

Rules for SCA Weight Pulls

Revision 3.1 (Sept 2006)

- 1) Eligibility
 - a) Only registered Samoyeds, including ILP registered dogs, are eligible to compete in the Samoyed Club of America Annual National Specialty Weight Pull.
 - b) Other SCA sanctioned weight pulls may include other breeds at the discretion of the hosting club.
 - c) All dogs competing must be at least one (1) year old and cannot be older than twelve (12).
 - d) All dogs must be currently in a veterinarian approved immunization or vaccination program. Use of all controlled drugs, i.e. narcotics, stimulants or depressants, shall be strictly prohibited. The Chief Judge is to be notified of any dog on any veterinary prescribed medication at the time of the pull, other than those for heartworm or flea and tick control; this would include medication such as pain medication, antibiotics, or other clinical medications. Reporting of these medications will be on the honor system, the purpose being to enable the judge to more easily ascertain if/when a dog is being asked to exceed it's capability.
 - e) No bitch in season shall be allowed to compete or be allowed on the pull premises.
 - f) All contestants shall fill out an official SCA entry form and a Handler's Report.
 - g) These rules shall govern any weight pull offered at the annual National Specialty or any SCA Sanctioned Weight Pull.
 - h) The annual National Specialty shall be required to offer a Novice Seminar prior to the Sanctioned Weight Pull, for the purpose of instructing handlers and dogs on these rules in preparation for the weight pull. These clinics shall be open to dogs at least (6) six months of age and not more than (12) twelve years of age.
- 2) Officials: Snow and Wheeled
 - a) The event shall be governed by the Chief Judge. To insure that the SCA has qualified officials at its events, all Chief Judges shall be selected from a list of approved Chief Judges provided by the Judges Chairman.
 - i) 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. The Chief Judge has the right to disqualify any dog or handler for any violation of the rules or for unsportsmanlike conduct before, during, and after the event.
 - ii) The **Sled / Course Marshal (hereafter referred to as the Sled Marshal)** shall be responsible to coordinate the safe and proper: stacking of weight on the sled/cart, positioning of the sled/cart, hooking up of the dogs to the sled/cart, breaking the sled when pulling on snow, and maintenance of the pulling course.*
 - iii) A qualified **Timer** shall time each pull and report that time directly to the official **Recorder**. The recorder shall post the weight pulled and the time required on the official score sheet. (The timer and recorder shall be instructed, supervised, and approved by the Chief Judge, and may be the same person, in which case the Chief Judge will also need to time pulls to provide a back up time.)
 - b) No Official is to impede the progress of dog or cart.
- 3) Physical Area
 - a) Snow

The weight-pulling chute shall be in an area not less than ten (10) feet but no more than twenty (20) feet wide and not less than thirty-five (35) feet long. The chute will be open on the end toward which the pull is made. The starting line shall consist of two lines separated by a distance of two (2) feet. The first or rear line is the breaking line. The second or starting line is 16' from the finish line. This chute shall be as level as hard packed snow permits. If there is any perceptible slope to the chute, the direction of the pull shall be toward the higher end. There shall be at least one (1) physical barrier separating the crowd from the chute by a distance of three (3) feet. Dogs shall achieve traction on the same surface as on which the sled rides.
 - b) Wheeled

The dimensions and the description of the weight pull chute shall be the same for wheeled pulls as for snow pulls, with the exception of the starting line. Only one starting line is required for a wheeled pull. The chute shall be as level and firm as conditions permit. Acceptable surface shall include grass, hard packed dirt, gravel* or carpet. Dogs shall achieve traction on the same surface as that on which the cart rides.
 - c) Holding Area

A safe and adequate holding area shall be provided for both snow or wheeled pulls. All competing dogs shall remain in a marked or designated holding area. The holding area shall adequately and safely hold the number of dogs in competition. While in the holding area the handlers are responsible to control their dogs at all times.
 - d) Maintenance of either surface will only be allowed between each round of weight increases, thus not favoring any one dog over another.
- 4) Equipment
 - a) Snow Sled

The sled must be capable of safely carrying a load of 2000 lbs. 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. The runners shall consist of a *p-tex 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. The sled shall be provided with an adequate bridle and tug line of total length so that the point of attachment to the dog harness will not exceed six (6) feet from the sled. The bridle shall be made of rope (acceptable materials include Nylon, Dacron, or Polypro line) the bridle shall be tied together at a point 2'-3' in front of the sled. It shall continue the remainder of the 6' in a single form. The bridle will look like a "Y".

