

**WEIGHT PULLING RULES***Effective as of February, 1997. Updated February 2008.***1. ENTRY RULES****1.1 Entries**

- 1.1.1 An entry for a weight-pull shall be submitted prior to the start of the pull, subject to deadlines as determined by the weight pull organisation.
- 1.1.2 The weight pull organisation may reject any entry for just cause.
- 1.1.3 The competition giving organisation shall prohibit any person convicted of animal abuse or neglect at a misdemeanour or greater level from participating in AMCV sanctioned weight pulls.

**1.2. Dogs**

- 1.2.1 To qualify for a weight pulling contest- the dog shall be at least 18 months old.
- 1.2.2 No female in season shall be used in the weight pull event or brought into the weight pull area.
- 1.2.3 The Chief Judge, (ref) may check all bitches to ascertain whether they are in heat or not.

**1.3. Disease**

- 1.3.1 No dogs shall be brought from a kennel where hepatitis, distemper, leptospirosis, parvovirus, kennel cough or any other contagious disease exists.
- 1.3.2 A person shall not bring equipment or clothes to a contest which have come in contact with any contagious disease.

**1.4. Pulling Classes**

- 1.4.1 36 kg (90 lbs) - all dogs weighing up to and including 36 kg.
- 1.4.2 45 kg (100 lbs) - all dogs weighing more than 36 kg up to and including 45 kg.
- 1.4.3 55 kg (120 lbs) - all dogs weighing more than 45 kg up to and including 55 kg.
- 1.4.4 Unlimited - all dogs weighing more than 55 kg.
- 1.4.5 All weights shall be rounded off to the lowest whole kilogram. Example: A dog weighing 50.7 kg would be recorded as 50 kg.

**1.5. Medications Administered to dogs - Prohibited Drugs**

- 1.5.1 See attachment 1, "AMCV List of Forbidden Substances and Methods for Dogs"
- 1.5.2 AMCV will allow a positive test for previously declared parasiticides in the test for prohibited substances in sled dogs. It is incumbent upon the driver/owner to declare all foreign substances used in his/her sled dogs before testing occurs.
- 1.5.3 Whenever a specimen is requested for testing, the owner/driver shall be present (or higher representative) and shall declare in writing to the sampling official all medications administered to the dog within 72 hours preceding the start of the event.
- 1.5.4 If an owner or handler refuses to allow a sample to be collected from a dog, that dog shall be disqualified from the event.
- 1.5.5 If a dog shows a positive test of a prohibited drug, that dog is subject to disqualification, the decision to be made following a hearing.

**1.6. Drug Testing**

- 1.6.1 If an organisation intends to test for drugs, it shall declare so on the entry form. It is recommended that the organisation uses the AMCV Drug Testing Procedures.
- 1.6.2 The external use of DMSO and Topical Cortico-Steroids are limited to the use on feet only, in ointments, and provided by a registered veterinarian.
- 1.6.3 Where testing is due to an appeal, the person lodging the appeal shall be required to pay the costs at the time the appeal is lodged.

**2. PROCEDURES****2.1. Dog Weight Determination**

- 2.1.1 All dogs shall be weighed prior to each weight pull event,
- 2.1.2 The weigh-in shall be no more than ONE day previous to the event.
- 2.1.3 All dog weights shall be recorded and rounded off according to section 1.4.5.
- 2.1.4 The Chief Judges decision shall determine disputed weights and shall be final.

**2.2. Class Eligibility**

- 2.2.1 A dog shall compete in the weight pulling division determined by pre-contest weigh-in.
- 2.2.2. The winner of the lower division shall have the option, and with an additional entry fee and qualification requirement, to move into the next higher division.
  - 2.2.2.1. The winner of the lower division shall be seeded on the higher division entry sheet in the last pulling position.
  - 2.2.2.2. A dog winning a lower division shall have its winning weight and time officially recorded as a pull in the higher class/division should the handler be taking the option of moving up a division.
  - 2.2.2.3. A dog competing in a higher division need not pull unless at the discretion of the handler.
  - 2.2.2.4. Dogs moving into a higher division on previous performances shall receive all benefits of any placing it has earned in both its own and higher class, including purses, prizes, trophies and points at AMCV sanctioned events.
- 2.2.3. If no dog has qualified for the next higher division the dog winning the lower division shall not be allowed to move up into a non-competing division to gain any benefits previously offered in that division.

**2.3. Qualifying**

- 2.3.1 Each dog shall be required to do a qualifying pull prior to the commencement of each AMCV sanctioned event.
- 2.3.2 The qualifying weight shall be either the unladen weight of the weight pulling cart or 160 kg, whichever is the higher weight, to a maximum of 180 kg.
- 2.3.3 Qualifying shall be conducted as per the rules for normal competition.
- 2.3.4 At least ONE dog must qualify for a division for that division to be run.

