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## Weight lifting and India: A brief overview

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### Abstract

The study aims to provide a brief overview on weightlifting, its forms, history and technical details. It sums up notable Indian achievements in various games. The study enlightens the aspirations of Indian perspective of weightlifting from all corners.

**Keywords:** Weightlifting, snatch, clean and jerk, weight category.

### Introduction

#### Weight Lifting

The sport or activity of lifting barbells or other heavy weights. There are two standard lifts in modern weightlifting: the single-movement lift from floor to extended position (the Snatch), and the two-movement lift from floor to shoulder position, and from shoulders to extended position (the clean & jerk)

#### Meaning and Definition

"Weightlifting, also called, or Olympic weightlifting, is an athletic discipline in the modern Olympic programmed in which the athlete attempts a maximum-weight single lift of a barbell loaded with weight plates."

The two competition lifts in order are the snatch and the clean and jerk. Each weightlifter receives three attempts in each, and the combined total of the highest two successful lifts determines the overall result within a bodyweight category. Bodyweight categories are different for women and men. A lifter who fails to complete at least one successful snatch and one successful clean and jerk also fails to total, and therefore receives an "incomplete" entry for the competition. The clean and press was once a competition lift, but was discontinued due to difficulties in judging proper form.

In comparison with other strength sports, which test limit strength (with or without lifting aids), Weightlifting tests aspects of human ballistic limits (explosive strength); the lifts are therefore executed faster—and with more mobility and a greater range of motion during their execution—than other strength movements. Properly executed, the snatch and the clean and jerk are both dynamic and explosive while appearing graceful, especially when viewed from a recording at a slower speed.

While there are relatively few competitive Olympic weightlifters, the lifts performed in the sport of weightlifting, and in particular their component lifts (e.g. squats, dead lifts, cleans), are commonly used by elite athletes in other sports to train for both explosive and functional strength.

#### Ancient History

The earliest evidence of weightlifting dates to China's Zhou Dynasty, which took place from the 10th century B.C. until 256 B.C. During this time, military recruits were required to pass weightlifting tests before they were accepted into the military. Various sculptures from ancient Greek civilizations also portray the sport, depicting Greeks lifting heavy stones. Eventually, the Greeks substituted large heavy bells for primitive dumbbells. Ancient Egyptian artifacts also depict the sport of weightlifting; according to these artifacts, Egyptians lifted heavy bags of sand as a form of physical training.

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### **Early Olympics**

The sport of weightlifting made its first Olympic appearance at the 1896 games. During these games, Launceston Elliott of Great Britain won the “One-Hand Lift” contest; Vigo Jensen of Denmark won the “Two-Hand Lift.” The sport did not appear in the 1900 Olympic Games but returned to the scene for the 1904 games. In the 1904 games, a Greek competitor secured the gold medal for “Two-Hand Lift” and Oscar Oath off secured the gold for the “All-Around Dumbbell” contest. The sport was again eliminated from the Olympic Games in 1908 and 1912 but returned to the Olympics permanently in 1920. By the 1932 Olympic Games, five weight divisions had been established and competition featured three disciplines: the press, snatch and clean and jerk.

### **Modern Olympic Weight Lifting**

By 1972, The clean and press was discontinued because athletes started to push with legs and bend backwards instead of strictly pressing the weight overhead, and this left the sole elements of what is today's modern Olympic Weightlifting programmed - the snatch and the clean and jerk. The snatch consists of lifting the barbell from the floor to an overhead position in one fluid motion. It is a very precise lift that can be nullified by a lack of balance of the athlete. The clean and jerk consists of moving the barbell from the floor to overhead in 2 movement: from the floor to the shoulders, and from the shoulders to overhead.

### **Weight Lifting types**

#### **1. Lift Types: The Snatch**

For the snatch, the lifter takes the barbell from the floor to an overhead position in a single motion. It's one of the most explosive and athletic movements in all of sports. Looks can be deceiving, though; the snatch is a finesse lift. When executed perfectly, heavy weight feels light.

#### **The Setup**

Start with your feet hip-width apart directly under the bar. Bend over and grab the bar with a wide grip—30-plus inches, depending on your height and shoulder flexibility. Many competitors use the full length of the bar. Get into a squat position with your back flat, arms straight, and hips higher than your knees. Look forward.