b) **Wheeled Sled**
If the pull is held on a surface other than snow, a wheeled cart shall be used. The cart must be capable of safely carrying a load of 3000 lbs. The cart must have four (4) pneumatic tires, which must all have the same air pressure *prior to the event. The tires shall not be less than eight (8) inches in height and no more than eighteen (18) inches in height. The bridle shall be made of rope (acceptable materials include Nylon, Dacron, or Polypro line). The point of attachment will not exceed six (6) feet from the sled, nor be less than five (5) feet from the sled. 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".

c) **Weight**
An adequate supply of pre-weighted inert material suitable for safe, stable stacking shall be provided (such as concrete cylinders, concrete blocks, dog food bags or boxes, sand tubes or bags). The weights should be weighed with the same scale as is used for the dogs' weight prior to each day's pulling. A minimum of three samples should be taken and the weight averaged and rounded up to the nearest whole pound.

d) **Barriers**
The chute barrier shall be a minimum of three (3) feet high and long enough so that dogs being driven from the rear will complete their pull within the barrier. The chute barrier shall be located at the very edge of the pulling pad, within the chute area. The best possible barrier is encouraged. The following would be considered appropriate chute barrier: plywood, snow fence, wood planks, hog panels, and other material that possess a bouncing off or glancing ability when struck by the sled or cart.

A crowd barrier is required to separate the spectators a minimum distance of three (3) feet from the pulling chute. A rope barrier is considered adequate for this purpose.

e) **Miscellaneous Equipment**
The following equipment should be on hand:
Spare tire or flat repair equipment and pump
Scale or sling to weigh dogs and weight
(The scale should be capable of weighing a 100 lb dog safely)
2 stopwatches
PA or announcing system (Optional)
First aid kit for handlers and dogs
Clipboards and poster board
Waste receptacles for dog waste
Spray chalk or tape such as duct tape for marking start and finish

5) **Classes and Competition**

a) **Weight classes**

0 to 37	pounds
38 to 50	pounds
51 to 63	pounds
64 to 76	pounds
77	and over

b) "Dog" refers to any entry, whether male, female, neutered male, or spayed female.

c) There will be recognition given for the Samoyed pulling the greatest percentage of its weight regardless of class entered or the dog's weight.

6) The number of dogs entered in a given weight class by one handler will be limited to no more than three (3) dogs per weight class. In the event a handler has three dogs entered an assistant will be required to manage the dogs in the holding area,

7) **Weigh in:** All dogs shall be weighed prior to each SCA pull. All recorded dog weight shall be rounded to the lowest whole pound. If the pull is a two day event, weigh in is only required on the first day of competition. However, an owner / handler may reweigh a dog at their discretion.

a) The dog that wins its weight class shall not be allowed to compete in the next weight class. However the winning dog shall be allowed to pull additional rounds to establish a top percentage pull. The weight increments will not be changed. The dog may pass as stated in the passing rules.

8) **Equipment (Harnesses)**

a) The dog must be fitted with an adequate freighting or weight-pulling harness. The harness must have a spreader bar at the rear of the dog. The Chief Judge will inspect each dog's harness prior to the dog's first pull.

b) If any part of the harness or other equipment breaks during the pull, the handler will have another chance to repeat the pull if repairs (or replacement) can be safely made before the next weight increase.

c) If repairs cannot be made before the weight is increased, the handler can elect to call the interrupted pull as a "pass", if he is eligible to take a pass on that weight.

9) **Procedures of the Weight Pull Event for the Sanctioned Class**

- a) The* official may interrupt a pull at any time it appears that the dog may injure itself.
- b) During the competition, dogs waiting their turn in their weight class will be held on lead or by their harness (or may be crated) in the designated holding area behind the starting line.
- c) The dog next in line (on deck) will progress into the area immediately near and behind the pull *vehicle. The on deck circle is to be clearly marked.
- d) The handler will be allowed to position the cart anywhere on the starting line within the chute. The dog must be positioned in front of the cart, anywhere between the tires, at the end of the tug line (i.e. the cart may be positioned at the center, left or right of center, but may only position it once per weight increment)

When on snow the sled shall be broken in the following manner: there shall be a break line 2' behind the designated start line. The Chief Judge shall then direct the following sequence:

