

THSPA Official Rulebook 2022

Texas High School Powerlifting Association

"The Strongest Association in Texas"



THSPA

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Highlighted Text represents rule changes for the 2022 Season

I. GENERAL RULES OF COMPETITION

- A. The T.H.S.P.A. recognizes the following lifts, which must be taken in the same sequence in all competitions conducted and approved by the T.H.S.P.A.
1. Squat
 2. Bench Press
 3. Deadlift
- B. Each competitor is allowed three attempts on each lift. The lifter's best valid attempt on each lift, counts toward his competition total. The winner of a category shall be the lifter who achieves the highest total. The remaining lifters shall be ranked in descending order of total. Lifters failing to achieve a total are eliminated from competition. If two or more lifters achieve the same total, the lighter lifter ranks above the heavier lifter.
- C. All T.H.S.P.A. competitors at Regional and State competitions must be enrolled in a Texas Education Agency certified high school in the state of Texas, grades 9-12, and must be eligible for competition under the current U.I.L. standards.
- D. All competitors must be sponsored and coached by a full time staff member of his school. Training for competition is to be done using school facilities and under the direction of the above-mentioned coach. Competitors who use private clubs or gyms as their primary training site may be declared ineligible for competition by the T.H.S.P.A. Executive Committee. Competition in THSPA is restricted to males that meet the age requirements and limitations established by UIL. The definition/establishment of gender and age are determined by the athlete's birth certificate.

II. TEAM COMPETITION

- A. Each school must pay a \$75.00 associational fee each year for its athletes to be eligible for competition in the T.H.S.P.A. The payment of T.H.S.P.A. dues must be postmarked no later than **January 24, 2022**.
- B. Payments received that are postmarked after **January 24, 2022** will be considered late and a \$200.00 fine will be assessed. The fined school must then pay the fine by the Monday before the last qualifying date at 4:00 PM (**February 21, 2022**) or the school's lifters will not be eligible for Regional or State Competition. No exceptions will be made. Schools who fail to pay dues but still compete in meets will be warned by letter. If a second consecutive violation

occurs then the school's athletes will be suspended for one season. Appeals must be directed to the regional director for review by the executive committee.

- C. T.H.S.P.A. competition is divided into **four divisions** on the regional and state levels. The entry fee for Regional and State Meets shall be \$35.00 per lifter. Results from invitational meets will be sent to each regional director and rankings for regional qualification will be kept separate by divisions.

1. **Division 1 (6A-5A schools)**

2. **Division 2 (4A schools)**

3. **Division 3 (3A schools)**

4. **Division 4 (2A-1A schools)**

- D. Division classification will be determined when a school's state governing body of athletic competition (UIL, TAPPS, TCIL, etc.,) reclassifies based on average daily attendance.
- E. Each school is allowed a maximum of twelve competitors spread throughout the range of the twelve weight classes. No more than three competitors from any one school may lift in any particular weight class for team points except at the regional or state meets. Schools may enter "A" or "B" teams if approved by the meet director in advance, but each will be designated at weigh-in and will compete as separate teams. Those competitors designated as "B" team or "extra lifters" will be eligible for all individual awards, but cannot receive the team points. If a "B" team lifter places in the top five in any particular weight class, the points earned for that placing will vanish. At regional and state meets, those qualifiers competing for team points must be designated at the weigh-in (maximum of twelve). **No lifter shall compete in more than one meet per week (Mon-Sat)**
- F. Team point scoring for all individual, regional, and state meets will be 7, 5, 3, 2, 1 for the first five finishers in each weight class. Places are awarded on the TOTAL weight lifted in the three lifts: squat, bench press, and deadlift.
- G. Individual medals and team awards must be given to the first three or five places. In case of a tie, the team having the largest number of first place finishers will be ranked in the highest spot. If teams are also tied in points, and first place finishes, then the team with the most second place finishers will be classified first, and so on. If the schools are still tied after comparing all top five finishers of both schools, then the Schwartz numbers of each team's medal winners/point scorers will be averaged to break the tie. Exception: At State and Regional level the Schwartz average will be ignored, not the place tiebreaker, for the Team Championship (1st place only).

- H. An invitational meet must consist of no less than two (2) different schools, having no less than seven (7) competitors per school. All judges at Dual, Tri- or Quad-meets must be T.H.S.P.A. certified. During the week of the last qualifying date for regional competition (beginning on the Monday prior to the last qualifying date), an invitational meet must consist of at least 7 different schools with at least 50 total lifters. Each school at the meet will be allowed a maximum of 12 lifters towards the 50 lifter minimum. All Dual, Tri- and Quad-meets must have prior approval from the Regional Director.

III. INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION

- A. Each lifter must establish a qualifying total in a T.H.S.P.A. certified invitational meet prior to the regional qualifying deadline. These meets are invitational meets in which each meet director can vary the structure of the meet. The allowance to vary meet structure does not extend to varying T.H.S.P.A. Rules of Performance. Examples might range from open meets with schools from all classifications competing together, to meets with separate divisions. A meet director might choose to host a meet with Class A, 2A and 3A schools competing separately from Class 4A and 5A schools. Another option is to have a single division meet, for example Class A-3A schools only.
- B. All invitational meet results must be received by the regional director(s) by 4:00 p.m. on the Monday following the invitational meet, or arrangements must be made with the regional director(s). All meet results must be sent by an attachment using the Powerscore software by Sandhill. If meet results are not turned in by this time, and no arrangements have been made, the regional director will have the option of refusing the results. The regional director(s) must receive results from meets held on the last qualifying date by 12:00 midnight on that last qualifying date. If meet results are not received by this time, they will not be recorded. All invitational meets must be approved by a regional director; if a meet is held without approval then the regional director(s) will have the option of refusing the results. All invitational meets must be approved by a regional director; if a meet is held without approval, the results will not be posted and there will be no change in the rankings. A meet certification form is available on the website. All meets must be submitted and approved by the Regional Director for those results to be posted to the statewide rankings
- C. Lifters who rank in the top twelve totals for their weight class in each region and in each division will qualify for regional meets. Rankings are listed and certified by the T.H.S.P.A. regional directors.
- D. Any lifter who qualifies in more than one weight class must declare to the regional director which class he intends to compete in at the regional level. This declaration must be made by the Monday following the last qualifying date before 4:00 p.m. If no declaration is made, the regional director will assign the lifter to

the heaviest class in which he has qualified. Also, at this date and time, each school becomes responsible for the entry fee for each lifter they have qualified.