#### **The Pull**

Lift with your legs, gluts, and back, keeping the bar very close to your shins but not contacting them or your knees as you lift the bar; it will brush your thighs on the way up. Once the bar is above your knees, accelerate with all your power as you extend your ankles, knees, and hips—aka triple extension—rising onto your toes.

#### **Receiving The Bar**

As you extend, shrug your shoulders and “pull” yourself under the bar, going into a full squat. As the bar passes your head, turn your wrists over and push the bar to a full lockout by driving with your shoulders and triceps. Your feet may jump out to shoulder width. You are now in a full squat position with your torso erect, your arms locked out at the elbows, and the bar directly over or a little behind your ears.

#### **The Stand**

Once you have secured control of the barbell, stand erect, extending your knees and hips. The bar must always stay directly over your ankles and hips. Like the clean and jerk, the

snatch is not considered complete until the lifter is completely motionless. You should aim for the same goal. Lower or drop the barbell under control.

### **2. Lift Types: The Clean And Jerk**

This lift starts with the barbell on the floor and sees the lifter take it overhead in two separate motions, cleaning it to the shoulders, pausing, and then jerking (or thrusting) it overhead to a full lockout. the clean and jerk is probably the single best lift for developing strength and power, as it requires a big pull for the clean, a big front squat to rise out of the squat position, and a tremendous effort to complete the jerk with a heavy weight.

#### **Setup**

Set your feet at hip width directly under the bar, then bend over and grab the bar with a shoulder-width grip. Drop your hips into a squat position with your back flat, arms straight, and hips higher than your knees. Look straight ahead.

#### **Pull**

Explosively pull the bar with your legs, hips, and back, keeping the bar very close to your shins, however, the bar shouldn't make contact with your shins or knees as it rises, though it will brush your thighs. Triple-extend your ankles, knees, and hips, rising up onto your toes.

#### **Receiving The Bar**

With your body now extended, shrug your shoulders and “pull” yourself under the bar, going into a full squat as the bar passes your chest. Thrust your elbows out in front of you, turning your wrists over and receiving the bar on top of your clavicles and deltoids.

#### **The Stand**

Once you have the bar under control, stand erect, driving your heels into the floor. This portion of the lift is simply a front squat. Your torso might lean forward slightly and your hips may shift backward, but the bar must always stay over your ankles.

#### **The Jerk**

Dip down by bending your knees and hips about two to four inches, then explosively extend your knees, hips, and elbows, thrusting the bar overhead. Lean your head back as the barbell rises above your shoulders. As the barbell passes your head, split one leg forward and the other backward. Both feet should land at the same time as your arms lock the bar overhead. Your head returns to the neutral position so the bar is directly over your ears or a little behind them. Then bring both feet back together side by side, about hip- to shoulder-width apart, and stand fully erect.

### **Sports Training**

Sports training is a specialized process of the physical perfection of the content of which is the planned preparation for top class performance in the event or discipline chosen on the basis of evaluation and training. For improving the standard of play in the field of sports, conditioning exercises play a prominent role. Conditioning is essential for any form of sports and games.

### **Weight Classed From 1920 to Today**

Olympic weightlifting competitions are being conducted in different weight classes. This section features the search

engine allowing to review how the weight classes were changing throughout the history of the Summer Olympics and official World Championships.

### **Weight Classes**

Athletes compete in a division determined by their body mass. There are eight male divisions and seven female divisions since 1998

### **Men's weight classes**

- 56 kg (123 lb)
- 62 kg(137 lb)
- 69 kg(152 lb)
- 77 kg(170 lb)
- 85 kg(187 lb)
- 94 kg(207 lb)
- 105 kg(231 lb)
- 105 kg (231 lb+)

### **Olympic Barbells Measurement**

First the fun stats. A Men's Olympic Barbell is 2.2 meters long (7.2 feet) and weights 20 kilograms (about 44 pounds). The outer sleeves are 49-50 mm thick, and the shaft is 28-29 Mm (1.1 inch) thick and makes up 1.31 (4.3 feet) meters of the total length of the bar.

