

Weight Management Decision Guide

Mat Manual companion guide to "The Cut: Making Weight Without Making Yourself Worse." Print it. The article argues the frame. This guide makes the decision: tables that return a plain go or no-go, timelines for the cuts that pass, weigh-in and rehydration standards, red-flag stop rules, and the conversation script for the talk that should happen before any plan starts. It is free, because this is the guide nobody should have to pay to read before a weigh-in.

Name: _____ Gym: _____ Event and date: _____
Coach: _____

BEFORE ANYTHING: THE RED LINES ARE THE PRODUCT ☐ NO diuretics. NO laxatives. No medication or supplement used to force water or food out of the body, outside genuine medical care. No exceptions in this guide. ☐ NO rubber suits, plastic suits, or sauna marathons. Sweat is a byproduct of training, never the goal of a session. No session in this guide is a sweat session. ☐ NOTHING that risks the kidneys to make a number. Dehydration strains the kidneys. The plan never trades an organ for a bracket. ☐ MINORS DO NOT CUT. Athletes under 18 compete at their natural weight, in the class that contains it. This rule has no supervised version and no just-this-once version. ☐ Any red-flag symptom in Part 15 stops the plan, the day, and if needed the event. Stop rules outrank every table, timeline, and entry fee in this guide. ☐ This guide does not clear anyone medically. Athletes with any flag in Part 5 talk to a doctor before any cut is planned, and the doctor's answer outranks the coach's and this guide's.

Part 1: How to Use This Guide: Decide First

Work the parts in order the first time. Part 2 prints the red lines as rules. Part 3 gathers your numbers. Parts 4 and 5 run the decision. Parts 6 to 8 handle the no-go outcomes, which are complete outcomes, not failures of the guide. Parts 9 to 14 give timelines and standards only for a go decision that survived Parts 4 and 5.

Your situation	Start at
Adult, first event	Part 6, card one, before any table

Your situation	Start at
Adult, gap between walking weight and class is small, weeks are plenty	Parts 3 to 5, then Part 9
Parent or coach of a young athlete	Part 7, then Part 18
Anyone with a medical flag	Part 5, and a doctor before anything else
Returning after a bad cut	Part 22 first, honestly, then Part 3

The decision this guide produces is one of three words: go, no-go, or not yet (the class is reachable at a later event with a real timeline). Write the word on Part 28's decision page when you reach it. A decision written down survives the week-of panic; a decision held in memory gets renegotiated by it.

Part 2: The Red Lines, Printed as Rules

The opening block named them. This part gives each line its reason and its tell, so athletes can spot a bad plan handed to them by someone else.

Diuretics and laxatives. Reason: forced fluid and gut loss strains the kidneys and disturbs the salts that keep the heart's rhythm steady. The tell: any plan that names a pill, tea, or supplement whose job is to make you urinate or empty your bowels for the scale.

Sweat protocols. Reason: forcing out large sweat volumes in heat gear or long sauna stays is the mechanism in the worst outcomes in weight-class sports. The tell: any session whose stated purpose is weight lost on the scale that day, any clothing chosen to prevent cooling, any weigh-in planned immediately after a sweat session to capture the loss.

Kidney risk as a trade. Reason: the kidneys filter the blood; dehydration concentrates their work exactly when the body can least spare the water. The tell: dark urine treated as a badge of effort, thirst treated as weakness, dizziness treated as normal preparation.

Minors. Reason: growth spends calories on bone, brain, and height; a cut takes the building materials off the truck. The tell: any adult framing a young athlete's natural weight as a problem to fix rather than a class to enter.

If a plan you are shown crosses a line, the conversation is Part 18's script, and the answer if the plan stands is no-go. There is no version of loyalty to a gym that requires an athlete to cross these.

Part 3: The Inputs Worksheet

Decisions run on numbers, not on how the athlete feels about the class. Gather these before Part 4.