- E. Lifters may only compete in the weight class in which they qualify at both the regional and state level. Failure to make proper weight will eliminate the lifter from all competition.
- F. A lifter who qualifies for the regional meet may qualify for the state meet by either finishing first or second in his weight class or by posting a qualifying total for his class as follows:

114 – 850	220 – 1450
123 – 950	242 – 1500
132 – 1100	275 – 1550
148 – 1200	308 – 1600
165 – 1300	SHW – 1650
181 – 1350	
198 – 1400	

Totals posted at invitational meets cannot be used as criteria for state meet qualification.

- G. Each lifter, coach, and school must provide certified proof of scholastic eligibility under U.I.L. guidelines prior to competition at the regional and state level. These forms can be found on the website, www.thspa.us.
- H. Approved suits of some type must be worn in regional and state meets (one-piece singlet type).
- I. Coaches are required to notify Regional Directors if a regional or state qualifier cannot participate in these meets so the alternates may be allowed the opportunity to lift. **For the state meet only, the deadline for alternates to be added is Monday, March 14, 2022, by 4:00 PM.**
- J. State records may only be established by lifts performed at the state meet.
- K. At the discretion of the platform's judges, a lifter who intentionally drops or dumps a bar in the squat or deadlift events shall be disqualified from further competition and no total will be posted. No previous warning is required; this rulebook and/or coaches' pre-competition meeting shall serve as a "first-warning".

IV. LIFTING EQUIPMENT AND SPECIFICATIONS

A. PLATFORM

All lifts shall be carried out on a platform measuring between 5'x5' minimum and 8'x8' maximum. The surface of the platform may be treated with an approved non-slip coating. Loose rubber mats or similar materials are not permitted. Interlocking rubber mats are permitted provided they allow for firm footing and are not loose. No one is allowed on the platform except the lifter, the designated spotter/loaders, the platform judges, and other meet officials as designated if the need arises. Any cleaning, mopping, brushing, or adjusting of the platform shall be handled solely by these official personnel unless otherwise designated by the Chief Judge.

B. BARS AND DISCS

For all powerlifting contests organized under the rules of the T.H.S.P.A., only disc barbells are permitted. The use of bars or discs that do not meet the correct specifications will invalidate the contest and any records accomplished. Only those bars and discs that meet all specifications may be used throughout the entire competition and for all lifts. The bar shall not be changed during an event (squat, bench, or deadlift) unless it is bent or damaged in some way as determined by the judges.

1. The BAR shall be straight and well knurled or grooved, should have a center section of knurls or grooves if used for squats, and shall conform to the following dimensions:
 - a. Total overall length not to exceed 7',
 - b. Distance between the collar faces must not be less than 4',
 - c. Weight of the bar and collars are to be:
 - (1.) 55 pounds if using 5 pound collars
 - (2.) 55 pounds if using 2 ½ pound collars in combination with 2 ½ pound discs
 - (3.) 50 pounds if using a 2 ½ pound collars without discs
 - (4.) 45 pounds if using negligible weight plastic or spring collars
 - d. Diameter of the sleeve is 2",
 - e. There shall be a diameter machine marking or the bar taped so as to measure 32" between machining or tape.
2. DISCS shall conform as follows:

- a. All discs used in competition must weigh within .25 percent of their correct face value,
- b. The hole size in the middle of the disc may be a maximum of 2.25" to 2" minimum,
- c. 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 arranged so that they can read the numbers of each disc,
- d. 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,
- e. The diameter of the largest disc shall be no more than 20".

C. COLLARS

1. Shall always be used in competition.
2. Collars may weigh 5 pounds each, 2 ½ pounds each, or be negligible weight as long as they are used in matched pairs and combined weight of the collars and bar are consistent with specifications above for "Bar".

D. SQUAT RACKS

1. 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 spotter/loaders. It may consist of a one-piece unit or two separate stands designed to hold the bar in a horizontal position.
2. The squat rack shall be designed to adjust.
3. Height adjustments should be made in incremental stages not to exceed 2 inches.
4. All hydraulic racks must be capable of being secured at the required height by means of pins.

E. BENCH

1. The bench must be of a sturdy construction and provide stability and conform to the following dimensions:
 - a. Length – not less than 4' and shall be flat and level,
 - b. Width – 11" to 12.25",
 - c. Height – 16" to 18" measured from the floor to the top of the padded surface of the bench without being depressed or compacted.
 - d. Minimum width between insides of bar rests shall be 4'.

F. LIGHTS

1. A system of lights shall be provided whereby the judges make known their decisions.
2. Each judge will control two lights with one representing a “good lift” and the other “no lift”.
3. The lights should be arranged horizontally to correspond with the positions of the three judges. They should be wired in such a way that they light up together and not separately when activated by the three judges.
4. For emergency purposes, i.e., a breakdown in the electrical system, the judges will manually (flags, thumbs up or thumbs down) make known their decisions.