1. The sled is to be broken and positioned at the start line with the sled runners perpendicular to the start line.*
 2. The pulling pad is to be cleared of all sled marshals (unless the handler requests assistance in hooking up the dog)
 3. The handler is to leave the on deck circle, hook up the dog and commence the pull.
- e) Only one handler is allowed to communicate with the dog during the pull.
 - f) Hand signals and / or voice command may be used.
 - g) During each pull, the handler must be in one of the following two positions, and may not change positions during the same round.
 - i) No closer than the point designated as the dog's finish line if the dog is being called to the handler. The handler's feet must be on the far side of the line. However, the handler may lean over the line to encourage the dog, as long as the feet remain on the far side of the finish line and the handler does not touch the surface of the pulling area between the start and finish line.
 - ii) No further forward than the front of the pull vehicle if the dog is being driven.
 - h) The pull is started by the Official Timer when the handler signals the dog either by voice or body / hand command, or the dog puts the cart or sled in motion.
 - i) The handler shall position the dog and proceed directly across the finish line if calling or behind the front of the cart / sled if driving without stopping or hesitating; there shall not be any communication or contact with the dog, pulling surface, or equipment between the start and finish line. The handler can not touch the dog until the pull is complete.
 - j) The dog has 60 seconds to pull the weight 16 feet.
 - i) If the cart or sled is in motion when the time expires, the dog will be allowed to continue the pull without disqualification provided the cart or sled remains in continuous motion.
 - k) The Chief Judge and 2/3 majority of the handlers, will determine the starting weight based on existing conditions. If it becomes apparent that the starting weight is too high, based on poor conditions, the Chief Judge may adjust the starting weight lower to match conditions.
 - l) The Chief Judge and 2/3 majority of the handlers, will determine how the load increments will be increased.
 - m) No one may request that a load be lightened at any time
 - n) Any handler may pass one (1) or two (2) turns but must pull on the third turn. After a successful pull, the option of passing one or two turns may be repeated at any time during that weight class competition. Dogs may continue to pass when they are the only remaining contestant.
 - o) If a dog cannot pull a load and is disqualified either by the Chief Judge or voluntarily by the handler, the handler may request that the Sled Marshal push the sled or cart to enable the dog to confidently bring the sled or cart to the finish line.
 - p) In the event of a tangle, the Chief Judge will stop the clock and the handler must realign the dog and harness before the pull is resumed. Only the Chief Judge can call a tangle and stop the clock. The Sled Marshal, Timer, Recorder or the dog's handler should inform the Chief Judge when they observe a tangle. A tangle is defined as the dog's harness or the bridle becoming entwined on the dog, the sled or cart, or the barrier, which stops the sled or cart, or could injure the dog.
 - q) Two tangles on the same pull will constitute the dog's disqualification from the competition; the previously pulled weight will be recorded as the final pull for that dog.
 - r) If the sled or cart becomes stuck on a barrier, it will be called a tangle. The time will be stopped and the sled or cart freed from the barrier at the point of being stuck. The dog will be allowed to continue the pull within the time remaining on the clock.

10) General

- a) Unsportsmanlike conduct in the weight pull area or on the weight pull course, before, during, or after a weight pull, will result in disqualification.
- b) All dogs shall be kept in a designated holding area behind the starting line while they are waiting to pull.
- c) No dog, either an entered dog or a spectator, shall be allowed in the general area ahead of the starting line except for the dog that is pulling
- d) Only the dog next in line (on deck) may proceed beyond the holding area; the on deck dog will remain in the area behind the starting line, (the on-deck circle) until called to the starting line, by the Sled Marshal.

