

# MSA POWERLIFTING RULES

## POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE

### Squat

1. The lifter shall face the front of the platform. The bar shall be held horizontally across the shoulders, hands and fingers gripping the bar. The hands may be positioned anywhere on the bar inside and or in contact with the inner collars.
2. After removing the bar from the racks, (the lifter may be aided in removal of the bar from the racks by the spotter / loaders) the lifter must move backwards to establish the starting position. When the lifter is motionless, erect with knees locked, and the bar properly positioned the Chief Referee will give the signal to begin the lift. The signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command "Squat".  
Before receiving the signal to "squat" the lifter may make any position adjustments within the rules, without penalty. For reasons of safety the lifter will be requested to "Replace" the bar, together with a backward movement of the arm, if after a period of five seconds he is not in the correct position to begin the lift. The Chief Referee will then convey the reason why the signal was not given.
3. Upon receiving the Chief Referee's signal the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the hip joint is lower than the knee joint. Only one decent attempt is allowed.  
The attempt is deemed to have commenced when the lifters knees have unlocked.
4. The lifter must recover at will to an upright position with the knees locked. Double bouncing at the bottom of the squat attempt or any downward movement is not permitted. When the lifter is motionless (in the apparent final position) the Chief Referee will give the signal to rack the bar.
5. The signal to rack the bar will consist of a backward motion of the arm and the audible command "Rack". The lifter must then move forward and return the bar to the racks. For reasons of safety the lifter may request the aid of the spotter / loaders in returning the bar to, and replacing it in the racks. The lifter must stay with the bar during this process.
6. Not more than five and not less than two spotter / loaders shall be on the platform at anytime. The Referees may decide to the number of spotter / loaders required on the platform at any time 2, 3, 4, or 5.

#### Causes for disqualification of a Squat:

1. Failure to observe the Chief Referee's signals at the commencement or completion of a

lift.

2. Double bouncing at the bottom of the lift, or any downward movement during the ascent.
3. Failure to assume an upright position with the knees locked at the commencement or completion of the lift.
4. Stepping backward or forward although lateral movement of the sole and rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted.
5. Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the hip joint is lower than the knee joint.
6. Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotter / loaders between the Chief Referee's signals in order to make the lift easier.
7. Contact of the elbows or upper arms with the legs. Slight contact is permitted if there is no supporting that might aid the lifter.
8. Any dropping or dumping of the bar after completion of the lift.
9. Dumping the bar. The meet director or any of the three officials have the right to disqualify the lifter on the spot.
10. Failure to comply with any of the items outlined under Rules of Performance for the squat.

### **Bench Press**

1. The lifter must lie on his back with shoulders and buttocks in contact with the bench surface. The head does not have to be. The feet can be either flat on the floor or on the toes. The lifter's hands and fingers must grip the bar positioned in the rack stands with a thumb around or thumbless grip. This position shall be maintained throughout the lift.
2. To achieve firm footing the lifter may use flat surfaced plates or blocks not exceeding 30 cm in total height to build up the surface of the platform.
3. Not more than five and not less than two spotters / loaders shall be on the platform at anytime. After correctly positioning himself, the lifter may enlist the help of the spotter / loaders in removing the bar from the racks. The lift off if assisted by the spotter / loaders doesn't have to be at arm's length. The lift starts at the chest, when the press command is given. The spotters/lifter off man cannot assist the bar to the lifter's chest.

4. The spacing of the hands shall not exceed 81 cm measured between the forefingers (both forefingers must be within the 81 cm marks and the whole of the forefingers must be in contact with the 81 cm marks if maximum grip is used). 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 and if necessary the bar will be marked accordingly. Reverse grip is permissible.

5. There will be no start command; the press begins at the chest.

6. After lowering the bar to the chest, 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 uneven extension of the arms. When held motionless in this position the audible command "Rack" shall be given together with a backward motion of the arm.

#### Causes for Disqualification of a Bench press

1. Failure to observe the Chief Referee's press or rack command.
2. Any change in the elected lifting position of the buttocks, from the bench, or movement of the feet on the floor / blocks / plates / or lateral movement of hands on the bar.
3. Heaving, or sinking the bar into the chest after it is motionless in such a way as to make the lift easier.
4. Any pronounced / exaggerated uneven extension of the arms during the lift.
5. Any downward movement of the bar in the course of being pressed out.
6. Failure to press the bar to full extension of the arms at the completion of the lift.
7. Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotter / loaders between the Chief Referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier.
8. Any contact of the lifter's feet with the bench or its supports.
9. Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rests support.
10. Failure to comply with any of the items outlined under the Rules of Performance.

#### **Deadlift**

1. The lifter shall face the front of the platform with the bar laid horizontally in front of the lifter's feet, gripped with an optional grip in both hands and lifted until the lifter is standing erect.
2. On completion of the lift the knees shall be locked in a straight position and the shoulders back.
3. The Chief Referee's signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command "Down". The signal will not be given until the bar is held motionless and the lifter is in the apparent finished position.
4. Any rising of the bar or any deliberate attempt to do so will count as an attempt. Once the attempt has begun no downward movement is allowed until the lifter reaches the erect position with the knees locked. If the bar settles as the shoulders come back (slightly downward on completion) this should not be reason to disqualify the lift.

#### Causes for Disqualification of a Deadlift.

1. Any downward movement of the bar before it reaches the final position.
2. Failure to stand erect with the shoulders back.
3. Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.
4. Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. If the bar edges up the thigh but is not supported this is not reason for disqualification. The lifter should benefit in all decisions of doubt made by the referee.
5. Stepping backward or forward, although lateral movement of the feet or rocking of the feet between ball and heel is permitted.
6. Lowering the bar before receiving the Chief Referee's signal.
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 hand.
8. Failure to comply with any of the items outlined under Rules of Performance.