### **Competition**

The aim in weightlifting is quiet simple: to lift as much weight as possible. There are two types of lift involved in modern Olympic weightlifting competition: The two competition lifts in order are the snatch and the clean and jerk. Each weightlifter receives three attempts in each, and the combined total of the highest two successful lifts determines the overall result within a bodyweight category. Bodyweight categories are different for male and female competitors. A lifter who fails to complete at least one successful snatch and one successful clean and jerk also fails to *total*, and therefore receives an "incomplete" entry for the competition. The clean and press was once a competition lift, but was discontinued due to difficulties in judging proper form.

### **Indian Weight Lifting History**

The importance of weightlifting made in one of the prominent game to make AP lace in first modern Olympic in 1896 in Athens. But the first world champion's hips was held on 28<sup>TH</sup> march 1891 in London where 9 countries participated with 7 athletes representing them. Modern weightlifting with barbells became popular towards the end of 19<sup>TH</sup> century. In 1935, the Indian Weightlifting Federation was formed. Shri Bijoy Chand Mahatab of Bordwan as its first president and Shri N. M. Bose, Barristwer-at-Law, was the rist honorary secretary in the same year it got affiliated with Indian Olympic Association and International Weight lifting federation. In 1936 Berlin Olympic games, Indian weightlifting team part icipated for the first time. Similarly, in the Asian games Indian participated in 1951 held in Delhi and in Commonwealth Game in 1966 at Kingston.

Initially, Five Body weight categories were established for the Olympic Game. They were feather Weight (60kg), light weight (67.5kg), Middle Weight (75ke), light heavy weight (82.5kg) and heavy weight (90kg) and in 1972 fly weight (52kg) was added in the year 1980. Weightlifting in India is popularly known as lifting. In the game of strength, the participant need to lift heavy weights attached in the World Championships for the first time in 1989 at Manchester

although it started in 1987. N. Kunjarani Devi won 3 silver medals and laila Polley won 2 bronze medals. Shyamala Shetty and Chhaya Adak also won silver medals apiece in this competition. Weightlifting in India has become a popular event in the recent years. India is a country with no dearth of games, as varieties of sports and games from every corner of the world ventured in India and were practiced all over the country. India, like many other sport, welcomed weightlifting too, which was practiced in ancient Egyptian and Greek societies.

### **History of Weightlifting in India**

The importance of weightlifting made it one of the prominent games to make a place in the first modern Olympics in 1896 in Athens. But the first World Championship was held on 28th March 1891 in London where 6 countries participated with 7 athletes representing them. In 1935, the Indian Weightlifting Federation was formed. Sir Bijoy Chand Mahatab of Burdwan was its first president and N.N. Bose, Barristar-at-Law, was the first honorary secretary. In the same year it got affiliated with the Indian Olympic Association and International Weightlifting Federation. In the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, Indian weightlifting team participated for the first time. Similarly, in the Asian games India participated in 1951 games held in Delhi and in the Commonwealth Games in 1966, at Kington.

### **Body weight Categories in India**

There are five body-weight categories were established for the Olympic Games. They were Feather Weight (60 kg), Light Weight (67.5 kg), Middle Weight (75 kg) Light-Heavy weight (82.5 kg) and Heavy weight (90 kg) and in 1972 Fly weight (52) and Super heavy weight (over 110 kg). A new category (100 kg) was added again in the year 1980.

### **Weightlifting in Olympics**

Weightlifting got place in modern Olympics in 1920 at the 7th Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium. The World War II also could not affect the popularity of the game and total 14 nations competed for the Weightlifting title in that Olympic. Weightlifting in India is popularly known as lifting only. In this game of strength, the participants need to lift heavy weights attached to the steel bars known as barbells.

### **Indian Weightlifters**

Indian Women weight lifters competed in the World Championship for the first time in 1989 at Manchester although it started in 1987. Kunjurani Devi from Manipur earned three silver medals in that competition. Laita Polley from West Bengal added two bronze medals to this glory. In individual lifts, Shyamala Shetty and Chhaya Adak owned two medals.

### **Events of Weightlifting in India**

Weightlifting in India can be divided into two events: "snatch" and the "clean and jerk". In 1972 Olympics, the "clean and press" or simply "press" type was introduced but later got abolished for creating problems in judging.

### **Importance of Indian Weightlifting Federation**

Indian weightlifting federation has it's headquarter in New Delhi, which is affiliated under the Indian Olympic Association, Delhi. Indian weightlifters got a full squad entry in World Championship only in 1957 at Tehran. In that competition Indian participator Mookan reached the highest

ever eighth position. In the lightweight category, Alok Nath Ghosh was positioned 10th.

