

So.... you want to have a sanctioned USA Weightlifting meet?

Hosting a meet is an exhausting but rewarding experience. There are many factors to take into consideration such as venue and volunteers. Most CrossFit boxes are already partially or fully equipped to host an event. The process is quite simple but some of the information is not easily accessible so I am writing this to facilitate those who are interested.

Step one: The sanctioning of a meet is required IF the meet results are to count towards qualification for a USAW national events. To sanction the meet, you will need to complete the appropriate [form](#) (Meet Sanction) and send it to the USAW LWC* President who will need to approve it before you proceed. The sanction must be received in the national office a minimum of 10 business days before the meet. In a sanctioned meet there must be at least 6 competitors. If you sanction the meet, all competitors must also be USAW members prior to the meet, <https://www.usaw.hangastar.com/Login.aspx>. They can register the day of the meet before weigh-ins but you will need to record their membership number during weigh-ins and for [reporting results](#) (Official Scoresheet). You will send this form to your LWC President click here to find your LWC at <http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Weightlifting/Clubs-LWC/LWC-Information.aspx>. LWC stands for Local Weightlifting Club. Mostly separated by geographic area, some LWCs encompass more than one state and some states have more than one LWC. You will need to know the LWC number (based on meet location) which is listed on your weightlifting membership card.

Step two: Compose an entry form and disseminate to potentially interested boxes and clubs. Since all CrossFit boxes have websites, it is convenient to have participants register and pay (if there is an entry fee) online. Having a due date for the entry or setting limit on number of participants is helpful to make sure you can accommodate the number of lifters that register. A manageable session size is 10-15 competitors. A session of 10-15 competitors will take 2 hours to 2 ½ hours depending on the flow of the meet. In terms of time per lifter, 10 lifters technically need 30 minutes for snatch and 30 minutes for clean and jerk as each lifter gets a minute on the clock for each lift. You must add time in for loaders changing the weights, time for introductions, time for a ten minute clock between snatch and clean and jerk, the probability of two minute clocks, and unexpected delays like cleaning the bar, sweeping the platform, etc. accounts for a session easily taking two hours to complete. You can compose sessions based on weight classes, based on totals, gender, or to simply accommodate what is best for the competitors. If you base them on totals, with closer totals together in a session, you can minimize two minute clocks.

Step three: Logistics and preparation for the meet will require procuring the equipment necessary to conduct the event and of course the volunteers to help conduct the event. You will need a scale for weigh-ins and a secure room to perform weigh-ins. You will need to have bars and weights for warm-up platforms, and the competition platform. Organizing the manpower is crucial to the meet's success. For the warm-up area, I would suggest at least four warm-up platforms outfitted with a full set of weights per platform.

It is preferable for the warm up room weights and bars to be in kilograms but it is not required in a local meet. There should be **plenty of room between and around the platforms as both athletes and coaches** (and often extraneous onlookers) will be in the warm up area. **Safety is an issue and space helps**. Of course it is often limited so doing your best to keep the area clear of nonessential equipment and people. The warm up area should be tangent to the competition area. Not only it is better for the athlete to have a short walk to the platform, it is also helpful to the coach to be able to keep an eye on the competition platform if there is not a visible posted scoreboard. The competition platform will need to have a full set of weights (or more) in kilograms as results are recorded in kilograms. Warm-up platforms are usually 8' x 8' but there is no required size for a local event. Be sure there is adequate space between and around warm up platforms and be aware of the "aisles" people will create to walk around. Make sure there is adequate room for people to lift and move around the platforms. **More warm up platforms is not always ideal if they are being squeezed into a small area. Space to safely lift and miss is important.** The competition platforms are required to be 13' x 13' (technically 4m) but this does not mean that you must actually build a full size competition platform. It is permissible to simply mark off with tape (colored tape works well) a 13 x 13 area and have an actual platform within that space that is smaller. The 13 x 13 perimeter allows both the referees and athlete to identify the boundaries within which the lift must be performed and completed. Please be sure to identify to athletes where the boundaries are. As far as other equipment is concerned, it is advisable to provide chalk and rosin for the lifter. **You should also have alcohol to clean blood off of the bar and a broom on to sweep chalk off of the platform on hand.** You will also need a small table to display and order the attempt cards. If you do not have a light system, the referees will need red and white "paddles" which can be made out of red and white construction paper to hold up indicating whether a lift is successful or not. A clock or watch to set a one minute clock, or two minutes if a lifter is following him/herself.