Input	Your number
Current morning weight, after the bathroom, before food, three mornings averaged	_____
Target class limit	_____
Gap, in weight and as a percentage of current weight	_____
Weeks until weigh-in, counted honestly from today	_____
Age	_____
Events competed so far	_____
Medical flags from Part 5's list (write none if none)	_____
Coach aware of and agreed to this plan (Y/N, name)	_____
Weigh-in timing: same day or day before, and hours before competing	_____

Weigh-in timing changes the risk picture and belongs on the worksheet, not in memory. A day-before weigh-in gives a longer recovery window and tempts larger cuts; a same-day weigh-in punishes a depleted athlete within hours. Neither timing licenses crossing a red line, and Part 4's table is deliberately strict for same-day events.

Average the morning weight across three days. A single morning is a mood; three mornings are a measurement. Athletes who skip the average plan against their lightest recent morning and build a gap that was never real, then chase it in the final week.

Part 4: Decision Table A: Gap Size Against Weeks Available

This guide's standards, set conservatively on purpose. Find your gap's row and your weeks' column. The cell is the decision before flags (Part 5 can still turn any go into a no-go).

Gap to the class	6+ weeks	4 to 5 weeks	2 to 3 weeks	Under 2 weeks
Up to about 2 percent of body	Go, Part 9 timeline	Go, Part 10 timeline	Go with coach agreement, Part	Not yet: walking weight or later

Gap to the class	6+ weeks	4 to 5 weeks	2 to 3 weeks	Under 2 weeks
weight			11	event
About 2 to 4 percent	Go with coach agreement, Part 9	Not yet, unless your coach and history support it	No-go	No-go
About 4 to 6 percent	Not yet for most amateurs; coach and medical conversation first	No-go	No-go	No-go
Over about 6 percent	No-go for this event; a longer, separate plan is a different decision	No-go	No-go	No-go

Read the table's spirit, not just its cells. The cells assume an adult, no flags, a coach involved, and an athlete who trains normally through the plan. Remove any one of those and the answer slides one step toward no. A table that cannot be slid stricter by circumstances would be a sales tool, not a safety tool.

Worked example, in words. An adult walks at the averaged weight, wants a class about 3 percent below it, and has seven weeks. Row two, column one: go with coach agreement, Part 9's timeline, Part 5 still to check. The same athlete with two weeks: row two, column three, no-go, and Part 8's class conversation is the next page, not a sweat session.

Part 5: Decision Table B: Flags That Override Everything

Any row that applies turns the decision to no-go or to doctor-first, regardless of Part 4's cell.

Flag	Decision
Under 18	No-go. Minors do not cut (Part 7)
Kidney, heart, or blood pressure history	Doctor first; no plan before that conversation
Diabetes or medication affected by fluid or food timing	Doctor first
Eating disorder, past or present, or a history of distress around food and weight	No-go. Compete at walking weight; support, not a scale plan
Pregnancy	No-go

Flag	Decision
First tournament or first fight	No-go for a cut; compete at walking weight (Part 6)
Recent illness, injury return, or a hard training camp just finished	Not yet; the body is already spending its reserves
No coach involved or coach has not agreed	Not yet; a solo cut is an unsupervised experiment
The plan anyone proposes crosses a Part 2 red line	No-go, and Part 18's conversation happens

Doctor-first means the doctor hears the whole plan, the gap, the timeline, and the event, and answers about that plan. A general "you are healthy" from an annual check is not clearance for a cut, and presenting it as clearance is how flags get laundered. Write the doctor's answer, in their words as nearly as you can, here:

Part 6: When Not to Cut: The Cards

Card one: the first event. A first tournament or fight is a measuring day: rules, nerves, warm-up rooms, strangers. Compete at walking weight and spend all your adaptation on the day itself. The class you belong in is the one your walking weight falls into. Athletes who love their first event come back; athletes who spend it depleted often do not, and they blame the sport for what the cut did.

Card two: the goal is a photograph. If the honest reason for the lower class is looking leaner, or matching a training partner, the cut has no performance case and all of the cost. No-go, kindly and firmly.