**3. OFFICIALS****3.1. Chief Judge**

- 3.1.1 The Chief Judge shall supervise the over-all event. He/She shall make all final decisions in any protest or dispute, before, during, and after the event.
- 3.1.2 The Chief Judge has the right to disqualify any dog or handler for any violation of the rules or unsportsmanlike conduct, before, during, and after the event. The Chief Judge / Weight-pull Co-ordinator has the right to disqualify a dog at any time should the dog's welfare be deemed to be in jeopardy.
- 3.1.3 The Chief Judge shall be responsible for the completion of all forms, handlers reports, working dog title cards and any other information required by the AMCV.
- 3.1.4 The Chief Judge shall ensure that there are enough Stewards to conduct the event in an efficient and safe manner.
- 3.1.5 The Chief Judge shall ensure that the event is conducted in a fair and safe manner for all dogs, handlers, Stewards and spectators.

**3.2. Stewards**

- 3.2.1 Stewards shall be supervised by the Chief Judge.
- 3.2.2 The Stewards shall perform the support role for the event they shall be responsible for:
  - 3.2.2.1 the safe and proper stacking of weight on the sled/cart
  - 3.2.2.2 proper positioning of the sled/cart
  - 3.2.2.3 hooking up of the dogs to the sled/cart
  - 3.2.2.4 breaking the sled when pulling on snow
  - 3.2.2.5 maintenance of the pulling course
  - 3.2.2.6 timing each pull and reporting that time directly to the official recorder.

3.2.2.7 recording the weight pulled and the time required on the official AMCV score sheet.

## 4. EQUIPMENT

### 4.1. Sleds

- 4.1.1 A sled capable of safely carrying 1200 kg (2700 lb) shall be provided for snow events.
- 4.1.2 The two runners must be two (2) to four (4) inches wide and at least seven (7) feet long on the contact surface and curved at the front end in a reasonable manner for a sled.
- 4.1.3 The runners shall consist of a plastic material or a steel runner. The sled must be a minimum of thirty (30) inches in width and no more than forty-eight (48) inches in width.
- 4.1.4 The sled shall be provided with an adequate bridle and tugline of total length so that the point of attachment to the dog's harness will not exceed six (6) feet from the sled.
- 4.1.5 The bridle shall be made of rope or nylon. Chains or cable will not be allowed.
- 4.1.6 The sled bridle shall be tied together at a point 2' - 3' in front of the sled. The bridle will look like a Y.

### 4.2. Carts

- 4.2.1 A wheeled cart capable of safely carrying 2000 kg (4400 lb) shall be provided for non-snow events.
- 4.2.2 The cart must have four (4) pneumatic tires which must all have the same air pressure prior to the event.
- 4.2.3 A spare tire for the cart should be available at the pull site.
- 4.2.4 The bridle shall be made of rope or nylon. Chains or cable will not be allowed. The cart bridle shall not be tied. The snap should be able to slide freely from side to side. This bridle will look like a long V.

### 4.3. Scale

- 4.3.1 A scale, calibrated not more than 2 weeks prior to the event is to be provided by the event organisers. The calibration shall be performed by a registered authority.
- 4.3.2 If the scale platform is less than 1 foot wide and 2 feet long, a makeshift platform with roughly these dimensions and the ability to be secured to the scale shall be provided. (most scales are designed for humans not dogs!)

### 4.4. Weighting Material

- 4.4.1 All weighting material shall be inert, that is, its weight shall not fluctuate if exposed to rain, snow, etc. The material shall be suitable for safe, stable stacking.
- 4.4.2 An adequate supply of weighting material shall be provided by the event organisers (eg for dry conditions it is not unreasonable to be pulling >1500 kg).
- 4.4.3 Weighting material should be pre-weighed and stamped.
- 4.4.4 Weighting material shall be measured to the nearest 100 grams (eg 20.2 kg)
- 4.4.5 A minimum of THREE (3) weights to be used in the event shall selected randomly prior to the commencement of the event. They shall be weighed to confirm the indicated weight - a variation of  $\pm 2\%$  is acceptable (eg 20 kg  $\pm 2\%$  =  $\pm 0.4$  kg).
- 4.4.6 Any material found to vary more than  $\pm 2\%$  shall be deemed either not-inert or imprecise. In this situation each weight must be individually weighed prior to being used in the competition.
- 4.4.7 In the situation where insufficient weighting material is available for the event, the organisers, with the approval of the Chief Judge, shall be permitted to use any material available at the site, provided it is weighed prior to use and is safe.