Regarding volunteers, you will need help with weigh-ins and conduct the meet. Per session you will need the following personnel:

- 1) A referee to conduct weigh-ins for the men (which requires a male) and the women, (which requires a female) as most lifters strip down to underclothes or nude;
- 2) An announcer, he/she should be familiar with the rules and will usually also keep track of the attempt cards unless you have another person keeping track of the cards;
- 3) Two loaders, usually one per side;
- 4) Three referees to call the lifts, one on each side at a ¾ view right and left and a head center judge will determine whether a lift was successfully completed within the rules;
- 5) A scorekeeper, he/she will keep track of what is happening on the cards on a surface area such as a chalkboard or whiteboard so coaches can easily see the progression of the meet. This is helpful but not necessary as coaches can refer to the cards on the announcer's table.

Obviously, a volunteer can do double duty but it makes the meet flow more smoothly to divide the labor amongst many individuals.

Meet Day and Results Reporting

At least one week prior to the event or on the earliest day possible, it is necessary to post a start list with any and all changes made to the tentative time schedule. It is common to revise to the original time schedule based on the number of entrants. Meet directors should do their best to organize the time schedule and session sizes to ensure that the schedule can be followed. Then, he/she should post all changes with a start list so that competitors can check that they are on the start list and in the correct class. Remember that athletes make travel and accommodation arrangements based on this schedule so once a “final” schedule is posted, it should not be changed again. Most important in this phase is communication with athletes and coaches.

You may choose to have any of the following men’s and women’s categories: youth (up to and including 17 years of age), junior (up to and including 20 years of age), senior, and masters, which begins at age 35-39, then 40-44, and so on. It is common in local meets to have an open category for all and then a couple of options such as masters and juniors. See [IWF rulebook](#) for weight classes and information regarding age categories. The categories contested and awarded is up to meet director and should have been decided and included on the entry form.

The platform is technically required to be 4x4 meters, about 13x13 feet. Since a typical piece of plywood is 4x8, it is quite feasible to build a 2-layer 8x8 platform with as few as 4 pieces of plywood with the under layer horizontal and the top layer vertically placed on top and then screwed together. My preference is to build a 12x12 platform and then mark with bright colored tape the 13x13 perimeter. Some prefer to use 2x4s to build a platform. If possible, a layer of rubber stall mats in between the layers of wood or used on the sides where the weight sits will help dampen noise and impact on the wood, minimizing cracking in the wood. These can be purchased at tractor or farm supply stores as they are meant for horse stalls. The lifting platform is typically assembled the day/night before the meet. On the platform, there should be a full set of bumper plates in kilograms and the 1kilo increment weights as well as the appropriate bar for the gender, 15 kilogram women’s bar and 20 kilogram men’s bar. Again, chalk and rosin should be available. Alcohol on hand in case the bar needs to be cleaned and a broom to sweep the platform.

The meet director should ensure that all positions are filled for every session. For weigh-ins, 1 -2 officials should conduct the weigh-in. For the competition platform, a center judge and 2 side judges (all officials should read section 2 of the rulebook which starts on page 6 of the pdf file) are necessary as well as 2-3 loaders. An announcer and a person managing the attempt cards should be at a table accessible to the coaches. If the announcer is experienced he/she may be able to do both jobs but since the flow of the meet is dictated by the ability of the announcer to keep the clock and lifters moving, it is advised to have someone assisting at the table. Providing a scoreboard which can be a whiteboard/chalkboard, or if you have the technology a projection, of the score sheet with the attempts as they are occurring. This is very helpful for coaches and athletes to be able to count attempts without having to hover over the scorekeeper’s table, which is likely doubling as the announcer’s table. This position requires someone who is knowledgeable, focused, and detail oriented. Next to the announcer, this volunteer has the

most important job in making the meet a success from the perspective of the coach and athlete.

