



POWERLIFTING

PROGRAM GUIDE

7075 Newington Road, Unit G • Lorton, VA 22079

Phone: (703) 339-3796 • Fax: (703) 339-8751

www.sycva.com

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Registration/Drops..... | 3 |
| Winter Season..... | 3 |
| Summer Season | 3 |
| Drop Requests..... | 3 |
| Registration Cost..... | 3 |
| Communications | 4 |
| Player and Parent(s) Expectations | 4 |
| Training Sessions & Powerlifting Meets | 4 |
| Coaches | 5 |
| Uniforms and Equipment..... | 5 |
| Pain, Injuries and Other Negative Training-Related Outcomes..... | 5 |
| Code of Conduct | 5 |
| Complaint Procedures | 5 |
| References | 7 |

Introduction

Powerlifting is an individual strength sport where athletes seek to improve their one-repetition maximum (1RM; the amount of weight one can lift in a single repetition) on the squat, bench press, and deadlift. 1RMs in these three lifts are tested in competitions known as powerlifting meets.

The mission of SYC Powerlifting is to provide the Springfield youth with the opportunity to compete in powerlifting meets and to learn how/why one should lift weights for their long-term health and well-being (see the [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#)). Importantly, powerlifting was also created to address the ongoing problem of non-contact musculoskeletal injuries present in many different sports. Resistance training (e.g. powerlifting) has been shown to reduce the risk of these types of injuries. Additionally, resistance training (depending on how it's done) can improve sport performance as it helps to prepare athletes for the demands of dynamic activities, such as sprinting and jumping (see [Faigenbaum 2010](#)). Thus, powerlifting may also be viewed as an offseason (or in-season, depending on the level of the athlete) sport for SYC athletes to prepare them for the demands of other sports they might play.

Registration/Drops

Registration for either the winter or summer season is open to boys and girls from *grades 7-12*. Note, there are little to no detrimental effects of lifting weights for athletes below 7th grade (see [Faigenbaum 2010](#) and [Lloyd 2012](#)). In fact, powerlifting is quite safe and has a lower injury risk compared to other sports like football and track & field (see [Aasa 2017](#)). We imposed this cutoff because it's more difficult to teach younger athletes proper lifting technique in larger group settings.

Winter Season

Registration for winter powerlifting must be completed during the SYC winter sports registration period – either in person (at the SYC offices during normal business hours) or on-line at www.sycva.com.

Summer Season

Registration for summer powerlifting must be completed during the SYC summer sports registration period – either in person (at the SYC offices during normal business hours) or on-line at www.sycva.com.

Drop Requests

SYC Powerlifting follows the official refund policy of the Springfield/South County Youth Club.

Registration Cost

\$285 for a 12-week season (2, 90-minute training sessions per week).

Communications

Team staff will communicate all major updates, notices, etc. via email. Ensure that you check your email regularly, including your spam/junk folders. To reduce the prevalence of important emails arriving in your spam folder, please add powerlifting@sycva.com to your safe sender list. Our website is a wonderful resource as well. Please visit sycva.com/powerlifting to view program documents, season schedules, and much more. If you have any questions related to the powerlifting program, please email powerlifting@sycva.com. If you have general club inquiries, please email admin@sycva.com. In emergencies which involve an athlete's safety or well-being during practice/competition, you may call or text the commissioner at 571-328-1677 and 911, if applicable.

Player and Parent(s) Expectations

In order to maintain a fun, safe, and encouraging atmosphere, we require athletes to adhere to the following expectations:

- Act in a respectful manner towards all players, coaches, and competitors.
- Listen and follow all coaches' instructions.
- Ask questions when curious or confused.
- Bring your best self to each practice.
- Talk to the coaches if you are hurt, disappointed, or upset.
- No foul or inappropriate language. We ask that parents approach coaches respectfully if there is a complaint or issue. Our team staff will bend over backwards for your athlete and we promise to provide the best experience possible, but mutual respect is inherent to success.
- Please do your best to be on time for training sessions so the group can start as soon as possible.

Training Sessions & Powerlifting Meets

Training sessions will take place at CrossFit Burke (5589 Guinea Rd, Fairfax, VA 22032) and last 90 minutes. There will be 2 training sessions per week for a total of 24 sessions across the 12-week season. All training sessions will include the big three (squat, bench press, and deadlift), accessory exercises (Nordic hamstring curls, planks, L-sits, and so on), and some athletic movements (mainly plyometrics and sprinting). For each training session there will be a maximum of 20 athletes (boys and girls) in the gym at once and they'll be coached by two certified personal trainers (Matt Zielezienski and Claudia Helmick). In the training session, those 20 athletes will be subdivided into two groups (grades 7-9 and grades 10-12).

Due to the nature of the sport (powerlifting is an individual sport), we won't form teams (instead, we'll be one big team and support each other over the course of the season!). Additionally, it is optional as to whether an athlete wants to compete in a powerlifting meet at the end of the season. Generally, we do not expect most athletes to be ready to compete in their first

powerlifting meet until their second season. However, if an athlete is experienced enough and demonstrates competency in the big three, then we will make exceptions.

Coaches

SYC powerlifters will be placed into two groups (grades 7-9 and grades 10-12). Claudia (Head Coach) and Matt will split their time evenly between the two groups. The Head Coach is a paid position.

Uniforms and Equipment

Practice shirts will be distributed at the beginning of the season. It is your responsibility to wash that shirt before every training session. Beyond the practice shirt, no extra equipment is required beyond comfortable shorts/pants and comfortable, stable (preferably flat-soled) shoes. If you are competing in a powerlifting meet at the end of the season (we don't expect anyone to compete in their first season), you will need to buy a singlet. Please speak with the head coach (Claudia Helmick) about purchasing a singlet.

Pain, Injuries and Other Negative Training-Related Outcomes

If an athlete has a preexisting injury or is dealing with pain with a certain movement, that should be brought to the attention of Matt and/or Claudia as soon as possible. If we can work around the problem (by lowering volume and/or intensity and/or changing the exercise/technique), we will do so. If the injury or pain is serious and/or chronic, we'll refer athletes to the appropriate person (physical therapist and/or doctor) since rehabilitating individuals is outside the scope of practice for personal trainers.

A quick word on muscle soreness as well: a higher amount of soreness is normal and to be expected during the first 2-3 weeks of beginning the sport. Matt and Claudia will do their best to minimize soreness as much as possible through intelligent programming (autoregulation and gradual increases in volume and/or intensity) and by communicating proper recovery strategies (sleep, nutrition, and so on) to athletes.

Code of Conduct

Parents/guardians, spectators, players, and coaches shall adhere to the code of conduct as written in SYC policies and procedures. Code of conduct for players, parents/guardians, spectators, and coaches can be found on the website, www.sycva.com, under "About SYC" in "Policies and Procedures".

Complaint Procedures

Sport-related complaints should first be addressed to the coach. Since the coach will be the person most likely to understand the member's concerns, an e-mail to the coach should be the first level of address. Addressing a coach during a training session or meet is discouraged as this has an overall negative effect for the children and families participating in the program. If a resolution cannot be found, the problem should then be brought to the attention of the SYC Vice President (VP) for Activities. If the SYC VP for Activities is unable to resolve the issue, they will

work with the Commissioner so the complaint may be directed to the SYC Board of Directors utilizing the Complaint Procedure. The Complaint Procedure may be found on the SYC web site at www.sycva.com.

References

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Faigenbaum, A., Myer, G. (2010). Resistance training among young athletes: safety, efficacy and injury prevention effects. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 44(1): 56–63. doi:10.1136/bjism.2009.068098

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