### 4.5. Harnesses

- 4.5.1 Dogs shall be fitted with an adequate freight-type harness.
- 4.5.2 The AMCV shall make available spare harnesses for beginners. Sizes of the spare harnesses should be small, medium and large and at least 2 of each size should be provided. (This will significantly help speed up the event, without discouraging newcomers to the sport.)

### 4.6. Inspection

- 4.6.1 The Chief Judge shall inspect all harnesses prior to the event for proper and safe fit.
- 4.6.2 The Chief Judge shall inspect all equipment, cart/sled, weighting material, surface, ropes and snaps.

## 5. PHYSICAL AREA

### 5.1. Diagram

### 5.2. Chute

- 5.2.1 All sanctioned pulls shall be held in a single chute.
- 5.2.2 The weight pulling contest shall be in a chute not less than 3m (10 ft) wide and not more than 4.5 m (15 ft) wide.
- 5.2.3 The chute shall be open at both ends to accommodate the sled and the pull.
- 5.2.4 The chute shall be no less 12m (40 ft) long and not more 18m (60 ft) long.
- 5.2.5 There shall be a physical barrier separating the crowd from the pulling chute. This barrier should be approx 900 mm (3 ft from the chute).
- 5.2.6 The weight pull chute shall be as level, dry and hard packed as conditions permit.
- 5.2.7 If there is a perceptible slope then the dogs shall pull towards the higher end.

### 5.3. Pulling Surface

- 5.3.1 The pulling surface shall be uniform and clean of any debris (branches, rocks, glass, etc).
- 5.3.2 The dogs shall achieve traction on the same surface as that on which the sled rides.

### 5.4. Holding Areas

- 5.4.1 Directly behind or adjacent to the starting line of the pull chute, a holding area large enough to accommodate the anticipated entries shall be provided.
- 5.4.2 The holding area shall not be in front of the chute finish line.

## 6. THE CONTEST

### 6.1. Sequence of Classes

- 6.1.1 All weight pull classes/divisions shall be run concurrently.
- 6.1.2 Each class/division shall be brought into competition at a determined weight interval.

### 6.2. Required Distance and Time Limit

- 6.2.1 The dog shall be required to pull the load to a marked and measured 16 feet (4.8 metres)
- 6.2.2 The dog shall be required to pull the load within 60 seconds.
- 6.2.3 If a dog has begun a pull prior to his time running out and the load is in continuous motion at the expiration of the 60 second time limit, the dog shall be allowed to complete the pull provided that the load proceeds in a continuous motion.
- 6.2.4 The time marked on the score sheet shall be that of the actual time required to make the pull (times for pulls may be in excess of the 60 seconds under the above conditions).
- 6.2.5 A dog failing to pull to complete the pull within the 60 second time limit shall be allowed to attempt the same weight a second time, after all contestants have pulled that weight.
- 6.2.6 The dog may not progress to a higher weight until the second attempt succeeds, provided that the weight being pulled is less than 500 kg.

### 6.3. Load Increments

- 6.3.1 Increments shall be a minimum of 20 kg (44 lb) up to a maximum of 100 kg (220 lb), as determined by the Chief Judge.
- 6.3.2 The pull is complete when any part of the sled breaks the plane of the finish line.

### 6.4. Break Starting the Sled

- 6.4.1 The Chief Judge shall ensure that the sled is not frozen down immediately prior to the dog being attached to the gangline of the sled before the start of each individual pull.
  - a. The Sled Marshal shall be responsible to have the sled broken loose from the pulling surface in a consistent manner for all contestants.
  - b. On wet grass surfaces, and if the Chief Judge deems, the cart shall be loaded on a plywood surface.

## **6.5. Position of Handler**

- 6.5.1 During the pull, the handler shall be in one of two positions:
- No further forward than the front of the sled.
  - Beyond the designated line 6 meters (20 feet) from the starting line
- 6.5.2 Reference to calling line in diagram.

## **6.6. Start Time**

- 6.6.1 The timer shall start the pull with the word 'go' or its equivalent upon a 'ready' sign from the dog's handler.
- No dog shall not be allowed to begin its pull until it has been positioned with all four feet, either standing, sitting or lying, at least 1.5 meters (5 feet) from the starting line, directly in front of the sled.
  - If the dog should circle back toward the sled after the time has begun, it shall be considered a tangle and be called a tangle by the Chief Judge.
  - If the dogs should attempt to leave the chute, either by turning back and crossing the start line, or by attempting to climb over the side barrier of the chute after the time has begun, it shall be considered a tangle and be called tangle by the Chief Judge.

