



PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE IWF TECHNICAL AND COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS (TCRR)

July 2026

INTRODUCTION

The following recommendations were developed by USA Weightlifting's Technical Committee and are hereby presented to the IWF.

CHANGE #1 – ELIMINATION OF THE PRESS-OUT AS AN INCORRECT MOVEMENT

Proposal

USA Weightlifting proposes the removal of the “press-out” and “bending and extending the elbows” as criteria for determining an incorrect movement in the Snatch and the Clean & Jerk. Under this proposal, a lift shall be deemed successful if the athlete achieves a stable, motionless overhead position with fully extended arms and demonstrates control of the barbell, in accordance with all other existing rules.

This change would require amendment of the current IWF TCRR provisions related to incorrect movements to ensure that the method used to achieve the final locked-out position is no longer considered in judging the validity of the lift.

Rationale

The current application of the press-out rule has led to increasing inconsistency and subjectivity in officiating at the highest levels of competition. Recent international events have demonstrated that minimal or ambiguous elbow movement, often imperceptible in real time, can determine the outcome of lifts, medals, and final rankings. As a result, athletes are at risk of being penalized despite successfully bringing the barbell to a fully controlled overhead position.

This subjectivity introduces avoidable variability into competition outcomes, undermining the principle that results should be determined by clear, observable, and consistently applied criteria. It also creates confusion for spectators, reduces confidence in officiating decisions, and detracts from the overall presentation and credibility of the sport.

Objective

The objective of this proposal is to simplify and standardize the evaluation of a successful lift by focusing on the final position (control, stability, and full extension) rather than the method used to achieve it. By removing the press-out as a factor, the sport moves towards a more objective and transparent standard, ensuring that the best lift, as demonstrated by the final outcome, is consistently rewarded. The application

of a simplified rule will allow for more consistent judgment of lifts at all levels of the sport (from senior to youth age groups, and from international world championships to domestic local events).

Proposed Amendments to the IWF TCRR

The following sections would be deleted in their entirety to reflect this change:

2.5.1.4 – Finishing with a press-out

Finishing with a press-out

Deleted in its entirety.

2.5.1.5 – Bending and extending the elbows during the recovery

Bending and extending the elbows during the recovery

Deleted in its entirety.

PROPOSED CHANGE #2 – STAGE SIZE FLEXIBILITY

Proposal

USA Weightlifting proposes an amendment to Regulation 3.3.1 to reduce the minimum required stage size from 10 x 10 meters to 8 x 8 meters, while maintaining all existing safety, construction, and platform requirements. Additionally, the rule would allow the final stage dimensions to be determined by the host organizing committee, provided that visibility, safety, and officiating standards are preserved.

Under this proposal, the 4 x 4 meter competition platform remains unchanged, and all requirements related to stage construction, height, and safety features (including restraining bars and access) remain in force.

Rationale

The current minimum stage size requirement does not materially impact the technical execution or fairness of the competition. Athlete performance occurs entirely within the 4 x 4m competition platform, and referee positions are governed independently by distance and line-of-sight requirements.

An 8 x 8 meter stage provides sufficient space to maintain appropriate safety buffers, including adequate clearance between the platform, plate racks, and loaders, while preserving safe working conditions. Referees are positioned within a fixed proximity to the platform regardless of overall stage dimensions, meaning that increasing or decreasing stage size does not affect their ability to judge lifts.

In practice, recent international competitions have already operated with stage dimensions that do not strictly comply with the current rule, demonstrating that flexibility is both necessary and already informally accepted. This indicates that the existing requirement may not reflect operational realities.

Objective

The objective of this proposal is to introduce flexibility for organizing committees and the IWF in adapting stage dimensions to different venues, without compromising safety, visibility, or officiating standards. This

change would expand the range of viable host venues, reduce unnecessary constraints in event planning, and align the regulations with current practice.