V. COSTUME AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

A. THE LIFTING SUIT

The lifting suit shall consist of a one-piece full-length suit of a one-ply stretch material without any additional patches or padding. The straps must be worn over the shoulders at all times while lifting in competition. The lifting suit shall also be subject to the following requirements:

1. It may be any color or combination of colors.
2. Emblems may be worn on the lifting suit if they do not aid the lifter in his attempt.
3. Length of the leg must not exceed 6” from the middle of the crotch. Measurement is to be taken by making a line from the top seam of the crotch and measuring down the inseam of the leg from this line.
4. Any alterations to the costume, which exceed the established widths, lengths or thicknesses previously mentioned, shall make the suit illegal for competition.
5. Denim and/or canvas have been deemed to be non-stretch, non-elastic materials. Squat suits and/or singlets made of denim and/or canvas have been judged to unduly compromise the joint integrity of the young lifter, and so will not be allowed in T.H.S.P.A. competition.
6. Leotards with sleeves or high cut leg lines or any other lifting suit not meeting specification listed above are not permitted.
7. Suits that have straps that are too long may be stitched and if they are stitched the bar must be placed behind the stitching and the straps must stick

straight up. No other means of gathering or twisting will be allowed, including using tape, wrist wraps etc

B. SHIRTS WORN WITH SINGLET

A short sleeved or sleeveless-SHIRT must be worn under the lifting singlet during squat and bench press. A t-shirt in conjunction with a bench press shirt is not allowed. When a short sleeve t-shirt is worn, the sleeve must remain at least .25" above the elbow, but shall not be pushed or rolled up. When a sleeveless t-shirt is worn, it shall have a sewn hem at the shoulder. No cut off sleeves or tank tops will be allowed. The T-shirt must be made of lycra, cotton, polyester or a combination of the three. Other materials not per this specification are not permitted except as listed in V-B-4 to follow.

1. It may have a "V" or "U" shaped collar.
2. It may be of any color or combination of colors.
3. It shall not have any pockets, buttons, zippers, velcro, or collar other than per V-B-1.
4. Bench press shirts of a common commercially accepted design will be allowed. It shall consist of a one-piece, one-ply stretch material without any additional patches or padding. However, denim and/or canvas have been judged to unduly compromise the joint integrity of the young lifter, and so will not be allowed in T.H.S.P.A. competition. Shirts that utilize an elasticized portion across the chest must have an approved THSPA patch on the front of the shirt.
5. Deadlift or upper torso support shirts of a common commercially accepted design will be allowed. It shall consist of a one-piece, one-ply stretch material without any additional patches or padding.
6. Emblems may be worn on the T-shirt in T.H.S.P.A. competition, but may not include obscene or suggestive designs.

C. UNDERGARMENTS

An athletic supporter or standard cotton or nylon briefs of a single ply may be worn under the lifting suit. Swimming trunks or any other undergarments consisting of rubberized or similar stretch material are not permitted. The undergarments shall have no legs. Girdles or tights in conjunction with the lifting suit are strictly forbidden. Lifting briefs of a common commercially accepted design may be worn as underwear in conjunction with the lifting suit. A combination of underwear and lifting briefs is not allowed. Lifting briefs shall consist of a one-piece, one-ply stretch material without any additional patches or padding.

D. SOCKS

1. Socks may be of any color or combination of colors.
2. They shall not be of such length on the leg that they are underneath the knee wrapping or one-piece kneecap supporters when in use. This does not pertain to the piece of knee wrapping that is used to tie off the knee wrap.
3. Socks may not extend beyond the bottom surface of the kneecap.
4. Tights or hose are strictly forbidden.

E. SHOES OR BOOTS

Shoes or boots shall be worn; the heels of which shall not extend laterally beyond the upper edge of the shoes

1. Shoes shall be taken to include boots, sport shoes, trainers, gymnastic slippers or any foot covering that has a patterned molding or foot type outline that provides an inner sole.
2. Shoes with metal, rubber or molded cleats or spikes are not permitted.

F. BELTS

A competitor may wear a belt. If worn it shall be on the outside of the lifting suit.

1. MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

- a. The belt may be of any material.
- b. The belt may have padding.
- c. If a leather belt is used, the tongue loop shall be attached by means of studs and/or stitching.
- d. The name of the lifter's nation, state, school, mascot, club, or name may appear on the outside of the belt.
- e. Belts with lever action buckles are allowed as long as they meet all other requirements mentioned above and below.
- f. Belts with velcro strapping are also allowed as long as they meet all requirements mentioned above and below.

2. DIMENSIONS

- a. Width of belt – maximum of 4 inches.
- b. Thickness of belt – maximum of .5" along the main length.
- c. Outside width of buckle – maximum of 5".

G. WRAPS

1. Only wraps or bandages of one-ply commercially woven elastic that is covered with polyester, cotton or a combination of either materials, or medical crepe are permitted. Bandages of rubber or rubberized substitutes are strictly forbidden.
2. Wraps may be used as follows:
 - a. WRISTS – Wraps not exceeding 39” in length and 3” in width may be worn. Alternatively, wristbands not exceeding 4” in width may be worn. A combination of the two is forbidden.
 - (1) If wristbands are wrap-around type, they may have a thumb loop and Velcro patch securing them. The thumb loop may be worn over the thumb during the actual lift if it is a commercially made wrist wrap of elastic material, no more than 3/8” in width, and is not deemed supportive by the meet director or chief judge.
 - (2) A wrist wrap shall not extend beyond 4” above and 1” below the center of the wrist joint, not exceeding a total of 4.75” in both directions.
 - b. KNEES – Wraps not exceeding 2.5 meters in length and 3” in width may be used. A knee wrap shall not extend beyond 6” below the center of the knee joint and not to exceed 12” in both directions. These dimensions for wrap below the knee do not apply to the portion that may hang down as a loose tag after securing the wrap. Alternatively, an elasticized kneecap supporter not exceeding 12” in length may be worn. A combination of the two is forbidden. Knee wraps that utilize a Velcro closure are allowed.

