GOOD EVENING, AND WELCOME TO OUR FIRST AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION POWERLIFTING HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY!

WHAT A GREAT DAY OF LIFTING TODAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

HOW ABOUT A NICE ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR OUR HOST FOR THIS A-A-U SINGLE LIFT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP – MR. MARTIN DRAKE?? ...IN SPITE OF FOOD POISONING...

(PAUSE)

MARTIN IS ONE OF OUR INDUCTEES TONIGHT, AND WE’LL GET TO THAT... BUT TO THOSE THAT ATTEND MARTIN’S MEETS, YOU ALWAYS KNOW YOU’RE GOING TO HAVE A TOP NOTCH VENUE, GREAT LIFTING AND A REAL SHOW OF SHOWS --

(PAUSE)

FROM THE VENUE, TO THE JUDGES, TO THE COMPETITIORS WHO HAVE TO TRAVELED TO LAS VEGAS FROM AROUND THE WORLD – 11 COUNTRIES TO BE EXACT, INCLUDING AFGHANISTAN – AND ALL THE OTHERS WHO ARE HERE FOR THE WORLD FEATS OF STRENGTH CHAMPIONSHIP AS WELL, THIS IS THE TYPE OF VENUE, AND THE TYPE OF CELEBRATION, THAT STRENGTH SPORT ATHLETES DESERVE!

(PAUSE)

THANK YOU MARTIN, FOR ALL YOU DO!
• I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE OUR A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS CHAIRMAN, MR. STEVE WOOD, WHO HAS BEEN PRESENTING THE AWARDS UP HERE ON STAGE TONIGHT.

• STEVE AND HIS WIFE JUDY ARE KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE A-A-U POWERLIFTING COMMUNITY.

• STEVE IS HERE TONIGHT TO ALSO BE INDUCTED INTO THE POWERLIFTING HALL OF FAME, AND AS OUR NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING SET THE DIRECTION AND VISION FOR A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS.

• WE’VE EXPERIENCED SOME TREMENDOUS GROWTH IN THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS DURING STEVE’S WATCH;

  o FIRST WE INTRODUCED FEATS OF STRENGTH, AND AS YOU KNOW, THE FEATS OF STRENGTH WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS HAS BEEN GOING STRONG HERE THIS WEEKEND.

  o WE ALSO CHANGED OUR NAME TO A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS, TO RECOGNIZE THE INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL COMPETITIONS WITHIN OUR PORTFOLIO OF EVENTS.


  o AND EARLIER THIS YEAR, WE RAN THE FIRST NATIONAL COMBINE AT THE JUNIOR OLYMPIC GAMES IN DETROIT; IT WAS VERY POPULAR – SO POPULAR IN FACT, THAT WE HAVE DECIDED TO INCORPORATE COMBINE AS A STAND-ALONE COMPETITION UNDER A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS.

  o WATCH FOR THE RULES OF COMBINE TO BE FORTHCOMING, AND WATCH FOR SANCTIONED COMBINE COMPETITIONS TO BE HELD THROUGHOUT THE U-S IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS, BUT IN SHORT – I’LL JUST SAY YOU SHOULD EXPECT
EVERYTHING YOU SEE AT THE PRO FOOTBALL COMBINE, AND THEN SOME!!

(PAUSE)

- ALL OF THESE CHANGES OCCURRED UNDER STEVE WOOD’S WATCH AS SPORTS CHAIRMAN FOR A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS!

- STEVE – WE APPRECIATE HAVING YOU HERE, AND WE APPRECIATE YOUR HARD WORK ON BEHALF OF OUR ORGANIZATION AND OUR COMPETITORS.

- HOW ABOUT A NICE ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR OUR NATIONAL STRENGTH SPORTS CHAIRMAN, MR. STEVE WOOD?

(PAUSE)

- FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY NOT BE AWARE, THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION (AAU) IS ONE OF THE LARGEST AND OLDEST NON-PROFIT, VOLUNTEER SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, DATING TO 1888 – THAT’S 125 YEARS!

- A-A-U WAS ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED TO HELP PROVIDE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE TO PREPARE U-S ATHLETES FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES.

- TODAY, A-A-U IS DEDICATED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AMATEUR SPORTS AND PHYSICAL FITNESS PROGRAMS, AND THESE PROGRAMS INCLUDE POWERLIFTING.


- IF YOU PAUSE FOR A MOMENT TO THINK ABOUT THAT – IN 2014, A-A-U WILL CELEBRATE 50 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF POWERLIFTING IN THE USA, AND IT HAPPENED RIGHT HERE IN THIS ORGANIZATION.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1972, FEATURING LIFTERS FROM THE USA, GREAT BRITAIN, CANADA, PUERTO RICO, ZAMBIA, AND THE WEST INDIES. THERE WERE 67 LIFTERS TOTAL AT THE SECOND A-A-U WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, WHERE:

- LIFTS WERE MEASURED IN POUNDS,
- THE BENCH PRESS WAS THE FIRST LIFT,
- AND THERE WERE NO SUITS, POWER BELTS, OR KNEE WRAPS.


