

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE NEWS BULLETIN NO: 1 2008

The whole of this bulletin is devoted to a Rules Clinic which should be attended by all International Referees at least once within a four year period.

THE TECHNICAL RULES BOOK " COVER - COVER "

Approximate duration 30 minutes.

Foreword:

I have found over the years that the easiest and most comprehensible way for all to partake in the seminar (all Nations) and the way in which I would like it to be presented to me, is to begin from the first page of the Rule Book, quoting sections of most concern, interpreting, clarifying, demonstrating and if felt necessary making comment, and hopefully answering any questions to the satisfaction of all who attend.

Much of the obvious has been excluded i.e. the very basics of our sport which to referees of International standard would be as the saying goes " Teaching Granny to suck eggs " As this is also to be considered a Forum, the views of all who may feel that they have something to offer maybe discussed and taken into account in respect of future Rules Congresses. The next being in the year 2010.

John Stephenson
Chairman IPF Technical Committee

To begin:

GENERAL RULES OF POWERLIFTING

Page 2 (1 e)

If two lifters register the same body weight at the weigh in and eventually achieve the same total at the end of the competition, the lifter making the total first will take precedence over the other lifter.

Where awards are presented for best squat, bench press and deadlift or if a World record is broken, the same procedure will apply.

Comment:

Originally before the rule was changed there would have been a re-weigh. The problem was, that the scales were often in operation for the next weight class, which became even more difficult when the Men's and Women's Championships became combined. The lifter with the lower lot number has the greater chance of totalling first. Personally, I am of the opinion that this lottery should be done away with and the medals shared.

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Age categories:

As per the handbook - Passports to be checked at the weigh-in to confirm.

Page 4 - Item 7

Each Nation must submit a team roster giving the name of each lifter and his/her bodyweight category.

These details must be sub-mitted to the Championship Secretary of the IPF or Region and also the Meet Director at least 60 days before the date of

the Championships on the preliminary nomination. Final selection, sub-mitted not later than 21 days before the date of the Championships must be made from those nominated 60 days before the date of the Championships. This is inclusive of reserve or alternate lifters.

It is assumed that one of the reasons for this is that out of contest drug control may be performed and the results known. The IPF are determined to stamp out any taking of illegal substances.

Page 4 - Item 13

Should a lifter fail to succeed in either or both of the squat or bench press disciplines he/she may continue to compete for the remainder of the contest, and the lifter will be eligible for awards in any discipline in which he/she records a successful/ lift or lifts. To receive this award the lifter must make bona fide attempts on each of the three disciplines. i.e. a lift within his/her capabilities. The jury will decide, if this is questionable.

Comment:

At the IPF Open Championships in October a male lifter weighing 56 kg's entered 100 kg squat, 80 kg bench press and 255 kg deadlift. He only took the first squat (not as much as doubling his body weight) and bench press, no doubt thinking that he would acquire the deadlift medal. He failed to pull the deadlift. Should he had done so, the jury would not have allowed him to stand on the podium.

EQUIPMENT AND SPECIFICATIONS

Page 5 - Platform

The surface of the platform must be flat, firm and level and covered with a material of non-slip carpet (i.e. free from irregularities and projections) . Rubber matting or similar sheeting materials are not permitted.

The purpose of the non-slip carpet is that it has been proved that this is the safest surface. Rubber or rubber substitute presented a danger, in that, when powder or perspiration or the likes dropped onto it, the surface became more of a skating rink, especially when the soles of some footwear added to the danger. Beware, that there are " one or two " commercial platforms on the market that do not conform to IPF regulation.

Bars and Discs

Only bars and discs that have official IPF Approval maybe used at IPF World Championships or the setting of World Records. As from 2008 the " knurling " distances on IPF Approved bars will become universal/ standard (as illustrated in the Technical Rules) based on one of the originally approved bars.

This does not mean that bars which were originally approved and do not meet the current (2008) requirement, may not still be used at championships other than IPF World Meets and to create new records.