H. PLASTERS

1. Two layers of plaster, bandages or band-aids may be worn on the thumbs, but nowhere else without official permission of the Rules committee or Chief Judge. No plaster, bandage or band-aid may be used as a strap to help the lifter hold the bar.
2. With permission of the Rules committee or Chief Judge, the official doctor or paramedic on duty may apply plasters, bandages or band aids to injuries on the inside of the hand, but in no circumstances must the plaster, bandage or band aid continue around the back of the hand.
3. The official doctor or paramedic on duty shall inform the chief Judge and the President of the Rules committee immediately after applying plasters, bandages or band-aids to the injuries. He may also give advice regarding additional plasters, bandages, or band-aids that he may consider necessary.

However, these may only be applied with the permission of the Rules committee.

4. At all competitions where a Rules committee may not be present and no medical personnel are on duty, the Chief Judge shall have jurisdiction over the use of spot plasters.

I. INSPECTION OF COSTUME AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

1. Any competitor wearing a costume or using personal equipment during a lift inconsistent with items previously mentioned under Costume and Personal Equipment shall be given a “no lift” after completion of the lift.
2. Hat/head coverings cannot be worn on the platform. Jewelry cannot be worn on the platform. Any competitor wearing hat/head coverings or jewelry during an attempt will be given a “no lift” after completion of the attempt.
3. A competitor participating in a sanctioned T.H.S.P.A. meet may be subject to an official inspection of his costume or personal equipment by judges at any time. Any costume or equipment that might be considered questionable should be brought to the meet director for approval prior to use.
4. IN GENERAL:
 - a. The use of oil, grease or other lubricants on the body, costume personal equipment or lifting equipment is strictly forbidden.
 - b. Powder is prohibited.
 - c. Chalk (Magnesium Carbonate) may be applied on the hands, shoulders, knees and buttocks.
 - d. No foreign substance may be applied to any wrapping material or equipment, except per V-1-4-c above, which may result in chalk on a shirt or transferred to a wrap after having been applied to the knee area.
 - e. No sniffing of any substance is allowed.
 - f. **No head slapping or slapping to any part of the body is allowed by coaches or teammates.**
 - g. A violation of any of the above general rules may result in disqualification of the lifter from competition at the discretion of the meet director.

VI. POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE

A. SQUAT

1. The bar shall be held horizontally across the shoulders with the hands and fingers gripping the bar and the feet flat on the platform with the knees in a stationary and stable position.
2. The lifter may enlist the help of the spotter/loaders in removing the bar from the racks; however, once the bar has cleared the racks, the spotter/loader shall not assist the lifter any further with regards to proper positioning, foot placement, bar positioning, etc.
3. The lifter shall wait for the Chief Judge's signal, motionless in a full upright position with knees in a stable and stationary position. The signal will be given as soon as the lifter is properly positioned or is in what is determined by the Chief Judge to be the lifter's elected start position. The Chief Judge's signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and audible command "Squat."
4. Upon receiving the Chief Judge's signal, the lifter must lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is **lower** than the top of the kneecaps.
5. The lifter must recover at will, with one continuous movement and without double bouncing or any downward movement to a full upright and stable position with the legs in a stationary and stable position. When he has recovered to a motionless full upright position with his knees locked or is in what is determined by the Chief Judge to be the lifter's elected finish position the Chief Judge will give the signal to replace the bar.
6. The signal to replace the bar will consist of a backward motion of the hand and the audible command "Rack." Once the "Rack" command has been given, the spotters may assist the lifter in racking the weight. The lifter must continue to support the bar until it is safely returned to the rack, but the first step does not have to be forward as long as the lifter is making a bona fide attempt to return the bar to the racks.
7. The lifter shall face the front of the platform.
8. The lifter shall not hold the collars, sleeves, or plates anytime 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 sleeve.
9. No more than five, and no less than three spotter/loaders shall be on the platform at any time.

10. If failure in an attempt was due to an error by one or more of the spotter/loaders, the lifter may be given an additional attempt of the same weight at the Chief Judge's discretion. This attempt will occur at the end of the round.

B. CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF A SQUAT

Note: *The Chief Judge/Head Judge shall not call depth on squat. Otherwise, all platform judges are responsible to assess all performance aspects of the squat.*

1. Failure to observe the Chief Judge's signals at the commencement or completion of a lift.
2. Changing the position of the hands or fingers laterally on the bar after the "Squat" command and prior to receiving the "Rack" command. Opening and closing of the hands or fingers will be allowed as long as they are returned to their original position.
3. Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift as defined by non-continuous movement.
4. Failure to assume an upright position with the legs in a stationary and stable position at the commencement and completion of the lift. A lifter must recover with one continuous movement until the lifter is standing in a full, upright position with the legs in a stationary and stable position.
5. Any shifting of the feet laterally, backwards or forward, after the "Squat" signal but prior to the "Rack" command. The lifter's heel or toe may rise from the platform as long as when returned to the platform it is in the original location.
6. Failure to lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top of the kneecaps.
7. Changing the position of the bar across the shoulders after the "Squat" signal, but prior to the "Rack" command.
8. Contact with the bar by the spotter-loaders between the Chief Judge's commands.
9. Contact of the elbows or upper arms with the legs.
10. Failure to make a bona fide attempt to return the bar to the racks.
11. Any intentional dropping or dumping of the bar.
12. If a lifter initiates his squat attempt prior to the "Squat" command, the Chief Judge will wait until the lifter finishes his "unofficial" attempt and demonstrates motionless control of the bar in a full upright position with knees locked or the lifter's elected start position as determined by the Chief Judge before giving the "squat" command. Thus, the judges will only judge an attempt that is started after the "squat" command. If the lifter racks the bar after an

“unofficial” attempt, that attempt is disqualified, and the lifter forfeits that attempt.