## **6.7. Tangles**

- 6.7.1 If a dog becomes entangled in its harness or lines, the Chief Judge will call tangle.
- 6.7.2 Under any circumstances where a tangle has been called, the following will occur:
- The clock will be stopped but the clock will not be reset.
  - The handler will untangle the dog from its harness or lines.
  - The sled will be moved to the original starting position.
  - The handler will return to the original calling position and again resume giving commands to the dog.
- 6.7.3 If a dog should tangle a second time during the same pull, the second tangle shall be ruled as an unsuccessful pull.

## **6.8. Broken Equipment**

- 6.8.1 If any part of the harness or other equipment breaks, the contestant shall have another opportunity to pull the same weight after repairs are made.
- 6.8.2 The handler may choose to accept this interrupted pull as a pass if the pass does not give the contestant more than two (2) consecutive passes.

## **6.9. Passing Turns**

- 6.9.1 Contestants may pass one or two turns at a time. No contestant shall pass more than two successive turns without pulling.
- 6.9.2 The load shall not be lightened at any time.

## **6.10. Handling Baiting & Treating**

- 6.10.1 No physical handling of the dogs shall be allowed after the dog is in the starting position except as it applies to tangles.
- 6.10.2 An official may hold the dog in position at the request of the handler until the handler signals the start of the pull.
- Handling consists of anyone touching the dog, its harness, the sled or any other part of the equipment or load once the time/pull has begun.
- 6.10.3 For the qualifying pull only, a change of handler is permitted if the dog does not pull on the first attempt. The second handler is to call that dog for the remainder of the competition.
- 6.10.4 Only one handler is allowed to communicate with the dog, either with hand signals and/or voice commands from the chute area or at the end of the chute.
- 6.10.5 No food, treat, bait, noisemaker, muzzles or any other aid shall be permitted within the chute, nor shall food or bait be permitted on the person of the handler at any time during each individual pull.
- 6.10.6 Treating of dogs shall be allowed in the holding area.

## **6.11. Control of dogs not actually pulling**

- 6.11.1 During the weight pulling competition, dogs awaiting their turn shall be held in an assigned area to the rear of the pulling area.
- 6.11.2 No dogs, including those not scheduled to compete, shall be allowed in the general area ahead of the starting line except for that dog which is pulling.
- 6.11.3 All dog shall be under the physical control, on lead, while in the pull area except for that dog which is pulling.
- 6.11.4 Between pulls, dogs may be housed in their vans in the holding area.

## **7. CONDUCT**

### **7.1. Handlers**

- 7.1.1 All entrants shall be responsible for the conduct of their dogs and handler during the contest.
- 7.1.2 Abusive or inhumane treatment of a dog shall be prohibited and shall be cause for disqualification.
- 7.1.3 Unsportsmanlike conduct in the weight pull area or on the weight pull course shall be cause for a warning or disqualification after a hearing. This is at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

### **7.2. Dogs**

- 7.2.1 Unmanageable dogs shall be disqualified from competition.

## **8. RULES VIOLATIONS**

### **8.1. Protests and Hearings**

- 8.1.1 Any entrant wishing to protest any violations of the rules shall do so immediately following the contest.
- 8.1.2 The protest may be verbal but shall be followed by a written statement citing the circumstances and the particular rule(s) involved to the Chief Judge within one (1) hour of the end of the contest.
- 8.1.3 The individual who is being protested shall be notified by the Chief Judge and a bearing shall be scheduled before a decision is rendered.

### **8.2. Disciplinary Action**

- 8.2.1 For violation of any AMCV Weight Pull rule, the Chief Judge shall either issue a verbal warning to the handler or disqualify the handler and/or dog concerned from the event.
- 8.2.2 The decision of the Chief Judge shall be final.

## **9. DETERMINATION OF WINNERS**

### **9.1. Placings**

- 9.1.1 The dog pulling the most weight in its division is declared the winner. Each successive dog pulling the next highest weight shall be placed in the numbers two, three, etc., positions.
- 9.1.2 The winner of each weight pull class shall be the dog which pulls the most weight in the allotted time (60 seconds). The pull must be a completed pull covering the entire sixteen (16) feet.
- 9.1.3 Best Pull of the Day - based on the ratio of the dog's weight to weight pulled.
- 9.1.4 The winners of each Weight class may also compete against each other for weight to weight ratio winner.

### **9.2. Ties**

- 9.2.1
- If two or more dogs within the same weight class pull the same weight, then the dog that pulled the weight in the faster time shall receive the higher placing. The dog with the second fastest time shall be awarded second place, etc.
  - If two or more dogs in the same weight class have pulled an equal weight in the same time, then the dog with the higher weight to weight ratio shall receive the higher placing.
  - If one of the tie-placing dogs did not pull (passed), the other dog shall be declared the winner.