Page 6 - Squat Racks

1. Only squat racks from commercial manufacturers officially registered and approved by the Technical Committee shall be permitted for use in International Powerlifting Championships.

A question often asked is " Can World Records be accepted when approved racks have not been used " ? The answer is " Yes " . Only bars and discs which are on the Approved List must be used.

Page 7 - Bench

Only bench racks and benches from commercial manufacturers officially registered and approved by the Technical Committee shall be permitted for use in International Powerlifting Championships.

6. Attached safety stands must be used in all events.

These must be adjusted to the correct height for each of the lifters. The rack height sheet should contain a column in which this numbered height can be entered.

Lights

For emergency purposes, i.e. a breakdown in the electrical system the referees will be provided with small white or red flags or paddles with which to make known their decisions on the chief referee's audible command " flags "

Please make sure that these flags are available. An item often overlooked by the organiser.

Failure cards/paddles

After the lights have been activated and appeared, the referee/s will raise a card or paddle or activate a light system to make known the reason/s why the lift has been failed.

Do not raise the card until the lights have appeared, if so, it may cause the other referees who are " unsure " to follow suit.

The history of the cards is that they were devised by the Technical Committee and used experimentally in 1992 , now having become an asset.

The new sophisticated light system used at the last two IPF Open Championships is more professional. The wiring system (diagram) may be obtained from Tone Ingerbretsen e:mail tonege@broadpark.no I believe free of charge. Please check with Tone first.

Page 8 - Referees Numbered Card System

Not to dwell on this item as the rule book is quite explanatory, but to say that it maybe confusing to coaches, et al, if more than the one card is raised declaring many faults. To observe the one major infraction maybe sufficient.

Page 10 - Scorebaord

The importance of the scoreboard cannot be overlooked. When " two or three " competitors are vying for position. It is the one positive means of keeping spectators focused.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Page 10

Costume - Supportive

As specified in the rule book and that which is IPF Approved. The list of approvals should be posted in the gear check area. If doubtful contact a member of the Technical Committee. One of the main concerns is that the costume must be of one ply only.

Costume - Non Supportive

The modern W/L costume with short sleeves and a zipped back has not been seen on the powerlifting platform by myself, but suggest there is nothing in the rules that make it illegal.

Item (h)

It is recommended that when the costume shoulder straps are shortened, they are sewn in such a way that the excess material is under the strap, rather than the unsightly tufts that appear when the material is above the straps.

Comment:

My personal feeling is that this should become a must.

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Supportive Shirt

All as featured on the IPF Approved List

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Socks - (c)

Shin length socks must be checked in and worn for the deadlift. Socks that finish half way up the calf when the lifter steps onto the platform, will not be accepted. At a Regional Championship which I attended last year, one lifter appeared on platform with blood coming through the socks. Probably having warmed up without them. Shin guards are legal if passed at gear check.

Belt

Many lifters wear belts that are far too long and apart from looking hideous often obstruct the view of the referees when judging depth of squat. It is in the lifters interest to wear a belt that " fits " The ratchet belt that some may have seen advertised is not legal. A belt with this design of " buckle " was rejected by both the Executive Committee and Technical Committee. It was considered to be cumbersome and quite dangerous should it need to be released quickly.

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Shoes or Boots - (a)

Shoes shall be taken to include only Sports Shoes/ Sports Boots W/L, P/L Boots or Deadlift Slippers.

Sometimes there is doubt as to whether or not the footwear presented is of that referred to. If so, referees should consult a member of the Technical Committee, or, draw their own conclusions.

Remember, if it is felt that our sport would be brought into disrepute by the wearing of any piece of apparel, then rejection is likely.

(Inserts) - It has been noted that there are one cm thickness heel inserts (the legal limit) for sale on some stalls at International Venues. If worn, it is advisable that these be checked in. Rumoured, that some lifters may be building up the heel area inside the shoe with several layers - Beware!! Those discovered face disqualification.