13. Contact with the power rack supports as the lifter is attempting recovery to a full upright position that results in downward movement of the bar or is judged to have assisted or saved the lift.

C. BENCH PRESS

1. The front of the bench press bench must be placed on the platform with the back of the racks facing the Chief Judge.
2. The lifter must lie on his back with head, shoulders and buttocks in contact with the flat bench surface. His shoes must be flat on the floor. The position must be maintained between the “Press” and “Rack” signals.
3. To achieve firm footing, the lifter may use plates or blocks, not exceeding 7” in height, to build up the surface of the platform. Whichever method is chosen, the entire foot must be flat on the surface. If blocks are used, they shall not exceed 18”x18”.
4. No more than four and no less than two spotter/loaders shall be on the platform at any time. The lifter may enlist the help of the spotter/loaders in removing the bar from the racks. The lifters’ coach or teammate may be enlisted in removing the bar from the racks, but may not coach or encourage the lifter in any way during the course of the attempt. If a coach is spotting he may stay behind the lifter for safety, and the head judge will move so he can properly see the chest of the lifter to give the “press” command.
5. The spacing of the hands shall not exceed 32 inches measured between the forefingers.
6. After receiving the bar the lifter shall lower the bar to his torso and await the judge’s signal.
7. The signal to commence the lift shall be the audible command “Press” and will be given as soon as the bar is motionless on the torso.
8. After the signal to commence the lift has been given, the bar is pressed vertically until arms are fully extended and held motionless until the audible command “Rack” is given.

D. CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF A BENCH PRESS

Note: All platform judges are responsible to assess all performance aspects of the bench press.

1. Failure to observe the Chief Judge’s signals at the commencement or completion of the lift.

2. Any change in the elected lifting position after the “Press” command but prior to the “Rack” command that results in the lifter’s head, shoulders, or buttocks breaking contact with the flat bench surface, the lifter’s feet not remaining flat on the floor or moving from their original point of contact on the floor, lateral movement of the hands on the bar, or opening and closing the hands on the bar.
3. Allowing the bar to sink into the chest after receiving the judge’s “Press” signal.
4. The bar stops or descends in the course of being pressed out.
5. Contact with the bar by the spotter/loaders between “Press” and “Rack” commands.
6. Any contact of the lifter’s feet with the bench or its supports.
7. Contact with the bench uprights during the press that results in stopping or downward movement of the bar or is judged to have assisted or saved the lift.
8. Hand spacing of greater than 32 inches as measured between the forefingers.
9. Any intentional folding of the bench shirt during the course of the lift which results in a two ply advantage for the lifter.

E. DEADLIFT

1. The bar must be laid motionless horizontally in front of the lifter’s feet, gripped with an optional grip in both hands, and lifted with one continuous movement until the lifter is standing in a full upright position.
2. The lifter shall face the front of the platform.
3. On completion of the lift, the knees shall be locked with the lifter standing in a full upright position.
4. The Chief Judge’s signal shall consist of a movement of the hand and the audible command “Down”. The signal will be given when the bar is motionless and the lifter is in their apparent finished position.
5. Any raising of the bar or any deliberate attempt to do so will count as an attempt.

F. CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF A DEADLIFT

Note: All platform judges are to assess all performance aspects of the deadlift.

1. Any stopping or downward movement of the bar before it reaches the final position (called a hitch).
2. Failure to stand in a full upright position with the knees locked.

3. Supporting the bar at the thighs during the performance of the lift.
4. Any lateral movement of the feet, or stepping backward or forward after initiating the pull, but prior to the “Down” signal. The lifter’s heel or toe may rise from the platform as long as when returned to the platform it is in the original position.
5. Lowering the bar before receiving the Chief Judge’s signal.
6. Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands.

VII. WEIGHING-IN

- A. Body weight categories consist of the following twelve weight classes:*

114 lbs.	148 lbs.	198 lbs.	275 lbs.
123 lbs.	165 lbs.	220 lbs.	308 lbs
132 lbs.	181 lbs.	242 lbs.	Super Heavyweight

*Each of these weights is the **maximum** legal body weight to lift in that particular weight class.

- B. Weighing-in of the competitors must take place no earlier than 2 ½ hours before the start of the competition for a particular category. All lifters in the category must attend the weigh-in, which will be carried out in the presence of appointed officials for that category.
- C. The weigh-in period will last 1 1/2 hours or until all lifters have been weighed. The remaining time before the commencement of lifting will be used for the purpose of final competition preparation.
- D. Any weigh-in procedure which does not take place “on-site” (i.e. “honor system weigh-in”, “call-in weigh-in”) is strictly prohibited. A Regional Director must not accept results from an invitational where the weigh-in procedure is in conflict with T.H.S.P.A. Rules and By-laws.
- E. Lifters must be weighed nude or in appropriate underwear, which complies with the specifications, set out in the appropriate section of the rulebook and which does not effectively change the lifter’s weight. If a question exists regarding weight of undergarments, a re-weigh in the nude may be requested.
- F. If not previously carried out, the inspection of the costume and personal equipment will take place as the lifter is approaching the platform prior to their attempt.