### **Indian weightlifters in 1995 World Championship**

Indian weightlifters continued its glorious journey at the 1995 World Championship also by winning three gold and six silver medals. Karnam Malleswari won gold medals both in the clean and jerk category and in the snatch category by lifting 113kg and 90 kg respectively. Thus she became the first India woman to win the World title for twice. Few other names that had their part in this success story are Maniombi Devi of the Central Reserve Police Force at the fourth position, Jeevan Jyothi at 5th position and Susmita Laha stood 5th in 76 kg. Above all, the official mouthpiece of the international weightlifting federation, World Weightlifting magazine ranked Indian weightlifters Kunjurani Devi and Karnam Malleswari as World no 1 weightlifter.

### **Indian weightlifting in 1966 Commonwealth Games**

The Indian weightlifting fame did not stop there as in 1966 Commonwealth games at Kingston, Jamaica, Mohan Lal Ghosh (60kg) created a record for decades by winning a silver medal for jerk category.

### **Indian Weightlifting in 1978 Games**

In 1978 games, held in Edmonton, Canada, E Karunakaran won a gold medal in the flyweight section. He made another record by winning four gold medals in the Commonwealth games and for winning championship at a stretch from 1978 to 1981.

### **Weightlifting in India in 2000's**

Weightlifting in India got a jolt when three Indian weightlifters S. Sunaina, Sanamacha Chanu and Pratima Kumari were found guilty of doping in many international competitions in a year. For this reason, International Weightlifting Federation barred the Indian Weightlifting Federation for one year. But these issues cannot blemish the other victories by our Indian weightlifters like Karnam Malleswari's achievement of being the first Indian who got an Olympic medal at the 2000 Summer Olympics at Sydney. One more Indian weightlifter, Geeta Rani became the star at the Commonwealth Games (2006) by winning the gold medal in women's + 75 kg category.

### **Weightlifting in 2010 and 2014 Commonwealth Games**

The 2010 Commonwealth Games event was a disaster for all weight lifting athletes. Our players were defeated by lesser known teams, and it was a terrible outing for players for sure. Indian weight lifting team won a total of eight medals out of which only two were gold.

In the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Sanjita Khumukcham Chanu won the gold medal in the women's 48 kg category, while Mirabai Chanu took the silver in the same event. In the men's 56 kg category, Sukhen Dey won gold and Ganaesh Mali won bronze and Sathish Sivalingam won the gold medal in the 77 kg category, with 149 kg snatch, and 179 kg clean and jerk lifts, totalling 328 kg. His lift of 149 kg in the snatch, set a new games record

### **Weightlifting in Rio Olympics 2016**

India's weightlifting campaign at the Rio Olympics ended in disappointment with Sathish Kumar Sivalingam finishing fourth in the men's 77kg event Group B category in Rio de

Janeiro on Wednesday. National record holder Sivalingam lifted 148kg in snatch and 181kg in clean and jerk for a total of 329kg to finish fourth in the six-lifter competition. Sivalingam, who had won gold in the 2014 Commonwealth Games, holds the national record of 336kg (149+187) in men's 77kg. Group B is meant for lower-ranked competitors who have registered lower entry weights and by finishing fourth even in this category, Sivalingam has no chance to be on the podium.

Group A of the same event will be competed among higher-ranked lifters who have registered with higher entry weights.

Colombia's Caicedo Andres Mauricio took the top spot with a total lift of 346kg (155+191) while Mata Andres Eduardo of Spain and Nico Mueller of Germany were second and third with total lifts of 343kg (153+190) and 332kg (151+181) in the Group B event.

The other Indian lifter, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu had failed to even lift her entry weight of 104kg in clean and jerk to end her 48kg category event as DNF (Did Not Finished).

### **Preparation of Weightlifting in India**

to take weightlifting as a profession, one needs to get prepared from his younger days because fitness and strong body build are important criteria for approaching towards this field. It needs an experienced trainer to prepare a competitor to participate at the international level. If the glorious tradition of weightlifting in India has to continue, well equipped training institutes have to come up and encourage the young talents to get trained to represent the country in International events.

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