- BUT THE BOTTOM LINE... A-A-U ESTABLISHED ORGANIZED POWERLIFTING IN THE USA 49 YEARS AGO.


- TONIGHT, WE RECOGNIZE THOSE WHO CREATED OUR LEGACY.


- THE CRITERIA FOR ELECTION TO THE HALL OF FAME WILL MEAN ONLY A SELECT FEW WILL BE ADMITTED. THAT CRITERION
INCLUDES LIFTING IN COMPETITION AND TRAVELLING TO NATIONAL AND WORLD MEETS.

- INDIVIDUALS ELECTED TO THE HALL MUST HAVE DEMONSTRATED A MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN AAU POWERLIFTING TO BE CONSIDERED.

- NOW, THOSE WHO HAVE REACHED THIS LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE GREAT SPORT OF POWERLIFTING ARE SPECIAL INDEED.


- THEY DID IT IN A DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT, LIFTING AND PROMOTING THIS SPORT SIMPLY FOR THE LOVE OF IT.

- SO LET’S GET STARTED WITH RECOGNIZING THOSE WHO HAVE MADE SUCH AN IMPACT IN ELEVATING THE SPORT OF POWERLIFTING TO WHERE IT IS TODAY.

- OUR FIRST TWO INDUCTEES TONIGHT ARE DON AND FRAN HALEY, WHO WILL BE INDUCTED POSTHUMOUSLY.

- DON HALEY DEDICATED OVER 70 YEARS TO THE SPORT OF WEIGHTLIFTING IN ALL OF ITS FORMS, INCLUDING OLYMPIC STYLE WEIGHTLIFTING, POWERLIFTING AND PHYSIQUE COMPETITION.

- HE WON NUMEROUS AWARDS, INCLUDING THE 1949 CALIFORNIA HEAVYWEIGHT DIVISION IN OLYMPIC LIFTING. HE SHARED HIS PASSION FOR THE IRON GAMES BY TRAINING AND GUIDING OTHERS IN THE SPORT AND CONTINUED TO PERSONALLY LIFT WEIGHTS EVEN INTO HIS 90’S.

HE WAS PIVOTAL AS CHAIRMAN IN DRAFTING OF THE ORIGINAL RULES FOR POWERLIFTING FOR AAU SANCTIONED EVENTS BACK IN THE 1960S.

AFTER YEARS ASSISTING DON AT MANY EVENTS, FRAN HALEY TRAINED AND WON HER AGE AND WEIGHT CATEGORY IN POWERLIFTING WHILE IN HER SIXTIES.

DON AND FRAN CONTINUED TO MANAGE AND REFEREE VARIOUS POWERLIFTING EVENTS BOTH NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY FOR MANY YEARS.

TOGETHER THEY WERE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE IRON GAME;

TWO A-A-U AWARDS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN THEIR HONOR -- THE AAU POWERLIFTING DON HALEY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, AND THE AAU FRAN HALEY WHITE LIGHT AWARD, GIVEN TO OUTSTANDING LIFTERS ANNUALLY BEGINNING IN 2012.

THE HALL OF FAME AWARD WILL BE ACCEPTED BY THEIR SON, DR. PATRICK HALEY, WHO ALSO HAS A SHORT PRESENTATION FOR US TONIGHT.

PAT – OVER TO YOU, SIR.

(PAUSE FOR PRESENTATION)

WASN’T THAT JUST A WONDERFUL TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE? PAT, THANK YOU FOR SHARING THOSE MEMORIES, WHICH ARE ABSOLUTELY ALIGNED WITH THE LEGACY OF OUR GREAT SPORT AND THE FIRST A-A-U POWERLIFTING MEETS NEARLY HALF A CENTURY AGO.

(PAUSE)
• OUR NEXT INDUCTEE IS MR. ROBERT CORTEZ. ROBERT WAS BORN IN 1930 IN DETROIT, AND FIRST STARTED TRAINING IN OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING, BEFORE TRANSITIONING TO POWERLIFTING.

• ROBERT COMPETED IN OVER 200 POWERLIFTING COMPETITIONS, AND WON 20 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AND 35 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN MULTIPLE FEDERATIONS.

• HE ALSO SET 42 WORLD RECORDS IN 5 DIFFERENT FEDERATIONS; HE HOLDS THE POWERLIFTING WATCH ALL-TIME 60 PLUS AGE GROUP 148 LB BODYWEIGHT RAW DEADLIFT OF 485 LBS., AND RAW TOTAL RECORD OF 1,107 LBS, WHICH WAS SET AT AN AAU MEET IN 1998. (THAT RECORD STILL STANDS.)