Wraps

There are wraps on the market that have not received approval. Please check with the approval list, which can be found on the web site. It is up-dated frequently. It would appear that some Marathon Wraps are still in circulation. These are illegal.

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Inspection of Personal Equipment (b)

A minimum of two referees shall be appointed to fulfil this duty. All items shall be examined and approved before being officially stamped or marked.

For World Championships official rubber stamps will be issued by the Technical Committee. Collect and return to the jury table.

Item (i) - Before attempting a World Record the lifter will be inspected by the Technical Controller. This now makes it unnecessary for jury members to move from their chairs.

Now the very important:

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POWERLIFTING RULES AND PERFORMANCE

Squat

Item (1) Hands and fingers gripping the bar.

The four fingers (not necessarily the thumbs) must grip the bar. Gripping can mean at least all of the last joints on the four digits of each hand. DEMONSTRATE.

Item (2) If the signal to begin the lift has not been given within five seconds of the lifter awaiting, the Chief Referee will tell the lifter to "replace" and then indicate why the signal was not given. By gesture if necessary. Years ago, before this was introduced the lifter would be in a collapsing stage and often failed the lift, the clock running out by the time the coach requested of the jury the reason.



Item (3) Upon receiving the Chief Referee's signal the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top of the knees. DEMONSTRATE.

The attempt is deemed to have commenced when the lifter's knees have un-locked i.e. the lifter cannot lock and un-lock several times before descending. DEMONSTRATE.

The bar may move from its starting position downwards on the lifter's back the thickness/diameter of the bar during the performance of the lift.

Even the slightest movement before this was introduced would have been cause for failure. It was considered that any more movement than the thickness of the bar may prove dangerous, in that the bar may drop from the hands.

Item (5) The lifter must then move forward and return the bar to the racks.

If initially, directly after the "rack" signal the lifter steps backwards, at present this is cause for failure. This may be looked into for change. Perhaps the analogy can be made with that of the deadlift i.e. after the "down" signal which one might assume that the lift is completed. The lift will be failed if the bar comes out of the hands before it touches the platform. DEMONSTRATE

Causes for disqualification of the squat

Stepping backward or forward although lateral movement of the sole and rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted. DEMONSTRATE.

Bench Press

Item (2) The lifter must lie on his back with head, shoulders and buttocks in contact with the bench surface.

At the very least, fifty per cent of the buttocks must be in contact with the bench in order to receive the start signal. Although the rule says that this position must be maintained at all times, as long as part of the buttocks stay in contact with the bench during the up-lifting, this should not be cause for failure.

Photos showing the acceptable position may be found on the IPF Website, or, in the first issue of International Powerlifting Magazine 2007.

Item (5) If in the case of some old injury or anatomically the lifter is unable to grip the bar equally with both hands, he must inform the referees prior to lift off for each attempt. The meaning. DEMONSTRATE

Item (8) After receiving the signal, the lifter must lower the bar to the chest " the chest, for the purpose of the rule, finishes at the base of the sternum/breastbone", hold it motionless on the chest, after which the Chief Referee will signal the audible command "press". The lifter must then return the bar to arms length with no excessive/immoderate un-even extension of the arms. Sternum/breastbone. DEMONSTRATE.

Motionless - the silent count of "one" when at the chest. This is not as much as one second. Seconds being, 1 banana - 2 banana -3 banana.

Should the bar stop before it touches the chest and there is no further movement after the silent count of 1 - 2 - 3, the Chief Referee will tell the lifter to "rack" the bar.

Should the bar touch the stomach and not the chest , the Chief Referee will tell the lifter to "press" the bar.

No excessive/immoderate uneven extension of the arms. This means, no zig zag action or pronounced uneven extension. What it does mean is that slight un-even extension maybe accepted at lock-out when both arms need not finish together. Use a common sense approach !!!