- G. Each lifter may only be weighed once. Only those whose body weight is heavier or lighter than the category limits of the category entered are allowed to return to the scales. They must return to the scales and make weight within the limits of the hour and one half allowed for the weigh-in; otherwise they will be eliminated from the competition for that body weight category. A lifter can only be re-weighed after all lifters in the same body weight category have been weighed once. Lifters trying to make weight may be reweighed as often as time and orderly progression allows. A lifter may only be weighed outside the time limit of one one-half hour if he presents himself within the time limit, but due to the number of lifters trying to make weight, he is denied the opportunity of mounting the scales. He may then be allowed one reweigh at the discretion of the judges.
- H. Lifters may only compete in the weight class in which they qualify at the official weigh-in. At all regional and state meets, lifters must lift in the weight class in which they have qualified. Failure to make proper weight will eliminate the lifter from competition.
- I. 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 reweighed and the lighter person will take precedence over the heavier person. However, if they still weigh the same after re-weighing, they will then share the placing, and each receives an award. In such circumstances, the same procedure will be adopted to determine the record holder.
- J. Opening weights shall be declared by the lifter at the weigh-in for all three lifts (squat, bench and deadlift) and may not be changed after the lifter's card is turned in.
- K. Early weigh-in will only be allowed at regional and state meets. Invitational meets shall have a single weigh-in time, and said weigh-in shall take place on the day of the invitational.

VIII. THE “ROUND SYSTEM,” BAR LOADING PROGRESSION, AND WEIGHT CHANGES AFTER DECLARATION

- A. All T.H.S.P.A. regional and state meets will use the “rounds” system of competition. Each lifter will take his first attempt in the first round, his second attempt in the second round, and his third attempt in the third round. Weights will be in pounds with a minimum progression of five pounds per attempt.
- B. Where 10 or more lifters are competing in a session, groups (“flights”) may be formed consisting of approximately equal numbers of lifters. It is suggested that groups be formed when 15 or more lifters are competing in the same session. A

session can be composed of a single bodyweight category or any combination of bodyweight categories at the discretion of the meet director.

- C. In normal competition, the bar is loaded progressively. The lifter requiring the lightest weight will lift first. The bar cannot be reduced in weight once a lift has been performed with the weight announced. Therefore, it is necessary for a lifter or his coach to observe the progressive loading of the bar and be ready to make his attempt at the chosen weight. At no time will the weight of the bar be lowered within a round except for errors as described in Section X, and then only at the end of the round.
- D. Second and third attempts shall be submitted within one minute of the lifter's prior completed attempt. If no attempt is given within one minute of the lifter's prior completed attempt, the lifter's subsequent attempt shall be increased by 5 lbs.
- E. All rounds shall be governed by the order of increase in weight; therefore, the lifting order will change from round to round. The order of lifting is always from the lowest to the highest weight. When two lifters are attempting the same weight, their lifting order is originally determined by lot numbers, and subsequently determined by the order in which the subsequent attempts are submitted to the expeditor.
- F. All attempts in the second and third rounds shall be equal to or greater than the previous attempts.
- G. After an original declaration of weight attempt, a lifter will be allowed two changes ("bumps") of weight on second and third attempts during the competition. Each lifter will be allowed a maximum of two weight changes throughout the course of the meet. These changes must be made by a coach prior to an individual lifter being called to the bar and the bar is properly loaded. The bar is not considered to be loaded until it is loaded for that particular lift. A lifter may bump (up or down in weight) to a weight as long as it is not less than a previous attempt or less than what is loaded on the bar. Once loaded, weight can never be taken off the bar (collars included).
 - 1. Example #1 – Lifters A, B, C and D are all scheduled to attempt a 500-lb. deadlift. As lifter B is lowering his successful attempt, lifter C's coach bumps lifter C's attempt to 550 lbs. CORRECT INTERPRETATION of Item #G.
 - 2. Example #2 – Lifters A, B and C are all scheduled to attempt a 500 lb. deadlift, while lifter D is scheduled to attempt a 550 lb. deadlift. As lifter D's coach sees that lifter C's attempt is unsuccessful, he bumps lifter D's attempt down to 500 lbs. CORRECT INTERPRETATION of Item #G and #H, as long as lifter D had not previously attempted greater than 500 lbs.

3. Example #3 – Immediately after lifter A's attempt at a 500 lb. deadlift, the Speaker/Announcer declares the bar loaded for lifter B. Lifter B's coach then approaches the Expeditor about bumping up to a different weight. INCORRECT INTERPRETATION of Item #G.
4. In the round following an unsuccessful attempt at a 500 lb. deadlift, lifter A bumps to a 475 lb. third attempt. INCORRECT INTERPRETATION of Item #G.

IX. Order of Competition

- A. The Meet Director will appoint the following officials:
 1. Speaker/Announcer
 2. Time Keepers (Preferably the Chief Judge on each platform)
 3. Marshals/Expeditors
 4. Scorers
 5. Spotter/loaders
 6. Additional officials may be appointed as required, e.g. doctors, paramedics, etc.
- B. Responsibilities of the officials are:
 1. The Speaker is responsible for the efficient running of the competition. He acts as Master of Ceremonies and arranges the attempts chosen by the lifters in an orderly fashion, dictated by weight. He announces the weight required for the next attempt and the name/number of the lifter. When the bar is loaded and the platform cleared from lifting, the Chief Judge 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 then be displayed upon some type of scoreboard or projection screen erected in a prominent position for each platform.
 2. The Time Keeper is responsible for accurately recording the time lapse between the announcement that the bar is ready; and the lifter starting his attempt. He is also responsible for recording the time allowances whenever required, e.g. after an attempt the lifter shall leave the platform within 30 seconds. Refer to Item D, this section.
 3. The lifter is allowed one minute in which to start his attempt after the bar has been called ready for his attempt. If he does not start his attempt within this time allowance, the time keeper will call time and the Chief Judge 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 touches the bar

within the prescribed time allowance, the clock will be stopped. However, if the lifter touches the bar in an attempt to stop the clock and disengage the bar to adjust his costume, belt or to receive instructions from his coach, the Chief Judge will declare a “No Lift”.