Card three: life is already spending you. A new baby, a brutal work season, an illness in the house, poor sleep that cannot be fixed this month: the reserves a cut spends are already spent. Compete up, or spectate and train.

Card four: the cut eats the training. Test at the halfway point of any timeline: are sessions still being trained, or survived? Sleep holding? Mood roughly yours? If the answers have turned, the cut is costing more than the class returns, and Part 8's move is available at the halfway point too, not just at the start.

Part 7: Minors Do Not Cut: The Page for Adults

This part is written to the adults around a young athlete, because minors do not cut is a rule adults enforce or fail to.

The rule and its scope. No weight cutting for under-18 athletes: no food restriction aimed at a scale, no fluid restriction, no extra sweat sessions, no "just a pound or two." A young athlete's weight class is chosen from their natural, fed, hydrated weight, measured on an ordinary week, in ordinary training clothes' allowance as the rules provide.

What to do instead. Enter the class that contains the natural weight. If the athlete is much lighter than the class's top, that is a coaching conversation about divisions, age bands, and event choice, and it ends in a better-matched event far more often than adults expect. If the athlete is growing fast, recheck the class a few weeks out at natural weight; growth moves the class, and that is normal and healthy.

What to say when another adult suggests a cut. Use Part 18's script, third version. Say it plainly, once: in this family, in this gym, young athletes do not cut weight. Then move the conversation to the event's division options. An adult who persists after that sentence has told you something important about where your child should train.

Watch for the quiet version. A teenager who starts skipping meals, weighing daily in secret, or talking about food with fear has imported the cutting culture without any adult's instruction. The response is a calm conversation and, where worry persists, professional support.

Part 8: Choosing the Class Instead: Moving Up Well

A no-go is not the end of the event; it is a class decision, and it can be made well rather than mourned.

Move up early. The earlier the class change is made, the more of the plan survives: training continues aimed at the event, tactics are built for the actual bracket, and the athlete stops negotiating with a scale. Most events allow class changes by a stated date; find yours today.

Reframe in one sentence, and use it. "I am competing at my walking weight so I arrive strong." Say it to training partners, family, and yourself in that form. Athletes who narrate the move as a failure train like it was one; athletes who narrate it as a choice compete like it was one. That is accurate thinking, since strength at the higher class is the entire argument.

Tactical note for the higher class. Opponents there may be somewhat larger and will feel it most in clinch, grip, and contact exchanges, per your art. Your coach adjusts one or two tactical emphases for the event. Nothing about the higher class requires a rebuild; it requires arriving fed, hydrated, and trained, which the no-go just bought you.

Record it. Write the class change and its reason in the log (Part 24). Next event's Part 3 worksheet reads this entry, and the gap conversation starts from evidence.

Part 9: Timeline A: Six or More Weeks Out

The long timeline, for the gaps Part 4 allows at this distance. Its character is boredom, and boredom is the quality standard.

Weeks six to three. Ordinary training, ordinary meals of real food, with a small steady adjustment only if genuine body fat is part of the gap and your coach agrees it should be addressed. Water intake normal and consistent every day. Morning weight logged three times a week (Part 3's method). Sleep protected as a training input, not a luxury. Nothing about these weeks should be visible from outside: no skipped team meals, no dramatic restrictions, no scale talk as a personality.

The halfway check (Part 6, card four). At the midpoint, compare the averaged weight with the timeline's expectation: roughly half the gap closed, or the plan was mispriced. A mispriced plan is corrected by Part 8's move or by extending to a later event, never by steepening the remaining weeks. Steepening is how a sane cut becomes the other kind, one adjustment at a time.

Weeks two to one. Training intensity tapers per your coach's event plan. Food stays regular; the adjustments now are composition and timing at the margins, smaller evening meals if your coach uses them, nothing skipped outright. Fluids stay normal until Part 12's final-days window. The athlete should feel like an athlete preparing, not a person disappearing.

Dose of attention: one log line a day, one coach check-in a week. More attention than that feeds the scale a importance it has not earned.

Part 10: Timeline B: Four to Five Weeks Out

The compressed sane timeline, only for the smaller gaps Part 4 allows here.