Item (9) If anatomically, the arms cannot be fully extended the lifter must produce a certificate issued by the Medical Committee. The application form can be found on the IPF Website. The maximum allowable is 15 degrees out of true. Photos showing the acceptable degrees of limited extension may be found on the IPF Website or in an issue of the International Powerlifting Magazine. The Medical Committee will continue with the impairment system for the whole of 2008, then may re-assess

Causes for disqualification of a bench press.

Item (5) Any downward movement of the whole of the bar in the course of being pressed out.

Downward movement of one end of the bar, does not warrant failure.

Comment:

Two of the most controversial issues in the performance of the three lifts are those concerning the bench press. That of moderate uneven extension and limited lock-out. It is not known exactly when the rule changed from total even extension, but would suggest when the Masters were formed and the new rule catered for the less athletic. Limited lock-out in the early years of championships was only demonstrated to the referees by the occasional dwarf because of the anatomical "fault" in the elbows. Again, since the introduction of the Masters this has become more prevalent.

Page 17 - Deadlift

Item (1) The lifter shall face the front of the platform with the bar laid horizontally in front of the lifter's feet.

Something rarely seen these days is the lifter rolling the bar to and fro before pulling. Many of the Scandinavian lifters were seen to use this method in the past. It was never, and I suggest still is not cause for failure. DEMONSTRATE.

Item (3) The signal "down" will not be given until the bar is held motionless and the lifter is in the apparent finished position.

If the bar has failed to move after the silent count of three seconds, the lifter not standing erect, then this is considered to be the apparent finished position. The "down" signal should be given and the lift failed.

Item (4) If the bar settles as the shoulders come back (slightly downward on completion) this should not be reason to disqualify the lift. DEMONSTRATE.

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Causes for disqualification of a deadlift

Item (7) Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands, i.e. releasing the bar from the palms of the hands.

This does not mean that the bar has to be lowered slowly and gently to the platform. Forcing the bar into the platform will receive a warning from the Chief Referee or Jury.

Comment:

The Meet Director must ensure that the platform is constructed in such a way that it can cope with any unintentional dropping of the bar.

Page 19 - WEIGHING-IN

Item (4) For reason of hygiene the lifter should wear socks/paper towels on scales platform.

Many times it has been seen that lifters do not adhere to this rule. It is in their interest. Paper towels must be provided by the organiser.

Item (7) If a lifter changes categories and the lot draw has already been carried out, then the lifter shall be placed at the top of the draw.

This is the reason why the lot order on the original list of lifters to be posted, should begin at e.g. No:3 so that No:2 and No:1 can be used for this purpose.

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Item (8) Lifters should check squat and bench press rack heights and foot blocks prior to the start of the competition.

If possible a set of racks should be positioned directly outside of the weigh-in room with a nominated person taking the heights as the lifters finish weighing-in.

ORDER OF COMPETITION

The Round System

Item (a) The weight must be filled in where indicated upon the card, and submitted to the competition secretary, or, other appointed official before the one minute time allowance has elapsed.

If the lifter has no intention of coming out for attempts, it is requested that the attempt slip is marked with an X. Although not a rule, it does prevent time wasting.

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Item (k) A lifter must submit his second and third attempts within one minute of completing his preceding attempt.

A clock visible to coaches should display time left to submit the next attempt. The lack of a visible clock has caused many arguments.

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Item (m) In the third round of the deadlift, two changes are permitted. The change of the weight maybe higher or lower than the lifter's previously submitted third attempt. However, these are only permitted provided that the lifter has not been called to the bar already loaded to his previously submitted weight by the speaker.

It is important to note that the bar is not loaded even though the Chief Referee has called " bar loaded " until the speaker makes the announcement.

Then, the clock will begin. i.e. changes may be made up until the time the speaker makes the announcement.

Item (p) The system thus eliminates any time waste other than that necessary for arranging the platform between the lifts.

It has been customary of late, to allow up to five minutes break after squats and bench press.