11) No Touching, double handling, or Baiting will be Allowed

- a) Touching consists of anyone touching the dog, his harness, the sled or cart, or any other part of the equipment or load once a pull has commenced, except to stop the dog after completion of the pull, after the Chief Judge calls a tangle, or after voluntarily disqualifying the dog. Baiting is defined as to coerce the dog with food or treats or the appearance of enticing the dog through food or other treats. Double handling is defined as anyone assisting the handler in any way while the dog is attempting to or pulling.
- b) Leashes used to lead the dog to the pull area must be removed from the dog prior to starting the pull.
- c) All persons, or dogs, capable of baiting the dog pulling must be no further forward among the spectators than the starting line.
- d) No food, treats, bait, toys, balls, whips, noisemakers, muzzles, or any related aids will be permitted. This rule shall be in effect from the time the weight class begins until the dog has been eliminated from competition.
- e) Food or bait is not permitted on the person of the handler at any time in the pull area.
- f) No dogs, including those not entered in the competition shall be allowed in the area ahead of the starting line, except the dog that is pulling.
- g) The dog pulling the most weight in its class is declared the winner. Each successive dog pulling a lower weight is placed second, third, etc. If two or more dogs pull the same weight the required distance and can pull no more weight the full distance, the winner is determined by the fastest time in the previous pull.
- h) Any entrant protesting a violation of the rules shall do so immediately following the round. The protest may be verbal, but shall be followed by a written statement directed to the Chief Judge within one (1) hour after the end of the contest. A hearing shall be scheduled and a decision rendered. * The decision of the Chief Judge is final.

12) Novice Class **

- a) Novice dogs are defined as those dogs that have pulled in competition less than four times.

- b) Novice dogs will be allowed two or three free rounds (as time permits), defined as:

The dog may have help from the Sled Marshal (assisting to move the cart)

The handler may touch the dog to help him to pull the load (only by holding the back or breastplate of the harness, not the dog's collar) thus assisting in the completion of the pull. At no time is it acceptable to use pressure on the dogs collar to motivate him to pull.

The handler does not need to remain behind the finish line when calling the dog or behind the front of the cart when driving the dog.

The handler may use bait as a reward, it is acceptable only after the dog has completed pulling, but not in the chute nor in the holding area.

Novice dogs may continue to pull after the free rounds, but must do it on their own, with these conditions:

The handler may not keep the dog on a leash but may stay close to the dog.

The handler may not touch the dog

- d) A Novice dog may not earn points towards the SCA Working Titles.

13) Amateur Class (If offered)

- a) Amateur dogs are defined as those dogs that have pulled in competition more than four times, but are not ready for sanctioned competition. At the discretion of their handler / owner,* a dog that has won an Amateur pulls shall no longer be eligible to compete in an amateur pull.
- b) The handler is allowed to use the lead only three times (tug and release no dragging the dog with the lead).

- c) The handler is allowed to stay close to the dog, but may not touch the dog (except to attach the lead).
- d) An Amateur dog may attempt to earn points towards the SCA Working Titles, but must abide by all the Sanctioned rules. Once any of the rules are broken (i.e. handler works close to dog, uses lead, etc.) the maximum weight is recorded as the last clean weight pulled.
*If a dog has earned 75 points abiding by the Sanctioned rules but will not pull the next increment without the handler getting close or using the lead, and then the dog goes on to earn 112 points by using the lead. They will only receive the 75 points earned while pulling under Sanctioned rules.

14) Sanctioning Requirements.

- a) Any person applying for SCA sanctioning shall follow all SCA rules and procedures.
- b) Any person applying for SCA sanctioning shall be a member in good standing of the SCA.
- c) The SCA weight pull season shall run from September 1st to April 1st of any calendar year, but sanctioning will be granted to pulls held outside the official season. However, these pulls may not be counted for dogs competing for the Top Weight Pull Dog or Bitch award.
- d) The application for a sanctioned weight pull shall be postmarked not later than 30 days prior to date of the event and include a \$10 processing fee.
- e) The handler's reports and a full event report shall be postmarked not later than 10 days after the date of the event.
- f) The application for sanctioning must include the names of the Chief Judge, Sled / Course Marshal, Timer, and Recorder. The date or dates and location of the pull, the surface to be pulled on, the sponsoring SCA member, and the club or organization holding the event.
- g) The applications will be reviewed and approved by an SCA member (designated Weight Pull Sanctioning Chair) appointed by the President Samoyed Club of America.
- h) A major consideration in obtaining sanctioning will be completeness of the application and review of data of previous pulls including submission of handler's reports.

15) Chief Judge Requirements

- a) The Chief Judge shall be selected from a list of approved Chief Judges.
- b) Chief Judges shall be deemed approved if they are currently on a list of Chief Judges kept by the IWPA Judges Chair or the SCA Weight Pull Judges Chair.
- c) SCA Chief Judges shall be approved after taking a written test on the SCA Weight Pull Rules. The test may be obtained by written request to the SCA Weight Pull Judges Chair.
- d) SCA Chief Judges must be a member in good standing of the SCA.
- e) The SCA Weight Pull Judges Chair shall be appointed by the President of the Samoyed Club of America.