Week one. Inputs worksheet re-run (Part 3), coach agreement confirmed out loud, training normal, meals regular with the small adjustment if it applies. Set the halfway check date now and write it where you will see it.

Weeks two and three. The steady middle: logged morning weights, normal fluids, tapered nothing yet, and one honest review at the end of week three against the expected trend. Behind trend by a little is information; behind by a lot is a Part 8 decision forming. Do not let the review slide because its answer might be unwelcome. Unwelcome answers are the review's job.

Final week. Hand over to Part 12. Training tapers, food and fluid timing follow the final-days standards, and the weigh-in and rehydration plan (Parts 13 and 14) is written out in full before the week starts, so that no decision is left to be invented by a hungry athlete at the event hotel.

What this timeline refuses: a quiet week of near-fasting smuggled into week two, or a sweat session described as a hard training day. If either appears in a plan someone hands you, the plan is not this timeline, whatever its title says.

Part 11: Timeline C: Two to Three Weeks Out, Small Gaps Only

Part 4 allows a go here only for gaps up to about 2 percent, with a coach's agreement. This part exists so that small, late, legitimate adjustments have a safe shape, and so its narrowness is unmistakable.

The whole shape. Normal meals, slightly smaller portions at the margins if your coach advises, normal fluids throughout, morning weights logged daily in this window only, training tapered in the final week. The gap at this size is mostly ordinary fluctuation plus a small real adjustment. That is the entire method. If the gap does not close on this shape by three days out, it was not a 2 percent gap; it was a mismeasurement, and the answer is Part 8, not escalation.

The three-day rule. Three days before weigh-in, compare the averaged morning weight with the class. Within reach on the current shape: continue. Not within reach: the decision is made for you, and it is no-go, made while there is still time to change the class calmly. Write the three-day comparison in the log whether it pleases you or not.

What is never added at this range. Everything in Part 2, plus the softer cousins: skipping meals entirely, training twice a day to burn the gap, sleeping in extra clothing. The short timeline's temptation is always to borrow from the red-line shelf in miniature. Miniature crossings are crossings.

Part 12: The Final Days and Weigh-In Morning

For any go timeline, the final days adjust timing, not existence.

Final two days. Meals regular and familiar, sized moderately, nothing new introduced; a new food this close to an event is a stomach experiment with a bracket attached. Fluids normal through the day before weigh-in for same-day events; for day-before weigh-ins, your coach's timing plan, written in Part 13's checklist, governs, and it stays inside normal hydration ranges rather than restriction. Salt and fiber stay roughly normal; dramatic manipulation of either belongs to the professional game this guide does not copy.

Weigh-in morning. Wake, bathroom, weigh at home on the same scale used for the log where possible, then travel with water and the Part 14 supplies packed. Arrive with time to spare; a rushed athlete makes rushed decisions at the scale, including the worst one, which is attempting a last-minute sweat loss in the venue. That attempt is a red-line crossing with an audience, and this guide's answer to being slightly over is Part 8's conversation with the officials about the next class, made with dignity, not a run in a tracksuit.

If you miss. It happens to honest athletes on honest plans when a body does not follow a spreadsheet. The event's rules decide the options: usually the higher class or no competition. Take the option offered, compete if you can, and put the data in Part 22. A missed weight on a sane plan is a planning lesson. A made weight on a dangerous plan is a debt. Choose which story you would rather own.

Part 13: Weigh-In Day Checklist

Complete in order; tick as you go. The checklist is written the week before (Part 10) and used on the day, not composed on the day.

☐ Scale weight this morning, logged: _____ ☐ Official weigh-in time and location confirmed: _____ ☐ Water and rehydration supplies packed (Part 14): fluids, salts per your normal diet, familiar food ☐ First post-weigh-in meal planned and packed or located: _____ ☐ Competition start time and warm-up time written down: _____ ☐ Coach's contact and the plan for the hours between weigh-in and competing, agreed: _____ ☐ Red-flag check (Part 15) run on yourself honestly; any flag means the coach conversation happens before competing, not after ☐ Kit, documents, and event paperwork ready, so the morning's only job is the scale

Conduct at the scale. Weigh, step off, begin Part 14. Do not linger comparing numbers, do not accept a stranger's advice about a quick extra loss, and do not offer any. The checklist is your exit from that room; use it and leave.