The Technical Committee with the co-operation and assistance of the organiser will appoint the following officials:

It was felt that the Technical Committee should have some control over the appointment of officials for IPF World Championships, even so, most organisers have been left to appoint the itemised officials apart from that of the Technical Controller who will be appointed by the Technical Committee. A new official position, the job of the Technical Controller is to ensure that the lifter mounting the platform is that as announced by the speaker and is properly attired. To see that the coaches stay in the designated area, and that there is some degree of conduct in the wrapping area.

(a) Speaker / Announcer.

When the speaker announces that the bar is " ready / loaded ", then the lifter is committed to the attempt.

As has already been mentioned, the lifter is committed to the attempt, when his name is directly associated with the weight on the bar.

(b) Technical Secretary.

Comment:

Since the introduction of our very own (IPF) computer programmer, the duties of the Technical Secretary have been made relatively simple. Most of

the paper work being printed out directly following the Technical Meeting via the computer. No longer should there be the need to sit up till 2 a.m.

preparing the necessary paper work for the following days lifting.

One annoying factor is that at many championships the person who puts his name to that of Technical Secretary on the invitation, does not undertake

the job, and much is left to members of the Technical Committee. e.g. The Technical Secretary will attend each weigh-in. Attending most weigh-ins

when I am invited to meets to make sure nominated referees turn up (especially early mornings), rarely have I seen the Technical Secretary.

If one is going to put his name to this position, then the job should be done properly. As under his duties.

(c) Time Keeper, (a qualified referee)

Unfortunately we have seen a " mishmash " of timekeeping in the past. This has improved immensely, with someone suitably qualified. The

occasional " breakdown " in the electrical system is beyond the timekeeper's control.

(f) Spotter / Loaders. Correct code of dress.

Inproperly dressed spotter / loaders can still be seen at many of our championships. It is the organisers responsibility to see that they are uniformly

dressed. Many of our sponsors are eager to promote their products by supplying Meet Directors with named apparel for this purpose.

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Item (2) A lifter shall not use ammonia in view of the public.

The use of ammonia in view of the public may give the wrong impression, perhaps that it is an illegal substance. In the days when

ammonia sticks were used, these were often broken open and dropped at the feet of the lifter. Quite unsavoury!

Item (4) a - e

Explain if felt necessary.

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Item (6) Three unsuccessful attempts in any lift will automatically eliminate the lifter from the overall competition, but he may still compete for awards on individual lifts.

As was mentioned earlier, the lifter must make a genuine attempt on each of the individual lifts.

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Items (11 - 13)

Explain if felt necessary.

REFEREES

Item (3) Signals for the three lifts. DEMONSTRATE. Also, that of the word " replace ". Many referees appear to have difficulty with this word.

" Put it back " " Take it " " Rackit " and the likes are often heard. Many Nations spotters are not familiar with these terms, which may prove dangerous to the lifter if misunderstood.

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Item (5) The three referees may seat themselves in what they consider to be the best viewing positions around the platform for each of the three lifts.

Squat: Although it is logical to assume that the best position for side referees to observe depth is directly adjacent to the lifter, this is not always the case, as spotters often restrict their vision.

Bench Press: Ideally, the best vantage point for an unimpeded view by the side referees is to be seated at an angle of 45 degrees from the centre of the bench, and approximately 2.5 metres beyond. The position of the Chief Referee slightly off centre enables him to see buttock position, or movement of the buttocks from the bench more clearly.

Deadlift: Side referees positioned in front of, and to the left of the lifter to observe the up-right position.

Item 6 (b) The scales worked correctly and are accurate (currently certified).

The Meet Director should supply a certificate to this effect.

(d) Lifters discovered wearing or using apparel that has not been checked in maybe subject to penalty.

This applies equally to anything newly bought which may appear on the Approved List.

Item 7 (a) The weight of the loaded bar agrees with the weight announced by the speaker. It is the joint responsibility of the referees.

Not left solely to that of the Chief Referee.

