USA LINEMAN CHALLENGE
OFFICIAL RULES

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1. BACKGROUND

The purpose of USA Lineman Challenge is to provide athletes who play on the offensive and defensive line an opportunity to compete in organized competition during the summer months. Each competition consists of 8 events to test the speed, strength and overall ability of the athletes. Each May and June, there will be a series of state qualifying competitions ending in a state competition during July.

2. ELIGIBILITY

USA Lineman Challenge events are open to athletes who play on the offensive and/or defensive line. This includes the offensive positions of tackle, guard, center, tight end and the defensive positions of nose guard, tackle, and end. Players that only play a skill position are not eligible to compete. Schools that compete in 6-man football may use any athlete regardless of position. Coaches are expected to abide by these rules and the use of ineligible athletes can result in the disqualification of an entire team.

3. COMPETITION FORMAT

A. Contest Events

USA Lineman Challenge is made up of the 8 following events:
Bench Press for Reps
Medicine Ball Throw
Hand-over-Hand Sled Pull
Sled Drag
Farmers Walk

Sand Bag Load
Team Truck Push
Team Tire Flip

All events except for the Team Tire Flip will be completed with 5 athletes. The Team Tire Flip will use all 6.

B. Competition Schedule

Competitions should have all 8 events taking place simultaneously with a "shotgun" start. When a team completes their event, they will move to the next event. In competitions with 12 or fewer teams, directors have the option to complete the events 4 at a time. Some events take longer than others so each event needs to begin at the same time to keep the competition organized. The competition director should use some sort of signal such as an air horn to make sure that events begin at the same time.

4. COMPETITION DIRECTOR RULES

A. Registration of a Competition

Competition directors should register their competition at least 2 weeks before it takes place. Registration instructions can be found on the web site.

B. Entry Fees

Entry Fees are at the discretion of the competition director. However, entry fees may not be in excess of $25 per athlete.

C. Minimum Number of Teams

There must be at least 4 varsity teams from different schools competing for a competition to be an official State Qualifying Competition. Competition directors may not set the minimum number of teams competing at less than 8.

D. Teams from all Classifications

State Qualifying Competitions are not required to have a school from all 5 classifications to be official. However, if a competition does not have a school from a particular classification, the competition director is required to allow that school to enter the competition up to 3 days from the official competition date.

5. TEAM COMPETITION

A. Team Roster

Teams are made up of a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 athletes. These athletes are designated before the start of the competition by the team's coach. Only these athletes may compete for their team during the competition. Using an athlete from outside of the original roster is not permitted. If a school brings 10 or more athletes, that team must be broken into 2 separate teams. If a school brings 9 athletes, they must be broken into 1 team of 6 athletes and 1 team of 3 athletes. The smaller team will compete in the individual events and not the team events. The scores of the smaller team will not be counted in the final standings.

B. Number of Athletes per Event

All of the events, with the exception of the tire flip, will require 5 athletes from each team. The tire flip requires 6. If there are only 5 athletes on a roster, then one athlete from that team will make 2 trips during the tire flip event.

C. Team Scoring

Teams will be given a certain number of points in every event based on how their performance ranks against other teams. The team with the greatest number of points at the end of the competition is the winner. Points given for each event will be determined by the number of teams competing. Ex: If there are 10 teams in the competition, the team that performs the best in each event will earn 10 points. The 2nd place team would earn 9 points and so on until the team with the worst score would receive 1 point.

D. Ties

If two teams record the same score in an event, they will be awarded the same number of team points. Example: In a competition with 10 teams, Team A and Team B tie for 1st place in the bench press for reps. Both teams will be awarded 10 points for that event. Subsequently, the team with the next highest total will receive 8 points for 3rd place.
If two teams are tied at the end of the overall competition, the greatest number of 1st place finishes in individual events will determine the winner. Example: If Team A and Team B are tied and Team A has won an individual event and Team B hasn't, then Team A will be the winner. If neither team has won an individual event, then 2nd place finishes will be used. This system will be used until a winner is determined.

6. INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION

Individual competition will also take place during the USA Lineman Challenge. Individuals will have their results scored and awards will be handed out at the end of the competition.

A. Scoring

Individual points will be awarded for each individual event in the same way that team points are given out. If there are 50 athletes in the individual competition, having the best score in a particular event will earn the athlete 50 points. The athlete with the highest number of points at the end of the competition will be declared the winner. Only the scores of the athletes in the individual competition will be used to determine the winners.

B. Ties

Ties will be decided in the same way as the team competition. The athlete with the greatest number of 1st place finishes will be the winner. If there are no 1st place finishes between the two athletes, 2nd place will be used and so on until a winner is decided.

C. Declaration of Individual Athletes

Athletes who are members of a team who would like to compete in the individual competition should be declared by their coach at check-in. This is to help the scorekeeper at the end of the competition.

7. QUALIFYING FOR STATE

A. Qualifying a Team for State

The top 1A through 5A School at each official State Qualifying Competition will qualify for state. If the top team in a classification has already qualified for state, the next highest finisher from that competition in that class will go. Only 1 team per school may qualify for state.

B. Qualifying for TAPPS schools

Private schools in TAPPS districts will be placed into classifications with UIL schools of their same size. TAPPS coaches should be aware of their listed enrollment for the following year when they register for a competition and notify the competition director. The classification sizes are as follows:

5A: 2085 or more students
4A: 977 to 2084 students
3A: 429 to 976 students
2A: 200 to 428 students
1A: 5 to 199 students

If a TAPPS school competes in 6-man football, they follow the same rules as a UIL 6-man team. They may use an athlete of any position while in competition.

C. Alternate Teams at State

If a team cannot attend the state competition, the next highest finisher in that classification from that particular Qualifying Competition will get the invitation. Coaches should notify either the competition director or board representative immediately if they know they won't be attending.

D. Qualifying Individuals for State

Individuals who finish in the top 3 at a State Qualifying Competition will qualify for the individual competition at state even if their teams do not.

E. Previously Qualified Athletes

Athletes or teams who have already qualified for state need to notify the competition director of this prior to every competition.

8. STATE QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS

A. Schedule of competitions.

There will be State Qualifying Competitions during the months of May and June that lead-up to the State Competition in July. Coaches are encouraged to host their own qualifier. Any coach interested in doing so should go to www.texaslinemanchallenge.com. There will also be a schedule of competitions posted at this web site.

B. Events at State Qualifiers

The events at a state qualifying competition should be done as closely to the rules as possible. Rules, equipment specifications and instructions for organizing an official competition can be found on the competition web site.

C. Extra teams at competitions

A school may enter as many teams as they are able to field at a State Qualifying Competition. Multiple teams from a particular school will be given the designation of A, B, C and so forth to avoid confusion. These athletes need to remain with their team throughout the competition.

D. JV and Freshman Divisions

The competition director of each Qualifying Competition has the option to have JV and freshman divisions. There will be no advancement to the state competition for these teams. The freshman division is reserved for athletes about to enter the 9th grade. The JV division is open to any athlete but only for schools with a varsity team entered. JV and freshman divisions will use the same equipment with the exception of the weight on the bench press for reps.

9. STATE COMPETITION

A. Divisions

The State Competition will be made up of 5 separate divisions just like a qualifying competition. Schools will be separated into the classifications in which they will compete in the following school year. Private schools will compete against schools of their same size.

B. Individual Competition

The individual competition will be contested at state along with the team competition. At the end of the competition, the top 10 individuals from all classifications will be announced and receive awards.

C. Awards

The following awards will be given at the state competition.
Team Awards:
1st – 3rd place for each division
Individual Awards:
Outstanding performer in each individual event.
1st – 5th place for the overall individual competition among all classifications.

10. ATHLETE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

A. Athlete Attire

Athletes are required to wear a shirt that displays no profanity or brings the competition into disrepute. Both cleats and tennis shoes are acceptable and should be brought as the competition surface may vary for different events. Hats or other head coverings are not to be worn during competition. Sunglasses are acceptable as competitions will take place during the summer.