4. If a lifter is following himself in the order of lifting, after completion of his initial lift there will be a 3 minute allowance prior to calling the bar ready. The lifter will then have one minute in which to start his attempt.
5. Once a clock is running for a lifter, it can only be stopped by the completion of a time allowance, by the start of a lift, or at the discretion of the Chief Judge. Consequently, it is of great importance that the lifter or his coach check the height of the squat racks prior to being called, as once the bar is announced as being ready, the clock will be started. Any further adjustments to the racks must be made within the lifter’s one-minute time allowance, unless the required adjustment is due to an error by a meet or platform official.
6. The definition of the start of an attempt depends upon the particular lift being performed. In the squat and the bench press, the start is to coincide with the judge’s commencement signal. Refer to “Judge”, Item C. In the deadlift, the start is when the lifter makes a determined attempt to raise the bar.
7. Marshals/Expeditors are responsible for collecting the weight of the required attempts from the lifters or their coaches and passing the information without delay to the speaker. The Marshall will approach the lifter immediately after an attempt and request the weight required for the next attempt. The lifter is allowed one minute between completing his last attempt and informing the speaker, via the Marshall, of the weight required for his next attempt.
8. Scorers are responsible for accurately recording the progress of the competition.
9. Spotter/Loaders are responsible for loading and unloading the bar, adjusting squat racks or benches as required, cleaning the bar or platform at the request of the Chief Judge, and generally ensuring that the platform is well maintained and presents a neat and tidy appearance at all times. At no time shall there be less than two or more than five spotter-loaders on the platform. When the lifter prepares for an attempt on a squat or bench, the spotter/loaders may assist him in removing the bar from the racks. However, they should not touch the bar from the commencement command until the completion command. The only exception to this rule being that if the lift is in jeopardy and likely to result in injury to the lifter, the spotter/loaders may, either at the request of the Chief Judge or the lifter himself, step in and relieve the lifter of the bar. If the lifter is deprived of an otherwise successful attempt by the error of a spotter/loader and through no fault of his own, he may be awarded another attempt at the same weight at the discretion of the judges at the end of the round.

- C. During competition, only the lifter and his coach, members of the rules committee, officiating judges and spotter/loaders will be allowed around the platform. During the execution of a lift, only the lifter, spotter/loaders and the judges are permitted to be present on or in contact with the platform.
1. Teammates or coaches filling the role of spotter/loader on squat, bench or deadlift will be considered platform workers and are prohibited from coaching or encouraging the lifter.
 2. Coaches are allowed to encourage their lifters from the sides and back of the platform only and must not:
 - a. be in contact with the platform at any time during the execution of the lift,
 - b. obstruct the judges view of the lifter,
 - c. or impede the normal flow of the competition.
 3. Coaching is not allowed from the front/head (Chief Judge side) of the platform. Coaching or encouragement from a location inconsistent with those specified or while in contact with the platform may, at the discretion of the judges; result in “no lift”.
 4. Coaches/teammates are not to attempt to relocate spotters/loaders. If there is a perceived need to relocate a spotter/loader, the coach/teammate shall make the request for adjustment with the judge located closest to the spotter/loader in question. Whether the spotter/loader relocates is at the discretion of the judge. The primary responsibility of the spotter/loader during the execution of a lift is to ensure lifter safety. Judges are to ensure that the spotter/loader position best addresses this responsibility. However, positioning of the spotter/loader should be to allow an unobstructed view by judges so they can assess the lift, and should also consider the coach’s similar need.
- D. The lifter may adjust the belt or costume on the platform if the adjustment is made within the one minute time limit.
- E. Three unsuccessful attempts in any lift will automatically eliminate the lifter from the competition.
- F. Other than the initial removal of the bar from the racks, the lifter will not receive any help from the spotter/loaders in positioning himself for an attempt.
- G. If during the competition, a lifter suffers injury, the official doctor has the right of examination. If he considers it inadvisable for the lifter to continue, the doctor

- may, in consultation with the Rules committee, insist upon the lifter retiring from the competition. The coach must be officially informed of such a decision.
- H. Any lifter or coach, who by reason of his misconduct upon or near the competition platform is likely to discredit the sport, which includes profanity or unprofessional conduct toward an official, may be disqualified at the discretion of the platform judges or rules committee. The coach or lifter must be officially informed of the disqualification. There must be a majority of judges that agree that the coach's or lifter's actions are worthy of disqualification. This rulebook will serve as the first and only warning.
 - I. All appeals are subject to the rules committee at regional and state meets as well as invitational meets if such a committee is appointed. All decisions are final.
 - J. A break of five minutes may take place between the completion of one lift and the commencement of another, i.e., between the squat and the bench press, and between the bench press and the deadlift.
 - K. The Meet Director will be solely responsible for decisions taken in the case of loading errors or incorrect announcements by the speaker. His decision will be given to the speaker who will make the appropriate announcement.