(b) If wearing any illegal item passed in error by the examining referees, and the lift in which the discovery was successful, the lift will be rejected and then the lifter will be granted a new attempt (having removed the illegal item) at the end of the round.

The Technical Controller will probably identify the illegal item before the lifter mounts the platform. He will also check

thoroughly before any record attempt.

Item 8 If there is a majority opinion among the referees that a fault exists, the Chief Referee will not give the signal to commence the lift.

The Chief Referee cannot take it upon himself not to begin the lift if he is the only one to have observed a " fault ". If possible he can gesture to the side referees the observed fault, and there maybe time to stop the lift. e.g. DEMONSTRATE

Item 9 It is essential that the lot number of each lifter accompanies his name on the scoreboard.

Speakers do sometimes get the lifting order wrong (we're all human). The importance of the lot number cannot be overlooked.

Item 12 In the final round of the deadlift the bar must be cleaned before every attempt.

Assuring a level playing field. No unfair advantage with a less slippery bar.

Item 13 The three referees shall sign the official score sheets.

Some referees tend to disappear directly after the competition, and forget this duty.

Item 17 Extra Category One referees maybe used for jury duty if there is an insufficient number.

At many World Championships when short of Category One referees, the home Nation, can field the requirement.

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Item 18 Referees and members of the jury will be uniformly dressed.

c

As referees are on duty at geat check this applies equally here also. Dress/day wear shoes must be worn.

Pages 29 - 30

All the requirements concerning that of becoming either a Category Two or Category One International Referee and the re-registration qualifications can be found within these pages. Any further information in this regard can be found by way of our Referee Registrar

Goran Gunnarsson e:mail refereeipf@telia.com

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JURY

Item 4 The function of the jury is to ensure that the Technical Rules are correctly applied.

This applies to all aspects of the competition not just that " on platform "

Item 5 During the competition the jury may by majority vote, replace any referee whose decisions in its opinion prove him to be incompetent.

To remove a referee is embarrassing for both the remover and the removed. It is hoped the necessity does not arise!

Item 9 Only in extreme circumstances when there has been an obvious or blatant mistake in the refereeing will the jury in consultation with the referees reverse the decision. By majority vote.

This has been the subject of much interest and discussion within both the Executive Committee and Technical Committee. The reason being that some overrulings do not follow that of the intention of the rule. The rule was designed for specific and downright " mistakes " made by the referees, not e.g. doubtful depth of squat, whether or not the bar was below the base of the sternum in the bench press, or whether or not both knees were exactly locked at completion of the deadlift. In cases such as these, referees should be asked by a jury member to be more observant of these particular points.

Obvious, is more likely to mean e.g. the lifter not having waited for the signal to begin the lift, stepping backward or forward during the course of the lift, or releasing the bar (dumping).

The word blatant should perhaps be replaced by the word flagrant, stressing a "glaring " wrong. This is alluding to decisions made by referees who appear to favour their own country's lifters.

Not to dwell on the subject for it will be continuously monitored over the coming months, but to say, let the referees do their job, with a word in their ear should they tend to stray from the written rule.

If after a period controversy still reigns, then perhaps an amendment to the rule will be proposed. Some having already been discussed.

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WORLD AND INTERNATIONAL RECORDS

Item 2 (f) Single lift bench press records made at a three lift (Powerlifting) event do not need to be accompanied by a total but bona fide attempts must be made both on squat and deadlift.

This to ensure that the lifter is not at the meet solely to break a single lift record. Genuine attempts must be made on both lifts.

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Item (h) New records are only valid if they exceed the previous record by at least 1 kg, unless the new record is divisible by 2.5 kg, then a 0.5 kg is acceptable.

Some may not realise that a record has been broken because of the normal progression of loading e.g. current record 299.5 kg weight on bar 300 kg. Drug control must be carried out as in item (d).

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Note:

:It is appreciated that there maybe other versions of Rules Seminars that our Nations wish to present, but perhaps something maybe gleaned from this screed!