B. Gloves

Athletes are encouraged to bring gloves to competitions for the purpose of protecting the hands/fingers.

C. Athlete Conduct

Athletes should behave in a sportsmanlike manner during competition. Profanity, trash talk, or any other unsportsmanlike behavior during the competition is not allowed. If this behavior

becomes a problem, the competition director will warn the team and their coach and disqualifications will then follow.

D. Athlete Disqualification

Athletes are subject to disqualification during competition for inappropriate behavior. Disqualifications are the decision of the competition director and are final. An athlete disqualified at a Qualifying Competition may be declared ineligible for the State Competition. This decision will be made by Texas Lineman Challenge administration. If an athlete is disqualified prior to his team competing in the Team Tire Flip, a substitute may be used. If one is not available, an athlete will have to make two trips with the tire.

E. Fighting

Any player or players fighting during a competition will be disqualified immediately and asked to leave the competition field. If a team fight occurs, both teams will be disqualified and asked to leave the venue. Teams disqualified for fighting will not be eligible for the state competition.

11. COACHES' RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

A. Coach Responsibilities

Coaches are responsible for checking-in their teams, declaring athletes for events, and monitoring them throughout the competition.

B. Liability Waiver

Coaches and athletes are responsible for filling out a liability waiver prior to competition.

C. Coach Conduct

Coaches are expected to set a good example for their athletes while in competition. Profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct and dishonesty will not be tolerated and are cause for removal from the competition.

D. Use of Illegal Athletes

The use of an athlete not on the original roster or an athlete who does not play a lineman position is cause for the elimination of that athlete's scores in individual events. If that athlete participates in team events, the team's score for that event will be eliminated.

E. Protests

If a coach feels that an event was scored or handled incorrectly, they should bring this to the attention of the competition director immediately. The competition director will make a decision on the matter and that decision will be final.

F. School Coaches

As Lineman Challenge competitions are not sanctioned by any school, school coaches are not allowed to coach their athletes. Coaching duties during the competition should be handled by a volunteer.

12. EVENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Bench Press for Reps

Each athlete will accomplish as many repetitions on the bench as possible. Individual scores will be determined by the number of reps. Team scores will be determined by the total number of reps. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event. Varsity and JV athletes will lift 205 lbs. Freshmen athletes will lift 165 lbs.

Each athlete will grip the bar with a grip no wider than their index fingers on the rings. The athlete will take the weight from the racks and hold it at arm's length before starting the movement. Each repetition will include touching the chest and pressing the bar until the elbows are locked. At the completion of each rep, the referee will call out the number of completed repetitions. The bar must touch the athlete's chest and the athlete's buttocks must stay on the bench. Failure to do this will eliminate that repetition from the athlete's score. On the athlete's final rep the athlete must wait until the rep count is called out to return the bar to the racks. Wrist wraps and chalk may be used on this event. But elbow wraps and bench shirts of any type aren't permitted.

B. Sand Bag Load

Each athlete will load 10 sand bags weighing 50 lbs each onto the back of a truck that is 15 ft. away. This is a timed event. Individual scores will be determined by the lowest overall time. Team scores will be determined by the sum of the athletes' times. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event.

The athlete will begin with their hand touching the truck. The clock will start on the athlete's movement. The athlete will then begin carrying bags and loading them onto the truck. Athletes may only carry one bag per trip. The bags must be completely on the back of the truck. Athletes may throw the bags onto the back of the truck. But they must make the trip and touch the truck once for each bag they load. When the athlete touches the truck on his final trip, the clock will stop. Bags that fall off the truck must be loaded again. Athletes who cannot load all 10 bags will be given a time of 120 seconds. Athletes may use gloves or chalk during this event.

C. Farmer's Walk

Each athlete will walk with two implements down a 25 yd. course. This is a timed event. Individual scores will be determined by the lowest overall time. Team scores will be determined by the sum of the athletes' times. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event.