• HE IS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN A "DRUG FREE" LIFTER HIS ENTIRE LIFE… LADIES AND GENTLEMENT, MR. ROBERT CORTEZ.

(PAUSE)

• OUR NEXT RECIPIENTS ARE ANOTHER COUPLE – ELAINIA AND BOB BOLSTER, FROM CENTRAL FLORIDA.

• IF YOU’VE BEEN COMING TO A-A-U WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME, YOU WILL RECOGNIZE BOTH BOB AND ELAINA.

• THEY ARE BOTH MULTI TIME WORLD AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONS; ELAINIA IS A FORMER A-A-U POWERLIFTING BARBRA BEASELY AWARD WINNER, AND BOB IS AN A-A-U POWERLIFTING BROTHER BENNETT AWARD WINNER.

• BOTH OF THEM HAVE GIVEN BACK TO THE SPORT AS REFEREES IN STATE, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION OVER MANY, MANY YEARS.

• THEY DROVE ALL THE WAY HERE FROM ORLANDO THIS WEEK TO BE WITH US, AND BOTH OF THEM SERVED ON THE PLATFORM TODAY AS INTERNATIONAL REFEREES.

• BOB AND ELAINA BOLSTER, PLEASE COME ON UP.
OUR NEXT HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE IS NANCY HALVERSTADT-MARTIGNAGO, FROM CALIFORNIA.

NANCY SET MULTIPLE NATIONAL AND WORLD RECORDS FROM 1986 THRU 1994, WINNING SEVERAL NATIONAL AND WORLD TITLES.

A LIFE TIME DRUG FREE ATHLETE, SHE WAS AN AAU POWERLIFTING BOARD MEMBER, AND CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRUG TESTING AND THE USE OF THE CENTER FOR DRUG FREE SPORTS

NANCY IS AN AAU STATE, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REFEREE, REFEREE IN NUMEROUS SPECIAL OLYMPICS POWERLIFTING MEETS, AND IS ALSO A RECIPIENT OF THE PRESTIGIOUS BARBARA BEASLEY AWARD

OUR NEXT HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE IS HOWARD HUFFMAN.

HOWARD IS HERE FROM NEBRASKA TONIGHT; HE FIRST LIFTED IN THE AAU FROM 1974 – 1978 WHILE A STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN.


SINCE THEN, NEBRASKA HAS BECOME ONE OF THE TOP FIVE STATES IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF AAU POWERLIFTING MEMBERS ALONG WITH THE REPUTATION FOR THE BEST RUN MEETS IN THE AREA.

DURING ITS EVOLUTION, THE NEBRASKA AAU ENCOURAGED RAW LIFTING WHEN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WERE PUSHING EQUIPPED LIFTING. IT ALSO WORKED WITH THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS OF NEBRASKA TO PROVIDE TRAINING, COACHING, AND ASSISTANCE FOR ATHLETES WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES.
• IN RECOGNITION OF HIS DEVELOPMENT OF AND COMMITMENT TO THE NEBRASKA AAU, HOWARD RECEIVED THE BROTHER BENNETT AWARD IN 2008, AND TONIGHT WE HONOR HIM WITH INDUCTION IN THE AAU POWERLIFTING HALL OF FAME.

• HOWARD HUFFMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN --

(PAUSE)

• I ALREADY SPOKE AT LENGTH ABOUT OUR NEXT HONOREE – STEVE WOOD, FROM VIRGINIA, WHO HAS BEEN DELIVERING THE AWARDS TO OUR INDUCTEES TONIGHT;

• STEVE IS OUR SITTING CHAIRMAN OF A-A-U STRENGTH SPORTS, AND HAS PROVIDED GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION FOR THE STRENGTH SPORTS AND POWERLIFTING PROGRAMS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS.

• HE HAS ALSO CONSISTENTLY PROMOTED MEETS ON THE EAST COAST WITH HIS WIFE JUDY. MR MARTIN DRAKE WILL RECOGNIZE STEVE WITH HIS HALL OF FAME PLAQUE.

(PAUSE)

• STAY UP THERE MARTIN – STEVE NOW GETS TO RETURN THE FAVOR! OUR NEXT INDUCTEE, MARTIN DRAKE, REQUIRES NO INTRODUCTION. MARTIN STARTED LIFTING AT AGE 11 AS AN A-A-U WEIGHTLIFTER, THEN SWITCHED TO POWERLIFTING AND NATURAL BODYBUILDING.