Proposed Amendments to the IWF TCRR

The following section would be modified:

Regulation to 3.3.1 – Stage Requirements

Replace *The stage must measure a minimum of ten thousand (1000) x ten thousand (1000) cm.*

With: *The stage must measure a minimum of eight hundred (800) x eight hundred (800) cm. Stage size may be determined by the host organizing committee, provided that it ensures appropriate safety clearance, visibility for Referees and Jury, and suitable working space for loaders and technical officials.*

All other provisions within Regulation 3.3.1 (construction, height, access, and restraining bars) remain unchanged.

PROPOSED CHANGE #3 – LEAVING THE STAGE AFTER INITIATING AN ATTEMPT

Proposal

USA Weightlifting proposes the addition of a new incorrect movement to address situations where an athlete abandons an attempt after stepping onto the competition platform. Under this proposal, once an athlete has stepped onto the competition platform, leaving the stage before completing the lift will result in an immediate “No Lift.”

This change introduces a clear and enforceable standard that eliminates the need to wait for the attempt clock to expire in cases where the athlete has clearly abandoned the lift.

Rationale

Under the current rules, if an athlete approaches the barbell, initiates an attempt, and then abandons it before the barbell passes the knees the clock continues to run until it expires before a “No Lift” is recorded. This creates unnecessary delays and awkward dead time during competition, where the outcome is already evident to referees, spectators, and broadcasters.

This situation negatively impacts the flow of competition, disrupts broadcast presentation, and introduces confusion for audiences, who may interpret the delay as a technical issue rather than a procedural requirement. It also places referees in a passive position where no decision can be rendered despite the attempt being clearly concluded.

Objective

The objective of this proposal is to streamline competition flow and improve clarity by allowing referees to immediately conclude an attempt when it has been clearly abandoned. This removes unnecessary downtime, improves the viewing experience, and aligns officiating with the practical reality of the lift outcome.

Proposed Amendments to the IWF TCRR

The following section would be added:

2.5.1.6a – Leaving the Stage

Leaving the stage after stepping onto the competition platform and initiating an attempt.

Additional clarification: If the athlete raises the barbell from the platform but does not bring it to or beyond the level of the knees and then leaves the stage, the Referees shall immediately declare a “No Lift.”

PROPOSED CHANGE #4 – SIMPLIFICATION OF THE WEIGH-IN SECRETARIAT

Proposal

USA Weightlifting proposes an amendment to the weigh-in procedure set out in Regulation 6.4 so that the Weigh-in Secretariat is composed of one (1) Competition Secretary and two (2) additional weigh-in officials, rather than requiring referees to perform this function. Under this proposal, the athlete would continue to be weighed in the presence of two officials of the same gender, but those officials would no longer need to be referees. Any appropriately appointed IWF Technical Officials could perform this duty. This change would preserve the integrity of the weigh-in process while reducing unnecessary demands on referees assigned to competition duties.

Rationale

The current TCRR structure assigns referees to the weigh-in room and requires athletes to be weighed in the presence of two referees of the same gender. Regulation 6.4 currently provides that the Weigh-in Secretariat consists of the Competition Secretary, on-duty Referees, and optional assistant or weigh-in officials, and further states that each athlete must be weighed in the presence of two Referees of the same gender.

This approach places additional workload on referees before competition begins, despite the fact that the weigh-in function is administrative and procedural rather than adjudicative. Referees are the most important technical officials during the competition itself, and their primary value lies in judging lifts accurately and consistently on the field of play. Requiring them to spend additional time on weigh-in duties extends their working hours without providing a clear technical advantage to the competition.

A properly conducted weigh-in does not depend on referee judgment in the same way as lift adjudication. It requires accurate verification, recording, and procedural compliance. These responsibilities can be carried out effectively by other qualified technical officials, while allowing referees to remain fresher and better prepared for their principal role during competition.

Objective

The objective of this proposal is to simplify the weigh-in structure, use technical personnel more efficiently, and reduce unnecessary fatigue for referees. By removing referees from mandatory weigh-in

duty and assigning this function to designated weigh-in officials, the IWF would preserve the integrity of the process while improving officiating readiness and overall competition operations.