Part 14: Rehydration and Refuelling Standards

The hours after weigh-in are part of the performance plan. These standards assume a sane cut, where the deficit to repair is small: some fluid, a meal or two, and calm.

Fluids first, steadily. Drink normal fluids in steady amounts across the first hour rather than a single huge volume at once; the stomach handles steady better. Include ordinary food and normal dietary salt across the following meals. Drink to thirst, plus a margin for the event ahead, not to a forced total.

Food the stomach knows. First meal: familiar, moderate, built from foods you have eaten before training many times. Save the celebration meal for after the event. A stomach in revolt at warm-up time usually traces to this window rather than to the cut itself.

Time is an ingredient. Where the schedule allows, the last substantial meal finishes at least a couple of hours before competing, per your own known digestion and your coach's habit. Day-before weigh-ins earn their keep here: a full evening meal, a night's sleep, and a normal breakfast are the strongest legal performance tools in this whole guide.

What this standard is not. It is not a medical rehydration protocol for a severely dehydrated athlete, because this guide never produces one. An athlete who arrives at weigh-in severely depleted, with Part 15 flags, is not refuelled by this part; they are assessed, and the competing decision is made with a coach and, where available, event medical staff.

Part 15: Red-Flag Symptoms and Stop Rules

Stop rules, printed as a list to be read aloud at the start of any cut and posted where the athlete trains. Any single flag triggers its rule.

Flag	Rule
Dizziness, faintness, or a near-faint	Plan stops for the day; fluids and food; coach told; no training that day
Very dark urine, or no urine for many hours despite drinking	Plan stops; medical advice sought the same day
Racing, pounding, or irregular heartbeat; chest discomfort	Stop everything; medical assessment urgently
Confusion, slurred speech, severe headache, vomiting	Urgent medical assessment
Muscle cramps that spread or will not release, or muscle pain with dark urine	Same-day medical advice; kidney involvement is the concern
Mood or thinking about food becomes frightening or obsessive	Plan ends; competing happens at walking weight; support sought (Part 5)
Weight falling far faster than the timeline expects	Plan pauses; coach review; faster is a warning here, not a success

The authority rule. The athlete can invoke any stop rule unilaterally, and so can the coach, a parent, or a training partner who sees a flag. Invoking a stop is never overruled by a deadline. A plan that cannot survive a stop rule is a hope with a schedule.

After a stop. The event decision is remade from the stop: walking weight, higher class, or withdrawal, in that order of preference, with medical advice governing where flags were physical. Part 22's review records the stop in plain words, because the next plan needs the truth about where this one ended.

Part 16: Training Through a Sane Cut

Training continues during the timelines in Parts 9 to 11, shaped by two rules.

Rule one: intensity tapers, attendance holds. Sessions continue on the normal schedule; the hardest live work finishes about a week out, and the final week's sessions are technical and sharp rather than grinding. An athlete who stops training to save energy arrives detrained as well as lighter.

Rule two: performance is data. A sudden drop in training quality, strength falling off a cliff, sparring or randori going strangely, sleep breaking, is the cut reporting on itself (Part 6, card four). Log it the day it appears. Coaches plan the taper from these reports; athletes who hide them to seem tough remove the coach's instruments and then blame the plan for flying blind.

No extra sessions. Training volume is never raised during a cut to burn the gap. Extra conditioning in a deficit is how athletes get injured in the final fortnight, and an injury at that point converts a weight decision into a season decision. The gap is closed by the timeline's ordinary means or it is not closed by this guide at all.

Dose summary: normal schedule, normal session count, hardest work done a week out, final week technical. If a proposed plan needs more training than that to make its number, the plan has confessed its gap was too big (Part 4).