• HE WON VARIOUS NATURAL BODYBUILDING TITLES INCLUDING ABA USA MASTERS CHAMPION, ABA NATURAL SO. CALIFORNIA MASTERS, ABCC NATURAL AMERICA AND ABA NATURAL UNIVERSE MASTER CHAMPION.

• HE HAS BEEN MEET DIRECTOR FOR MORE THAN 50 NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND WORLD EVENTS, DRAWING LIFTERS FROM 27 COUNTRIES; HE HAS SECURED MAJOR VENUES IN SAN DIEGO, LOS ANGELES, LAS VEGAS, MESQUITE NEVADA AND LAUGHLIN NEVADA.
• AS A LIFTER, MARTIN HAS WON 38 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE A-A-U AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. 17 OF HIS 70+ BEST LIFTER AWARDS HAVE BEEN IN THE AAU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP.

• MR. MARTIN DRAKE, OUR NEXT HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE!

(PAUSE)

• OUR FINAL HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE TONIGHT IS MR. GORDON SANTEE.

• GORDON WAS BORN IN 1946 IN NEW YORK, GRADUATED FROM SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY AND RELOCATED TO LOS ANGELES AT THE AGE OF 30.

• GORDON HAS TRAINED THROUGH AND AROUND MANY INJURIES, AND WON HIS FIRST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1989.

• HE ALSO DABBLED IN BODYBUILDING, WINNING SEVERAL REGIONAL CONTESTS AND THE 1992 NPC NATIONAL MASTERS.

• THERE HAVE BEEN CHALLENGES OVER THE YEARS, INCLUDING CANCER, HYPOGLYCEMIA, A BROKEN BACK, SEVERAL BICEPS TEARS/REATTACHMENTS AND ARTHRITIS, BUT GORDON JUST KEEPS ON LIFTING.

• HE HAS WON 22 NATIONAL AND 28 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN MULTIPLE FEDERATIONS, AND SET OR BROKEN 103 AMERICAN AND 104 WORLD RECORDS.

• GORDON HAS ALSO BEEN AN ACTIVE NATIONAL AND WORLD REFEREE FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, AND HAS REFEREED IN OVER 500 POWERLIFTING MEETS. HIS LIFTING AND REFEREING HAS TAKEN HIM TO SUCH LOCATIONS AS SOUTH AFRICA, AUSTRIA, ENGLAND, CANADA, MEXICO, AND AUSTRALIA.

• HE IS ALREADY IN A NUMBER OF HALLS OF FAME, AND TONIGHT GORDON SANTEE JOINS THE INAUGURAL CLASS OF THE A-A-U POWERLIFTING HALL OF FAME. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, HOW ABOUT
A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR OUR LAST INDUCTEE TONIGHT, THE AGELESS GORDON SANTEE!

(PAUSE)

- THAT COMPLETES OUR A-A-U POWERLIFTING HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS FOR THIS EVENING.

- THE LEGACY OF THIS SPORT IS TREMENDOUS, AND TONIGHT, WE HAVE RECOGNIZED ITS GIANTS – MEN AND WOMEN WHO WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND, AND SOMETIMES OVER, UNDER AND AROUND, TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN POWERLIFTING COMPETITION, PROMOTION, JUDGING AND ADVOCATING FOR A-A-U POWERLIFTING.

- THESE MEN AND WOMEN BLAZED THE TRAIL, SO THAT ALL OF US CAN BE HERE TONIGHT IN THIS VENUE ON THE LAS VEGAS STRIP... CELEBRATING POWER!

- TONIGHT, WE IN A-A-U HONOR OUR NEAR 50-YEAR LEGACY AS THE ORGANIZATION THAT
  - FIRST PROMOTED POWERLIFTING IN THE U-S,
  - SANCTIONED THE FIRST WORLD POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS,
  - AND CONTINUES TO PROMOTE DRUG-FREE SPORT FOR ALL!

- THIS IS THE A-A-U POWERLIFTING LEGACY, AND THIS IS YOUR LEGACY!

- WE’VE FINISHED THIS CEREMONY, BUT THIS FESTIVAL OF STRENGTH GOES ON INTO TOMORROW WITH MORE GREAT LIFTING AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THE STRONGEST ATHLETES ON THE PLANET COMPETE!

- AND AS WE CLOSE TONIGHT, I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO COME UP FRONT AND SHAKE THE HANDS OF THESE FINE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE MADE SUCH A DIFFERENCE IN OUR GREAT SPORT.
• AND IF YOU DON’T SAY ANYTHING ELSE, SAY TWO WORDS: “THANK YOU.” THEY DESERVE ALL OF OUR THANKS FOR EVERYTHING THEY’VE DONE TO MAKE POWERLIFTING THE SPORT THAT IT IS TODAY!

• GOODNIGHT EVERYBODY! SEE YOU TOMORROW ON THE PLATFORM!

-END-