

USA Powerlifting Rules Meeting - Referee Briefing

Welcome

- welcome lifters to the event
- introduce referees

Squat

- grip: all fingers gripping the bar (thumbless grip is allowed)
- position the bar on the shoulders, lift the bar, and step out of racks (spotters may assist)
- stand upright with knees locked, in control/motionless, and ready
 - though not required, some lifters make eye contact or nod to head referee when ready
- will be told to “REPLACE” the bar if not in the correct starting position after 5 seconds
- lift begins with “SQUAT” command along with downward movement of head referee’s arm
- descend until hip joint is lower than top of knee (see picture in USAPL rulebook)
- ascend until in the finished position - upright, knees locked, in control
- lift ends with “RACK” command along with backward movement of head referee’s arm
- stay with/under the bar if you miss the lift - do not walk away from or dump the bar
- causes for failure:
 - not going deep enough
 - double bouncing at bottom of lift; downward movement of bar (“whole of the bar”) during ascent (bar may stop)
 - foot movement (rocking between ball and heel okay); cannot leave “footprint”
 - dumping the bar (may be cause for disqualification from meet)
 - not upright and/or knees not locked at beginning and/or completion of lift
 - beating the start or rack command
 - contact of elbows/upper arms with legs, contact of bar with rack, or contact with spotter in a way that aids the lifter

Bench Press

- can receive lift-off from the staff member designated for lift-offs (or take it out on own)
 - USAPL policy prohibits personal coaches (or any non-staff member) from lifting off to lifters
- foot blocks may be used (should have been indicated with opener/rack height submission)
- hands must grip the bar (thumbs around) no wider than 81cm between index fingers
- hold bar over chest with arms fully extended (straight arms and elbows locked), in control/motionless, and ready
- feet must be flat on floor; head, shoulders, and butt on bench for the entire lift
- will be told to “REPLACE” the bar if not in the correct starting position after 5 seconds
- lift begins with “START” command along with downward movement of head referee’s arm
- bring bar down to chest or stomach region (bar may not touch the belt)
- when bar is motionless, “PRESS” command will be given along with upward movement of head referee’s arm
- press bar back up to full extension of the arms, elbows locked, in control
- lift ends with “RACK” command along with backward movement of head referee’s arm
- causes for failure:
 - heaving/sinking the bar into the chest after getting press command
 - downward movement of bar (“whole of the bar”) during ascent (bar may stop)
 - lifting of the feet (feet may slide/move but sole of foot must be flat on floor); foot contact with bench or its supports
 - lifting the butt or head off bench; lateral movement of hands on bar
 - elbows not locked at completion (bar may be pressed and locked unevenly)
 - beating the start, press, or rack command
 - bar makes contact with belt; bar does not contact chest or stomach region
 - contact of bar with rack or contact with spotter in a way that aids the lifter

Deadlift

- grip bar with any grip (alternating, hook, overhand)
- lifter begins whenever he/she is ready after bar has been loaded (no start command is given)
- stand up with the bar until the body is upright, knees locked, shoulders back, in control
 - prior to attempt, lifters can move the bar (e.g., roll, shake, etc.) but only one genuine attempt to lift the bar is allowed
- lift ends with “DOWN” command along with downward movement of the head referee’s arm
- bar must be returned to platform under control, hands gripping bar
- causes for failure:
 - knees not locked and/or shoulders not back at the completion of the lift
 - downward movement of the bar (“whole of the bar”) during the ascent (bar may stop)
 - hitching, ramping, or supporting the bar on the thighs (edging up thighs is okay)
 - dropping the bar (before or after getting the “down” command); includes bar slipping out of hand on the way down
 - foot movement (rocking between ball and heel in same “footprint” is allowed); after down command movement is OK
 - lowering the bar before receiving down command

Miscellaneous

- once the lift has begun (command given), the lift must commence (no resetting, re-racking, etc.)
- lifter has until 3 minutes before lifting starts (or 3 lifters before flight starts) to change openers for each lift one time
- all attempts in kilograms; must be 2.5kg increments (including state record attempts)
 - American record attempts may be in increments lower than 2.5kg; can go as low as 0.5kg (e.g., 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0kg)
 - American records can only be set at state championship meets and higher (e.g., regionals, nationals, etc.)
- lifter has 60 seconds from announcement “bar ready/loaded” to begin lift
 - lift begins: “squat” command (SQ), “start” command (BP), beginning of pull (DL)
 - clock only stops in specific instances (e.g., misload or other mistake made by the meet staff)
- lifter may not mount platform until bar called ready/loaded
- lifter may only adjust belt on platform (other adjustments off platform)
- ammonia (if used) and/or slapping/striking of lifters (for arousal purposes) must occur out of view of the audience
- thumb loops must be off when wearing wrist wraps
- lifter must submit next attempt (in kg) within 60 seconds of completion of lift
 - if not, next attempt is automatically the same weight if previous attempt was missed or 2.5kg more if attempt made
- 3rd attempt DL may be changed twice; for BP-only lifters, 3rd attempt BP may be changed twice
- tell scorer’s table if rack heights need to be changed
- lifter must leave platform within 30 seconds of completion of lift
- shin length socks must be worn during deadlift; socks cannot touch knee sleeves
- undergarments must not have legs (e.g., boxer shorts/briefs, bike shorts, women’s boy shorts are not allowed)
- no profanity (includes lifters, coaches, handlers)
- rounds system is used; pay attention to progress of meet and plan accordingly
- tell scorer’s table if attempting American record so appropriate referees are present for attempt (see meet director after meet)
- minimal breaks (5-10 minutes) between end of SQ and start of BP and end of BP and start of DL
- baby powder and chalk may be used; please keep the warmup and staging areas as clean as possible
- tape may only be used on the thumbs (any other tape/medical bandages must be approved); kinesio- or KT tape not allowed
- lifters should not leave venue until they know they have not been selected for drug testing (notifications made before awards)
- all apparel/equipment that could potentially be worn must be approved at equipment check
- know why a red light was given (even if only one red light) so the mistake is not repeated (e.g., look at color card(s) shown)
 - at state/local meets, lifter may quickly (and politely) ask a referee why a red light was given
 - do not expect a referee to remember why he or she gave a red light after a minute or two has elapsed
- at meets with a jury present, lifter or coach must make any [legitimate] requests to the jury immediately after lift in question
- coaches, handlers, etc. must sign waiver form to be allowed in warmup room or staging area