Part 17: Sleep, Mood, and the Household

The unmeasured thirds of any cut, given a part because they decide more outcomes than the last row of any table.

Sleep. Protect it as the plan's recovery system: regular hours, and no weigh-in eve all-nighter of anxiety. An athlete who sleeps badly for the final three nights has spent much of what the lower class was supposed to buy. If sleep breaks early in a timeline, treat it as Part 16 data and tell the coach; it is one of the earliest signals that the deficit is too deep.

Mood. Hunger makes people shorter with the people they live with, and a month of it taxes a household that never chose the event. Name it in advance: the athlete may be quieter and quicker for a few weeks, it has a reason and an end date, and Part 18's script includes a version for home. Households that are briefed become allies.

The athlete's own head. Weighing three mornings a week on a timeline is a tool; weighing five times a day is a symptom. Set the schedule in the plan, keep it, and put the scale away between times if that is what keeping it takes. Part 5's eating-disorder flag outranks every logging standard in this book.

Part 18: The Coach and Parent Conversation Script

The conversation this guide keeps promising, in words you can actually use. Have it when the class is chosen, weeks out, in a calm room.

Athlete to coach. "I want to compete at [class]. My averaged morning weight is [number], so the gap is about [percent], and we have [weeks]. This guide's table calls that [go with agreement / not yet / no-go]. I want us to stay inside its red lines: no diuretics or laxatives, no sweat protocols, and we stop on any red flag. If we are not on trend by the halfway check, I want to move up rather than steepen the plan. Are you willing to run it that way?" A coach who agrees has given you the plan's most valuable asset. A coach who laughs at the red lines has given you different information, also valuable, and Part 8 is your next page.

Coach to athlete. "Your class options are [classes]. My honest read of the gap and the calendar is [read]. Here is the plan I will supervise, and here is where I will stop it. If I stop it, we move up, and that is my decision to carry, not yours to argue with." Athletes accept stopped plans from coaches who claimed the stopping right in advance. They resist stops that feel improvised, however wise.

Parent or coach to another adult proposing a cut for a minor. "Young athletes do not cut weight here. [Name] competes at their natural weight, in the class that holds it. If the division is a poor fit, we will find a better-matched event. That is settled, so let us talk about the event itself." Say it once, warmly, and do not debate the premise afterward; debating it teaches everyone listening that the rule is negotiable at volume.

Athlete to household. "For the next [weeks] I am on a plan for [event]. I may be hungrier and quieter in the evenings. It ends on [date] either way. What I need is [the practical thing: earlier dinners, the scale left alone, no commentary on portions]. Thank you for carrying a piece of this with me."

Part 19: Gym Culture: Making the Safe Way the Normal Way

Individual plans survive or die inside a room's culture. This part is for coaches and senior athletes, the people culture actually comes from.

Stories set the standard. Every gym retells its legends, and the cutting legends are usually horror stories told as comedy: the suit, the run, the collapse that became a nickname. Retire them, or retell them with their endings attached. A junior cannot hear the difference between a warning and a rite of passage unless the teller makes it plain.

Praise the boring plans publicly. When an athlete makes weight on a Part 9 timeline without drama, say so in front of the room. When an athlete moves up a class on a no-go call and competes strongly, name that as the senior decision it was. Culture follows applause more reliably than it follows posters.

The senior's duty at the scale. Senior athletes are watched at weigh-ins by every junior present. A senior who weighs, eats calmly, and gets on with the day teaches the guide better than the guide teaches itself. Coaches: brief your seniors on this before the event, by name.

Part 20: Weighing Practice: Scales, Records, and Sanity

One scale, one method. Use the same scale, on the same hard floor, at the same point in the morning routine, for the whole plan. Different scales disagree by enough to manufacture or erase a small gap, and athletes have chased phantom pounds produced by a bathroom scale's mood. Where the event allows, check your scale against the official one early in the week, not on the morning.

The record. Log date, morning weight, and one word for how you feel: normal, flat, rough. The word column is Part 16's data in miniature; a week of "rough" is a coach conversation regardless of the numbers.