X. EXAMPLES OF ERRORS IN LOADING

- A. If the bar is loaded lighter than the weight originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter may accept the successful attempt or elect to take the attempt again at the originally requested weight. If the erroneous light attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the originally requested weight.
- B. If the bar is loaded to a heavier weight than originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter will be granted the attempt. However, the weight may be reduced again if required for other lifters. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the originally requested weight.
- C. If the loading is not the same on each side, any change occurs on the bar or discs during the execution of the lift, or the platform is disarranged and the lift is successful, the lifter may take the attempt or elect to take the attempt again. If the original attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted a further attempt.
- D. If the speaker makes a mistake by announcing a weight lighter or heavier than that requested by the lifter, the Meet Director will make the same decisions as for errors in loading.

- E. If for any reason it is not possible for the lifter or his coach to remain in the vicinity of the platform in order to follow the progress of the competition and the lifter misses his attempt because the speaker omitted to announce him at the appropriate weight, then the weight will be reduced as necessary and the lifter allowed to take his attempt at the end of the round.

XI. JUDGES

- A. The judges shall be three in number: A chief or center judge and two side judges.
 B. The Chief Judge is responsible for giving the necessary signals for all three lifts.
 C. Signals required for the three lifts are as follows:

Lift	Commencement	Completion
Squat	A visual signal consisting of downward movement of the arm together with the audible command "Squat"	A visual signal consisting of a backward movement of the arm together with the audible Command "Rack".
Bench Press	Audible command "Press". If the lifter is deaf, the Chief Judge may give a visual signal to the lifter.	A visual signal consisting of a movement of the arm towards the judge together with the Audible signal of the command "Rack".
Deadlift	No signal required	A visual signal consisting of a downward movement of the arm with the audible of the command "Down".

- D. Once the bar has been replaced in the racks or on the platform at the completion of the lift, the judges will announce their decisions by means of the lights. One color for a "good lift" and another for "no lift."
 E. The three judges must arrange themselves in what they consider to be the best viewing positions around the platform for each of the three lifts. However, the Chief Judge must always bear in mind the need to be easily visible to the lifter performing the squat or deadlift.
 F. Before the contest, the judges shall jointly ascertain that the platform and competition equipment complies in all respects with the rules. Defective equipment is to be discarded.
 G. During the contest the judges must jointly ascertain that:

1. The weight of the loaded bar agrees with the weight announced by the speaker. Judges may be issued loading charts for this purpose.
 2. On the platform the lifter's costume is consistent with requirements under V. COSTUME AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT. If any judge has reason to doubt a lifter's integrity in this respect, he must after the completion of the lift, inform the Meet Director of these suspicions. The three judges may then examine the lifter's costume and personal equipment. If he is found guilty of wearing anything inconsistent with previously stated requirements, the attempt will be deemed "no lift".
- H. A judge shall not attempt to influence the decisions of the other judges.
- I. The Chief Judge may consult with side judges, the rules committee, or any other official as necessary in order to expedite the competition.
- J. Selection of judges will be the responsibility of the Regional Directors and the State Executive Committee for all regional and state meets. All invitational meet directors must receive certification of judges by the proper Regional Director for the meet to be sanctioned by the T.H.S.P.A. and totals to count toward regional qualifying.
- K. All judges presiding over T.H.S.P.A. Regional and State meets must be T.H.S.P.A. certified.
- L. For all invitational meets, at least one judge at each platform must be certified by T.H.S.P.A. Any school hosting a T.H.S.P.A. certified meet on the last regional qualifying date of the invitational meet season must provide certified judges for each of the three judge positions at each platform.
- M. At the discretion of the meet director, a rules committee may be formed to ensure that the technical rules are correctly applied. Although not required THSPA recommends that a rules committee be appointed for all invitational meets.
- N. During the competition the Rules committee may, by a majority vote, replace any judge whose decisions in its opinion, prove him to be incompetent. The judge concerned must have received a warning prior to any action of dismissal.
- O. The impartiality of judges cannot be doubted, but a mistake in judging can be committed in good faith. In such a case, the judge shall be allowed to give his explanation for making the decision, which is the subject of his warning.

- P. If a serious mistake occurs in the judging which is contrary to the technical rules, the rules committee may take appropriate action to correct the mistake. They may, at their discretion, grant the lifter a further attempt.
- Q. The rules committee shall not at any time overrule or change the decisions of the judges.
- R. THSPA recommends a fee of \$100.00 for all certified judges for any invitational meet.
- S. No video or pictures shall be reviewed by either judges or the rules committee for the purpose of overturning a judge's decision. All results are final at the conclusion of the meet

XII. DRUG TESTING POLICIES

The Texas High School Powerlifting Association strongly discourages the use of any performance-enhancing substances, such as anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, diuretics, or psychomotor stimulants. Competition in the THSPA is limited to lifters who have not used any form of strength enhancing drugs or hormones.

- A. The THSPA reserves the right to drug test at the State and Regional Championships by way of urinalysis for the presence of prohibited substances.
- B. The THSPA considers the following to be prohibited substances:
 - 1. Anabolic Steroids, including testosterone and related compounds
 - 2. Natural and Synthetic Growth Hormone
 - 3. Psychomotor Stimulants
 - 4. Drugs used as masking agents
- C. Competitors chosen as subjects for drug testing should be drawn at random from a pool of the top five finishers from each weight class.
- D. Urinalysis testing should take place following the individual lifter's competition.
- E. Any lifter testing positive for prohibited substances is automatically disqualified from the competition for which he was tested.

- F. Any lifter testing positive for prohibited substances has the option of being re-tested for the prohibited substance within a time period of 21 days.
- G. A THSPA approved laboratory should evaluate the urinalysis testing.
- H. Random drug tests may be administered at the state meet to discourage the use of substances that may be harmful to the athlete's physical and psychological development. Any lifter refusing this test, or any lifter who tests positive, will be disqualified from competition. In cases where team and individual awards and points are involved, these points and/or awards will be given to the next highest finisher in the competition.