Prior to weigh-ins the meet director may have chosen to select lot numbers to order the athletes at weigh-in or used some other method (by weight class and total). Lot numbers are essential in that it gives a predetermined order of calling the athletes for weigh-ins and should two athletes start with the same weight in a session, determines which will go first. Athletes have the first hour of the 2 hours allotted between weigh-ins and the start of their session to step on the scale and make weight. The athlete may, in turn, get on the scale as many times as necessary in that hour. The official weighing the athlete should record the weight on the athlete's scorecard, initial it, and have the athlete initial the weight recorded. Then the official requests the first attempts for the snatch and clean and jerk aka "openers". Only the first/opening attempt should be recorded on the card. These are also initialed by the athlete and official. A basic card may look something like this:

Lot#	Name			BodyWeight (in kg)
USAW #	YOB (year of birth)	Team	Wt class (in kg)	
SN	1st attempt	2nd attempt	3rd attempt	Best SN
declared				
1 st change				
2 nd change				
C&J	1st attempt	2nd attempt	3rd attempt	Best CJ
declared				
1 st change				Total
2 nd change				

Another card with more information spaces is available [here](#). With multiple sessions and platforms at meets, it may help to add session and which platform on cards if applicable.

Notice that there are three spaces allowed for each attempt. Lifters are allowed to change their attempt twice after declaring a weight as their attempt. The IWF rulebook should be available if you are inexperienced and read several times by the announcer to ensure that the meet flows as intended by the rules.

Introduction of the athletes typically begins 15 minutes before the start time of the meet and a 15 clock begins to run as the introductions start. You may also choose to introduce the athletes and then begin a 10 minute clock. This clock serves as the countdown to the beginning of the competition and allows athletes to time their warm-ups if they are up early in the session. The following is an excerpt from the IWF Rulebook, of pdf file,

“6.5.8 Order of calling: There are four (4) factors to consider in the following priority, when calling the competitors in sequence to take their attempts:

1. The weight of the barbell (lighter weight first)
2. The number of the attempt (lower number first)
3. The sequence/order of the previous attempt(s) (the athlete who lifted earlier comes first)
4. The lot number of the competitor (lower first)

See Example for Calling Order in the Annex No.4.

6.5.9 One minute (60 seconds) is allowed to each competitor between the calling of his or her name and the beginning of the attempt. After 30 seconds, a warning signal sounds. When a competitor attempts two lifts in succession, he or she is allowed two minutes (120 seconds) for the succeeding attempt. (For exception see 6.5.15). Thirty (30) seconds after the start of the allocated time and thirty (30) seconds before the end of the allocated time, a warning signal sounds. If at the end of the allocated time the competitor has not raised the barbell from the platform to make the attempt, this attempt is declared “No lift” by the three Referees. The start of the time has to be at the completion of the announcement of the attempt by the Speaker or the completion of the loading of the bar, whichever is the last.”

On the platform, the head judge (middle judge) is responsible for giving the athlete the down signal both visually and audibly if there is no electronic buzzer. The announcer **may** also give an audible 30 second notification if there is no electronic timer available. I would recommend **not** doing so if the lifter has already approached the bar and about to lift. Lifters are called to the platform by the announcer, who also informs of the following two lifters to prepare (A lifter to the platform, B lifter on deck, C lifter in the hole). The announcer is responsible for the flow of the meet, informing the lifters who is up and in line to lift, the weight on the bar, and other information to keep athletes, coaches, and audience abreast.

Results are transferred to the results reporting form from the cards and emailed to the national office. The breakdown crew should be treated to BBQ and beer, of course this is optional (required in Texas).

These are unofficial directions intended to get a new local meet director off to a start. If you have questions feel free to contact me at weightliftingwise@gmail.com. I am more than happy to answer any questions I can. The USAW National Office is also available to assist and answer questions. I strongly advise meet directors to also become familiar with the rulebook as this will go a long way in preparing you for holding a meet.

Train hard and train smart.

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USAW BOD Technical Director

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