

## **North American Weight Pull Association (NAWA)**

The North American Weight Pull Association (NAWA) exists to promote and preserve the sport of canine weight pull through fair, inclusive, and competitive events. We are committed to fostering a community grounded in sportsmanship, integrity, and respect for all participants — human and canine alike.

Our mission is to:

- Sanction and Host professionally run, rule-abiding weight-pull competitions.
- Champion ethical treatment and honest competition at every level.
- Uphold transparent governance and membership practices.
- Encourage participation regardless of background or experience.

NAWA proudly welcomes individuals who share our passion for the sport and who embody the values of fairness, camaraderie, and dedication.

### **Section 1: Season**

The competition season will be from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> keeping in mind that we have a temperature restriction of 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the chute. If the temperature exceeds that, then the event must be paused until the temperature lowers.

### **Section 2: Dog Registration.**

- A. Lifetime registration fee per dog of \$30. At that time the dog will be assigned a registration number with the organization.
  - 1. Tripods, deaf, or blind dogs are eligible for membership and competition.
- B. Dog registration is open to any dog or owner who has not been banned prior in any other weight pulling organization. New registration requests are required to divulge this information when applying for membership. Your previous ban will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Any future bans are subject to immediate loss of registration.
- C. Owner/Handlers who do not register and pay the NAWA lifetime registration for their dog(s) prior to or on the day of the show before the pull begins will be ineligible for placements, awards and ranking points and will be considered

“For Exhibition Only” until registration is completed. Host/Clubs may at their discretion give out “Participation” awards to FEO competitors.

### **Section 3: Eligibility of dogs.**

- A. Dogs must be nine months of age to compete. From 9 months to one year old the dog will be permitted to pull up to the advanced puller title. Once the dog reaches one year old, then they can continue working on the higher titles. Any dog over the age of 12 must have a written letter submitted yearly from a licensed veterinarian stating that they are physically able to continue to compete.
- B. The head judge and another competitor will inspect all dogs prior to competing. They shall inspect each dog for lameness, fitness to participate, and to check for females in season. If the two agree during this assessment that this dog does not pass, then they will deny the dog entry into the event. All entry fees will be refunded to the owner. After the event, the head judge will notify the organizational secretary as to why within 48 hours after the event.
- C. All dogs must be free of all canine related diseases, and it is at the discretion of the host if they require proof of vaccinations. If proof is required, then it must be listed in the event information when sanctioning is submitted.
- D. Dogs are not allowed to be on any performance enhancing substances. Random drug testing can be conducted by the organization at any time and will be unannounced.
- E. Dogs must be in good physical condition and free of any injuries, open wounds, stitches, or wound drains.
- F. No pregnant, lactating, nursing, or bitches in season.
- G. Training collars may be worn to enter the chute, once in the chute the training collar must be removed and placed behind the dog on the cart.
- H. Muzzles may be worn, but the dog must have ample pant room to breathe and drink freely while worn.

### **Section 4: Control of Dogs and conduct.**

- A. All handlers are required to have complete control of their dog at all times. It is required that the dog be in a secure crate or contained in a vehicle during the event.
- B. No soft sided crates permitted to be used in the holding area.
- C. Everyone must clean up after themselves and their dog. Failure to do so will have you removed from the event grounds and further disciplinary action from the organization.

- D. Any handler who is abusive (physically, verbally or otherwise) to their dog, judge, or fellow competitors will be removed from the event grounds at the discretion of the head judge. Any points, titles, and awards will be null and void. No refunds will be given. Within 48 hours the judge needs to submit to the secretary about this incident through the appropriate form on the website. This handler will then face further disciplinary action from the organization.

## **Section 5: Surfaces and Pulling Equipment.**

### **A. Rails**

1. Any combination of the number or type of casters. The caster size should not exceed 6 inches in height.
2. Flat or V groove is acceptable.
3. Track dimensions should be at least three feet across and thirty-two feet in length with the same pulling surface underneath.
4. The track should be constructed with the capability to safely hold at least 10,000 lbs.
5. All tracks are to have stoppers on each end to safely hold the cart onto the track at both ends. There shall be leveling legs underneath to set up the track onto the solid surface below.
6. Tracks may be oiled at the beginning of the event each day at the discretion of the head judge.
7. The trace line shall be attached to the cart. It shall be in the form of a "I" line. The length should be minimum of 5 feet and a maximum of 6 feet. The trace line is to be made of rope, but it must be rated with a high enough breaking strength for the surface. The trace line cannot be made of chain or cable. A smaller rated trace may be used for the smaller classes but must be switched at the maximum breaking strength which it is rated for.
  - a. Backup trace required.
  - b. Carabiner/Rope are required to have a breaking strength of at least 10,000 lbs.