Weighing schedule by timeline. Timeline A: three mornings a week. Timeline B: every other morning, daily in the final week. Timeline C: daily, because the window is short. Never more than once a day, after the bathroom and before food, per Part 3. An urge to weigh more often is information about anxiety, not weight; put the scale out of sight and tell the coach.

Children and scales. Young athletes are weighed for class placement by adults, on ordinary weeks, without ceremony, commentary, or audience. If a young athlete asks to weigh themselves repeatedly, Part 7's quiet-version paragraph applies.

Part 21: Event Day: From Weigh-In to Competing

The order of the day. Weigh in (Part 13). Begin fluids and the first familiar food (Part 14). Rest in a real chair, off your feet, away from the scale area. Warm up at the planned time, at the planned intensity, which for a sane cut is your normal warm-up unchanged. Compete. The celebration meal exists and it is after.

Decisions already made. By event day, this guide intends you to have no decisions left: the class was decided weeks ago, the post-weigh-in plan is packed, the warm-up time is written. Event-day improvisation is where depleted athletes get hurt, accepting a last-minute change of plan, an extra match, a borrowed supplement from a stranger. Refuse improvisation politely and completely. A stranger's powder has no place in a plan built on familiar food.

If flags appear on the day. Part 15 applies at the venue exactly as at home. Tell the coach and, where available, the event medical staff. Withdrawing or moving up on a flag is recorded in Part 22 as the plan working under its hardest condition, and any coach in this guide's culture says so to the athlete in those words.

Coaching note. The hours between weigh-in and competing are where a coach earns the trust the plan required. Be present, be calm, carry the schedule. An athlete who trusts that their coach holds the day will tell that coach the truth about flags.

Part 22: The After-Action Review

Complete within a week of the event, while the numbers and the feelings are both still available. Bring the log (Part 24) and answer from it, not from the medal or the absence of one.

Question	Your answer
Decision made (go / no-go / not yet) and on what date	_____
Gap planned versus gap at three days out	_____
Timeline followed, or where it bent, in plain words	_____
Red flags encountered, and what rule fired	_____
Morning of weigh-in: weight, and how you felt in one honest sentence	_____
Performance compared with your normal training level: same, better, worse, and the evidence	_____
The halfway check: held, or skipped, and what it would have said	_____
What the next event's worksheet (Part 3) should inherit from this one	_____

Reading the review. The verdict line is performance against your own normal level. A made weight with a worse performance is a failed plan wearing a successful number. A move up with a strong performance is a successful decision that happened to involve a higher class. Write the verdict in those terms; next season's athlete, who is you with less memory, will read this page.

Part 23: Fault Table: How Weight Plans Go Wrong

#	Fault	How it shows	The fix and its part
1	Planning against the lightest single morning	Gap looks smaller than it is; final week panics	Part 3's three-morning average, always

#	Fault	How it shows	The fix and its part
2	Steepeening after a missed halfway check	Adjustments grow as the date nears	Part 9's rule: move up or extend, never steepen
3	Copying a professional's methods	IV talk, extreme protocols, a support team of nobody	Article's frame; Part 2's tells
4	Sweat session renamed as training	A hard session appears in the final week with no technical content	Part 2: purpose is the test, not the name
5	Solo cut, no coach	Nobody can invoke a stop who is watching	Part 5: not yet until a coach agrees
6	Weighing many times a day	Scale appears in every log line and conversation	Part 20's schedule and the scale put away
7	Refuelling as celebration	First meal is the largest and richest available	Part 14: familiar, moderate, fluids first
8	Hiding symptoms to protect the plan	Flags surface after the event, in stories	Part 15's authority rule; Part 19's culture
9	An adult proposing a cut for a minor	Framed as small, supervised, or just this once	Part 7's rule and Part 18's third script
10	Judging the plan by the medal	A depleted win is filed as a good cut	Part 22's verdict line: performance against your normal level

Faults 2 and 4 are the pair that injure amateurs, because each arrives disguised as diligence. The table is ordered for coaches reviewing a log: scan for those two rows first.

