:**

- i. Socks overlaid by, or touching, knee wraps.
- ii. Wraps applied as to obviously exceed the width dimensions allowed for the wrist (12cm) or knee (30cm).
- iii. Wraps slightly in excess of the prescribed regulation.
- iv. Items forgotten to be removed that may have been worn for warm-ups or to maintain warmth, e.g., hats, rubber elbow bands, etc.
- v. Warmup knee sleeves around ankles with knee wraps on knees.

**c. Other infractions of similar consequence.**

- i. If any of the referees suspect without certainty any infraction of the rules regarding costume and personal equipment they will not act until after the lift has been



performed. The lifter should then be inspected. For a fault deemed an oversight or genuine mistake, the lifter's attention should be drawn to the fact and warned about repeating the infraction in any subsequent attempts. The attempt may be disqualified at the referee's discretion. Should the same infraction be repeated after a warning, the attempt shall be disqualified, or infractions deemed as a purposeful intention to cheat, the lifter shall be disqualified from the competition.

- ii. Referees shall, if requested, explain to a lifter or coach the reason or reasons why a lift was judged "no lift". All that is required of such an explanation is an accurate statement, debates will not be entered into, and an explanation will not cause distraction of the referee from the attempt of the next lifter.
- iii. A referee shall not attempt to influence the decision of other referees. Once any lift has begun, each referee will withhold his/her individual judgment until the completion of the lift, indicating such with a red or white light. Under no condition should a referee raise his/her hand after the lift has commenced unless to ensure the safety of the lifter.
- iv. The head referee may consult with the side referees, other appointed APO Referees, in attendance, or other officials as necessary in order to expedite or facilitate the running of the competition.
- v. After the competition, the three referees shall sign the official score sheets, record applications, and any other documents requiring their signatures.
- vi. The selection of a referee to act as head or side referee in one session does not preclude the selection of the same referee from being head or side referee in another session.
- vii. APO referees may have their refereeing status revoked upon consideration of their performance and abilities by the APO Board of Directors.

## **APO Special Olympics Rules/Guidelines**

### **GENERAL RULES**

1. Every person with an intellectual disability at least thirteen years of age is eligible to participate in the Special Olympics Division.
  - a. A person is considered to have an intellectual disability for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate in the Special Olympics Division if that person satisfies any one of the following requirements:
    - i. The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities.
    - ii. The person has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measures such as intelligent quotient or "IQ" testing or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community in that Accredited Program's nation as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay.

- iii. The person has a closely related developmental disability. A "closely related developmental disability" means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care). However, persons whose functional limitations are based solely on a physical, behavioral, or emotional disability or a specific learning or sensory disability are not eligible to participate in the Special Olympics Division.
2. The Special Olympics Division will be offered at state, national and world meets.
3. Records will be maintained for state, national and world.
4. Those competing in the Special Olympics Division may choose to lift Raw, Classic Raw or Equipped.
5. The Special Olympics Division will be part of the Tested Division but athletes will not be eligible for drug testing. Lifters not eligible for drug testing will not be counted in the 10% testing requirement calculation.

#### **WEIGH-IN**

1. For lifters who have an amputated lower limb, a prosthetic device, they shall be considered the same as the natural limb. For lifters with dysfunctional lower limbs that require leg braces or similar devices for walking, the device shall be considered as part of the natural limb and the lifter shall be weighed-in wearing the device.

#### **EQUIPMENT AND SPECIFICATIONS**

1. A 15kg bar is acceptable in the Special Olympics Division when available.
2. Bumper plates of 5kg., 10kg. and 15kg. may be used in the event of deadlift attempts of less than 65kg. when using a 20kg. deadlift bar. In lieu of bumper plates a 2.5" high box or rubber pads may be used to achieve the 2.5" distance.

#### **COSTUME AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

1. All competitors must wear a lifting suit which conforms to the stated APO specifications.
2. Athletes with physical disabilities (e.g. wheelchair, cerebral palsy, amputees), may wear a two-piece outfit with both upper and lower pieces being form fitting; either snug-fitting track trousers or snug-fitting shorts may be worn.
3. A full-length aerobic suit may be worn while performing the bench press. Lifting with a prosthesis is allowed and orthosis shoes will be allowed.

#### **POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE**

1. The APO rules for each division offered shall be in full effect unless otherwise specified.
2. Disabled lifters, e.g. blind, sight impaired, hearing impaired, mobility impaired may be assisted to and from, the platform. Assisted can be with the help of the coach and/or with use of crutches, sticks/canes, or wheelchair.