### **B. Wheels**

1. Construction of the cart may of any material, but it must be constructed with the capability to safely hold at least 5,000 lbs.
2. There shall be 4 pneumatic tires with the tires properly inflated to what the sidewall rating is listed. It is required to have a spare tire or patch kit available.

3. Up to three small carts may be available for the 10 lb, 20 lb, and 40 lb weight classes, but they must be able to safely hold up to the weight of the next size larger carts.
4. Wheels may be pulled on an acceptable surface underneath. Acceptable surfaces:
  - a. Carpet
  - b. Dirt
  - c. Grass
  - d. Infield mix
  - e. Diamond dust.

Unacceptable surfaces:

- a. Sand
  - b. Slag
  - c. Uncovered concrete or blacktop.
5. The carpet must be long enough to allow the dog to gain traction on and finish the pull on the same surface.
6. The trace line shall be attached to the cart. It shall be in the form of a V. The length should be a minimum of 5 feet but cannot exceed 6 feet. The trace line can only be made of rope. A smaller rated trace may be used for the smaller classes but must be switched at the maximum breaking strength which it is rated for.
  - a. Main trace line must have a backup.
  - b. Carabiner/Rope must have a breaking strength of at least 5,000 lbs.
7. Level as possible. If a hill is present, then the pull must be set up to have the dogs pull up the grade.

#### C. Snow

1. Construction of the sled may be of any material, but it must be constructed with the capability to safely hold at least 3,000 lbs.
2. The two runners of the sled are to be no smaller than 2 inches wide and a contact area of at least seven feet. The runners shall be curved up on the front of the sled. Curved runners on the back are recommended but not required.
3. The runners may be of any material. The runners may be waxed prior to the start of the event each day, but this is at the discretion of the head judge.
4. Smaller sleds may be available for the weight classes under 60 lbs, but they must be available to safely hold up to the weight of the larger sleds.

5. The trace line shall be attached to the runners of the sled. It shall be in the form of a Y. The length should be a minimum of 5 feet but cannot exceed 6 feet. The trace is to be made from rope, but it must be rated with a high enough breaking strength for the surface. A smaller rated trace may be used for the smaller classes but must be switched at the maximum breaking strength which it is rated for.
    - a. Main trace line must have a backup.
    - b. Carabiner/Rope must have a breaking strength of at least 3,000 lbs.
- D. Chute
1. The fencing can be of any material but must be at least three feet in height and be at least 40 feet in length. A wall may be substituted for a fence along one side but must meet the minimum length requirement.
  2. For snow, the chute must be made of strong enough material to allow the sled to bounce off the lower boards. The lower boards shall be from the start line to the finish line.
  3. The chute needs to be a minimum of ten feet in width. The stands that hold up the chute may extend into the pulling area.
  4. Crowd barrier a minimum of three from the chute.
- E. **All equipment will need to have pictures and specifications sent to the organization. All equipment will need to be approved before the ability to sanction an event.**

## **Section 6: Equipment failure.**

### A. Harness

1. If the dog's harness happens to break. The handler may take a five-minute break to repair or switch the harness. If the handler cannot repair or replace the harness, then they must take a pass for that round. If they cannot pass, then a foul will be assessed.

### B. Pulling Equipment

1. The pull will pause for five minutes while the club members and judges attempt to repair or replace the equipment. If pulling equipment cannot be repaired, then the pull will be stopped, and all awards will be handed out per the last fully completed round.
2. At any time, the head judge deems that there is a safety issue, then pull may be stopped for five minutes. At that time the club members and judges will attempt to fix the situation. If it cannot be resolved, then the pull will be stopped, and all the awards will be handed out based on the scores completed thus far.

## **Section 7: Entry and Weigh Ins.**

### **A. Entries**

1. The host may choose what their entry fees may be. It is at their discretion as to whether they wish to give discounts of any type.
2. Online entries are acceptable.
3. Pre-entries or day of show entries are permitted. If pre-entry only, it must be notated when submitting their sanctioning.
4. Limiting the number of entries is acceptable, but the maximum number of entries accepted must be listed when submitting for sanctioning. A waiting list must be set up if the entry number is met.
5. It is at the discretion of the organization and the host if they wish to refuse entry to anyone at any time.
  - a. Within 48 hours after the event, the club will need to submit in writing to the secretary why this entry was refused.
  - b. The individual can submit a letter to the organization asking for clarification.