Part 24: Planning Worksheet and Log

One row per logged morning, plus the plan's fixed points written once at the top.

Event: _____ Class decided: _____ Decision (Part 28):
 _____ Halfway check date: _____ Three-day check date: _____

Date	Morning weight	Feel (normal / flat / rough)	Training quality note	Flag (Y/N, which)

Date	Morning weight	Feel (normal / flat / rough)	Training quality note	Flag (Y/N, which)

Keep the completed sheet with Part 22's review. Two events of sheets, side by side, teach an athlete their own body's honest fluctuation range, which is the real number every future gap decision should be built on.

Part 25: Terms Used in This Guide

Term	Meaning
Walking weight	Your normal weight, fed and hydrated, on an ordinary training week
The cut	The planned reduction from walking weight to a class limit
Gap	The distance between averaged morning weight and the class limit, as weight and as a percentage
Red line	A method this guide does not teach or permit inside its plans (Part 2)
Flag	A medical, age, or situational factor that overrides the decision tables (Part 5)
Timeline	The week-by-week shape of a go decision (Parts 9 to 11)
Halfway check	The mid-plan review that can move the athlete up rather than steepen the plan
Stop rule	A symptom-triggered rule that halts the plan, the day, or the event (Part 15)
Refuelling	The planned fluids and familiar food after weigh-in (Part 14)

Part 26: Agreements: Athlete, Coach, and Parent (Sign Before Any Plan)

☐ We have run Parts 3 to 5 together and the decision, go, no-go, or not yet, is written on Part 28. ☐ We stay inside the red lines (Part 2). Neither of us will propose crossing one, in words, in jokes that are not jokes, or by example. ☐ Any of us can invoke a Part 15 stop rule at any time, and the invocation is final for the day. The event does not outrank it. ☐ If the athlete is under 18, this plan concerns class placement at natural weight only. There is no cut to agree to. ☐ The halfway check date is fixed, and a missed trend there means

moving up or extending, never steepening. ☐ Symptoms and rough days are reported the day they happen. Hiding them is the one dishonesty this agreement treats as serious.

Athlete: _____ Coach: _____ Parent (for minors): _____ Date: _____

Part 27: Pre-Event Checklists

Four weeks out: ☐ Parts 3 to 5 run and decision written ☐ Coach agreement confirmed ☐ Halfway and three-day check dates in the calendar ☐ Class change deadline for the event found and noted:

Final week: ☐ Part 13 checklist drafted ☐ Rehydration and first meal packed or located ☐ Warm-up time and competition time confirmed ☐ Scale checked against the official one if the event allows

Weigh-in morning: ☐ Part 13 run in order ☐ Feel-word logged honestly ☐ Coach knows where you are and when you compete ☐ Nothing new eaten, drunk, or accepted from anyone outside the plan

Part 28: The Decision Page, Coach's Session Plan, and Sign-Off

The decision. Complete after Parts 3 to 5, and again if a Part 15 stop or a Part 9 halfway check reopens it.

My averaged morning weight: _____ Target class: _____ Gap: _____
(_____ percent) Weeks available: _____ Flags (Part 5): _____

Decision: ☐ Go, on Timeline _____ ☐ No-go: I compete at walking weight in class _____ ☐

Not yet: the class is revisited for the event on _____ The sentence I will use for this decision (Part 8): _____

Coach's session plan (30 minutes, run with a team or class before an event season). 0 to 5: read the opening red lines aloud. 5 to 12: Part 4's table worked through with two invented examples. 12 to 20: Part 15's flags read and discussed; every athlete locates the list in their own copy. 20 to 27: Part 18's first script rehearsed in pairs. 27 to 30: agreements (Part 26) signed by every athlete planning an event this season, including the ones whose decision is no-go, because the culture is the plan.

Athlete sign-off: I made this decision from the tables and I will follow its stop rules.

_____ Coach sign-off: _____ Date: _____