The athlete will begin with the implements completely behind the starting line of the course. The athlete will pick up the implements whenever ready. The clock will start when the athlete is standing erect with both implements and takes his first step forward. The clock stops when the front of both implements crosses the end of the course. If an athlete cannot carry both implements at the same time, he may carry them one at a time. If an athlete cannot finish the event, they will be given a time of 120 seconds. Athletes may use gloves or chalk during this event.

D. Sled Drag

Each athlete will drag a sled, loaded with 135 lbs. of weights, attached to a belt or harness down a 25 yd. course. This is a timed event. Individual scores will be determined by the lowest overall time. Team scores will be determined by the sum of the athletes' times. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event.

The athlete will begin with the front edge of the sled just behind the start of the course. The clock will start on the athlete's movement. The clock stops when the front edge of the sled crosses the end of the course. If an athlete does not finish the course, he will be given a time of 120 seconds.

E. Hand-over-Hand Sled Pull

Each athlete will pull a sled, loaded with 135 lbs. of weights, attached to a rope down a 15 yd. course. This is a timed event. Individual scores will be determined by the lowest overall time. Team scores will be determined by the sum of the athletes' times. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event.

The athlete will begin with the front edge of the sled just behind the start of the course. The clock will start on the athlete's movement. The clock stops when the front edge of the sled crosses the end of the course. If an athlete cannot finish the course, they will be credited with the distance they were able to drag the sled. The athlete will stand in a marked 6'x6' square. The athlete may assume any position they want, but must stay inside of the square. The referee will assess a 2-second penalty every time the athlete steps on or over the line. If an athlete does not finish the event, he will be given a time of 120 seconds. Gloves or chalk may be used to improve the athlete's grip.

F. Medicine Ball Throw

Each athlete will throw an 8-kilo or 16 lb. medicine ball for distance. Individual scores will be determined by the longest single throw. Team scores will be determined by the sum of the athletes' longest throws. 5 athletes from each team will compete in this event.

The athlete will throw a medicine ball with any method they choose. Each athlete will take 2 throws. Throws will be measured from the front of the mark that the medicine ball makes to the center of the throwing line. If an athlete steps over the throwing line, the throw will not be measured. Medicine balls must weigh the same amount and have the factory weight-mark on them. If the competition director decides to use 16 lb medicine balls, all marked throws must be made with medicine balls of that weight. Athletes will take their throws in rotation and will have the option of taking both their throws at the same time. Athletes may wear gloves or use hand chalk during this event.

G. Team Tire Flip

All 6 athletes will be used for this team event. Athletes will work alone to flip a tire down a course of 20 yards. Each team will make 1 trip down the course, using a different athlete for each trip. This is a timed event. Team scores will be determined by the team's overall time.

The event will begin with the front edge of the tire at the start of the course. The first athlete will start with his hands on top of the tire. On the referee's whistle, the clock will start. The athlete will then flip the tire down the course. When the front edge of the tire has crossed the end of the course and the tire is on the ground, the next athlete will start. The clock will stop

when the front edge of the tire is on the ground and has crossed the end of the course on the 6th trip. Athletes may only make one trip down the course. If a team only has 5 athletes, one athlete will be allowed to make 2 trips.

The tire must be flipped end-over-end down the course. Rolling or carrying the tire is not permitted. If the tire is rolled, the referee will instruct the athletes to roll it back to the point where the roll started and begin flipping the tire from there. The tire must also be flat on the ground before the next flip begins. Athletes must wait for the tire to be across the end of the course and on the ground before they start their run down the course. Failure to follow the event rules will result in a 2-second penalty for each infraction. Athletes are encouraged to wear gloves during this event.

H. Team Truck Push

5 athletes will be used for this team event. All together, athletes will push a truck down a 50 yd. course as fast as possible. This is a timed event. Team scores will be determined by the team's overall time.

The event will begin with the front edge of the truck at the start of the course. On the referee's command, the clock will start. Athletes will push the truck down the course. When the front edge of the truck has crossed the end of the course, the clock will stop. The athletes may begin pushing on the truck prior to the whistle. On the whistle, the driver of the truck will take their foot off the brake.