### **B. Weigh Ins**

1. The weigh-in must be witnessed by a NAWA Judge for the event.
2. All dogs need to be weighed in during the advertised time, but no earlier than 24 hours before the start of the first pull. Two scales may be used, but the handler may ask to weigh in on both. The scales can be hanging or walk-on variety.
3. If there is a break in the entry, then the dog must be re-weighed in. Ex: Dog Pulls Friday but is not entered again until Sunday.
4. All weights will be recorded to the whole pound. Just drop tailing numbers after the decimal. Ex: 20.5 lbs is 20 lbs.
5. Dogs can only be weighed-in a maximum of three times during the advertised weigh in time.
6. Dogs may not be waterlogged to move up a weight class.

### **C. Weight Classes**

- 10 LB. Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 1 to 10 lbs.
- 20 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 11 to 20 lbs.
- 40 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 21 to 40 lbs.
- 60 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 41 to 60 lbs.
- 80 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 61 to 80 lbs.
- 100 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 81 to 100 lbs.
- 125 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh between 101 to 125 lbs.
- 150 LB Class: This is for dogs that weigh over 126 lbs.

## **Section 8: Handler Meeting**

- A. The Chief Judge will have a handler meeting before the first pull of the day. At the judge's discretion they can shorten or abbreviate the handler meeting before the second pull of the day.
- B. The Chief Judge will recommend two different weight drops per class. This is done by taking into consideration the equipment and the dogs that are entered. Then the handlers in the classes will vote. The Chief Judge is the tie breaker. Once these weights are set, the dogs must pull that increment.

## **Section 9: Starting Procedure, Fouls, Passes**

- A. All dogs must be behind the starting line while the competition is underway. The holding area may be in front of the starting line, but there must be some sort of visual barrier.
- B. Once the judge gives the handler the signal to enter the chute, they will have three minutes to start their dog. Failure to not start within the three minutes will result in a foul.
- C. Once the dog is hooked to the cart, they cannot unhook the dog. If they unhook the dog to reset, they will be assessed a foul.
- D. The starting position for each surface:
  - 1. Rails: On top of the track.
  - 2. Wheels: Between the wheels of the cart.
  - 3. Snow: Between the runners.
- E. The handler may hook the dog up, ask the cart help to hook or have an additional person hook for them. All paws must be on the ground. The leash must be placed behind the dog on the cart. All slack must be out of the trace line. The handler should ask the judge if they are ready before releasing the dog.
- F. When the handler releases the dog the time will start once the dog engages or when the handler gives the dog a physical or verbal command. The dog must complete the 16-foot pull in 60 seconds or less. They may go over time, but only if the cart/sled is in motion.
- G. You are allowed two fouls. What is a foul:
  - 1. Touching the dog.
  - 2. Tangle
  - 3. Not starting the pull within three minutes.
  - 4. Unhooking the dog at the starting line.
  - 5. Timing out
  - 6. Excessive foul language in or out of the chute.

7. Pulling the dog into the pull
8. An intentional sling shot or turn and burn starts.
9. Any Food or bait in the on-deck area or in the chute.
  - a. The on-deck area is behind the starting line. The chute location is as defined by the head judge in the handler meeting.
10. Double handling.
  - a. Only the event photographer or media can be at the end of the chute.
  - b. No one else may stand at the end of the chute.
  - c. No outside cues can be given to the dog or handler from anyone but by the judges from the table.
  - d. Cheering for the dog needs to exclude words or names. Judge's discretion given to spectators cheering such as at a pet expo or public event.
11. Handler in the No pull safety zone. -
12. The No Pull Safety Zone is the area from behind the dog to the front of the cart. You have three seconds to be in this area. You cannot remain in the area between the dog and cart. Judge will say out loud "Not Safe 1, Not Safe 2, Not Safe 3". Before "Not Safe 3" the handler needs to be along the side of the cart, or beside or in front of the dog.
- H. Disqualifications for the event include; blood, urine, vomit or feces from the dog in the chute. Slobber or saliva permitted.
- I. The dog can start at any weight increment in their class but can only pass three times before it must pull again.