#### **POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE BENCH PRESS**

1. Lifters with physical disabilities may be strapped to the bench from the ankles to the hips using a strapping belt not to exceed 3.94”(10cm) in width.
2. Lifters with hearing impairment may be tapped for the press command and rack command by the head referee.

## **APO Adaptive Lifting Rules/Guidelines**

### **GENERAL RULES**

1. The adaptive athlete division may be offered at state, national and world meets. Meet directors are not required to offer the adaptive athlete division. If an athlete is interested in competing in the adaptive athlete division at a particular meet but an adaptive athlete division is not offered, the athlete is encouraged to contact the meet promoter to see if the adaptive athlete division can be added to the list of divisions being offered for that particular meet; this request should be made as far in advance of the meet as possible.
2. Records will not be maintained due to the wide range in abilities, severity of limitations, and accommodations needed.
3. Those competing in the adaptive athlete division may choose to lift Raw, Classic Raw or Equipped.
4. APO Tested Division rules regarding drug testing apply to those competing in the adaptive athlete division.

### **BACKGROUND AND ELIGIBILITY**

1. The adaptive athlete division is intended for athletes who, by virtue of their specific disability/disabilities, cannot adhere to 100% of the technical rules of performance as defined in the APO rulebook and would therefore be ineligible to compete in the able-bodied division. Examples of situations where athletes cannot compete in the able-bodied division due to disability that prevents them from being able to adhere to 100% of the technical rules of performance include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. amputated/missing limb(s)/hand(s)/finger(s)/foot/feet/toe(s) with or without use of prosthetic device(s)
  - b. inability to fully extend elbow(s) in the bench press.
  - c. inability to fully extend knee(s) in the squat and/or deadlift.
  - d. inability to place one or both feet flat on the ground/blocks in the bench press.
  - e. inability to grasp bar without an assistive device.
  - f. inability to grasp bar in accordance with the rules.

### **POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE**

1. The adaptive athlete division in APO applies to single-lift, two-lift, and three-lift (i.e., full) competition. The adaptive athlete division is open to athletes 13 years of age or older with a disability defined by the ADA as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or

more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

2. Because each adaptive athlete has a unique set of circumstances/degree of disability and because there are no developed standards in the sport of powerlifting, it is impossible to create a set of rules/procedures that cover all possible situations. As such, the guiding principles of the adaptive athlete division in APO are inclusivity and accessibility as reflected by the following guidelines that apply to the adaptive athlete division:
  - a. Any reasonable/practical accommodations that can be made will be made (this applies to the competition lifts and weigh-in)
  - b. All technical rules of performance that can be adhered to by an adaptive athlete must be adhered to; those rules that cannot be adhered to will be waived.
  - c. Creativity and improvisation will be required in some situations and such adaptability is allowed provided that, in the judgment of the referees present, the safety of all involved (i.e., lifter, spotters/loaders, referees) is not compromised and it is clear there is a genuine attempt to adhere to the spirit/intent of the rules/procedures.
3. Amputees who will use a prosthetic device during competition must be weighed in with the prosthetic device. Athletes with an amputation (or amputations) that will not compete with a prosthetic device will be weighed in without any prosthetic device(s) and no adjustments will be made to their bodyweight. Any other assistive equipment (e.g., straps to hold the bar) will not be included in the athlete's official weight. All other weigh-in rules/procedures will apply.

## **Document Change History**

V1.4 to V1.5 on 2/4/24:

- inserted cartoon about squat depth
- removed reference to underwire bra
- inserted that no underwear shall be sticking out underneath singlet or briefs
- inserted that briefs may come up to the bottom of sternum

V1.5 to V1.6 on 2/18/24:

- Modified squat depth wording to be this to include the words "hip crease"

“Upon receiving the head referee’s signal, the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint (the “hip crease”) (C) are lower than the top of knees (D) This is represented by the line A-B.. See Diagram below.

V1.6 to V1.7 on 2/18/24

- Corrected spelling errors and updated APO logo.

V1.7 to V1.8 on 5/26/24

- Updated Equipment section 4 Discs, added section h about use of bumper plates on the deadlift.

- Special Olympics Equipment section, added option to use bumper plates or 2.5” rubber mats if Necessary to make the bar at the proper height for attempts <65 kg.

V1.8 to V1.9 on 6/10/24

- clarified section 9 “Footwear” in the Costume section about shoes needing a rigid or semi-rigid sole.

- clarified bench orientation is at Meet Director’s discretion under Rules of Performance for Bench Press