Proposed Amendments to the IWF TCRR

The following sections would be amended:

Regulation to 6.4, Section 2 – Weigh-in Secretariat

Replace the current text:

The Weigh-in Secretariat consists of:

- *Competition Secretary(s)*
- *on-duty Referees*
- *Assistant Competition Secretary(s) (optional)*
- *Weigh-in Official(s) (optional)*
- *Assistant Weigh-in Official(s) (optional)*

With:

The Weigh-in Secretariat consists of:

- *one (1) Competition Secretary*
- *two (2) additional Weigh-in Officials*

Regulation to 6.4, Section 3

Replace the current text: *Each athlete for all groups must be weighed in the presence of two Referees. Both of the Referees must be the same gender as the athlete.*

With: *Each athlete for all groups must be weighed in the presence of two Technical Officials. Both of the Technical Officials must be the same gender as the athlete.*

Regulation to 6.4, Section 4

Replace the current text: *Both Referees verify the athlete's bodyweight and provide it to the Competition Secretary (CS) by way of a handwritten note or electronic printout. The CS records the athlete's bodyweight on the Athlete's Card and Weigh-in List.*

With: *Both Technical Officials verify the athlete's bodyweight and provide it to the Competition Secretary (CS) by way of a handwritten note or electronic printout. The CS records the athlete's bodyweight on the Athlete's Card and Weigh-in List.*

PROPOSED CHANGE #5 – ALIGNING THE PUBLISHED START TIME WITH THE FIRST LIFT

Proposal

USA Weightlifting proposes an amendment to the IWF TCRR so that the official start time of a competition corresponds with the first lift, rather than the athlete introduction. Under this proposal, athlete and

Technical Official introductions would take place before the official start of the competition, and the first attempt would occur immediately upon expiration of the countdown clock at the published session start time.

This change would preserve a pre-session presentation window for athletes and officials while ensuring that the scheduled start time reflects the actual beginning of competitive action.

Rationale

The current rule structure provides for a ten-minute interval between athlete introduction and the first lift. In theory, this was intended to improve presentation by allowing spectators and broadcasters to see the introductions before lifting begins. In practice, the opposite has occurred. Broadcasters and viewers have adapted by timing coverage closer to the first lift rather than the listed session start, because they know there will be no competitive action for approximately ten to twelve minutes after the scheduled time.

As a result, weightlifting is placed at a disadvantage from a presentation standpoint. A session listed as starting at 10:00 does not actually begin with lifting at 10:00, but rather around 10:12 or later. This creates a mismatch between the published start time and the actual start of competition, which is unusual in sport presentation and weakens the product for spectators, broadcasters, and event organizers.

The current TCRR states that “the competition officially starts with the introduction of athletes” and that a ten-minute countdown begins after the athlete introduction and before the introduction of Technical Officials. The Timekeeper is also required to start that ten-minute clock ten minutes prior to the start of the competition. Together, these provisions build delay into the event format.

Objective

The objective of this proposal is to align the published start time of each session with the actual beginning of lifting. This would improve broadcast clarity, make the sport easier for spectators to follow, and bring competition scheduling more in line with common expectations in live sport. It would also preserve a formal introduction period by moving it before the official competition start rather than eliminating it.

Proposed Amendments to the IWF TCRR

The following sections would be amended:

6.5.1

Replace the current text: *The competition officially starts with the introduction of athletes. After the introduction of athletes and prior to the introduction of the Technical Officials, the timing clock starts a countdown of ten (10) minutes.*

With: *Athletes will be presented fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the competition of each bodyweight category or group. The competition officially starts when the timing clock expires.*

6.5.3

Replace the current text: *The Technical Officials of the group are introduced after which the Technical Officials submit their TO Cards to the Jury President.*

With: *The introduction of athletes and the introduction of the Technical Officials take place prior to the official start of the competition and do not form part of the competition time. The Technical Officials of the group are introduced after which the Technical Officials submit their TO Cards to the Jury President.*

Add new Section 6.5.4.: *Athlete and Technical Official introductions occur before the official competition start and are timed so that the first lift begins exactly at the published session start time.*

7.10.7

Delete the current text in its entirety: *Ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the competition (introduction of the athletes), the Timekeeper sets and starts the timing clock at ten (10) minutes.*