## **Section 10: Class Placement, Ranking Points, Titles, Awards**

- A. All classes will be placed on most weight pulled. If there is a tie, the tie breakers are time and then followed by body percentage pulled.
- B. Point accumulations
  - a. Class Placement Points are earned and counted throughout the career of the dog starting at the Certified Puller level.
  - b. Victory Points and Bonus points and will be earned and counted after the dog has completed the Elite Puller Title.
  - c. All three (Class Place Points, Victory points and Bonus points combined) count toward your total point count for Championships after you have earned the Elite Title on that surface. These points also count toward your ranking.
1. Class placement
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> Place: 5 points



b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: 3 points

c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: 1 point

2. Victory Points

a. 1 Point awarded for every dog that you beat for Most Weight Pulled.

b. 1 Point awarded for every dog that you beat for Most Weight Pulled Per Body Pound.

3. Bonus Points

a. Multiples of the dog's body weight (fka Percentage) pulled divided by 5. Ex: 20x / 5 would be 4 points.

C. All dogs will be ranked in their weight classes by state and may qualify in multiple weight classes. Dogs will earn State Ranking Points from Class placements points only - up until they earn their Elite title. After they earn their elite title then all 3 - Placement, Victory and Bonus points count towards both Champion points and their state rankings.

D. Titles

Once a Title is earned, they will show up in your dog's online portal account and be available for download. These certificates will not be mailed.

Restrictions: Dogs that are 9 months to 1 year old may compete, but they may only compete up to the advanced title leg requirement for that surface. They may not pull more than what is listed. Dogs 1 year and older are not capped.

Titles must be earned in the order progression listed below for each surface. You may submit any qualifying legs for titles that meet or exceed that title's requirements but you must request them in order [Certified, Advanced, Expert, Master, Elite] Please contact the Title Chairperson with any questions.

1. Rails

a. **Certified Rail Puller (CRP)** – Two Qualifying scores on rails 8x.

b. **Advanced Rail Puller (ARP)** - Three Qualifying scores at 12x.

c. **Expert Rail Puller (XRP)** – Four Qualifying scores at 15x.

d. **Master Rail Puller (MRP)** – Five qualifying scores at 25x.

e. **Elite Rail Puller (ERP)** – Ten qualifying scores at 35x.

2. Wheels

a. **Certified Wheel Puller (CWP)** -Two qualifying scores at 5x.

- b. **Advanced Wheel Puller (AWP)** – Three qualifying scores at 9x.
  - c. **Expert Wheel Puller (XWP)** – Four qualifying scores at 13x.
  - d. **Master Wheel Puller (MWP)** – Five qualifying scores at 19x.
  - e. **Elite Wheel Puller (EWP)** – Ten qualifying scores at 23x.
3. Snow
- a. **Certified Snow Puller (CSP)** – Two qualifying scores at 3x.
  - b. **Advanced Snow Puller (ASP)** – Three qualifying scores at 5x.
  - c. **Expert Snow Puller (XSP)** – Four qualifying scores at 8x.
  - d. **Master Snow Puller (MSP)** – Five qualifying scores at 12x.
  - e. **Elite Snow Puller (ESP)** – Ten qualifying scores at 15x.
4. **Champion Titles**

Champion Titles recognize exceptional performance after a dog has achieved its Elite Title on a given surface.

- a. Champion title points are a combination of your Class Placement Points, Your Victory Points and your Bonus Points
- b. Champion Titles
  - 1. All 3 Surface Champion titles can be achieved and do not supersede the previous. The numbering of titles will start at 2. ex. The first title that you earn will be CH and the second will be CH2.
  - 2. Milestones can only be used once toward a title. EX: You cannot use the same rails milestone for your CH and your VCH. You can accumulate the same milestone multiple times.
  - 3. Points may be used across the title requirements.
  - 4. The champion titles will precede the dog's name.

\*Champion Title Points do not start to accumulate until the dog has reached the elite title.

#### 1. **Surface Champion**

- A. Must have first earned an elite title on that surface.
- B. Have one milestone on that surface and the points to equal the value below:
  - Rails 1,000 points
  - Wheels 500 points
  - Snow 250 points

C. Without any milestones, this title can be achieved by having the point values listed below:

Rails 1,200 points

Wheels 600 Points

Snow 300 Points

C. For every additional surface point championship requirement on that surface an additional CH title will be earned. The point values are listed below:

Rails 1,000 Points

Wheels 500 Points

Snow 250 Points

D. Titles will be designated Rails: RSCH, Wheels: WSCH, Snow: SWCH

## **2. Versatility Champion (VCH)**

- a. Must have an elite title on two surfaces.
- b. Have at least two milestones and 1000 points. Milestones must be on a combination of at least two surfaces and points can be accumulated through those two surfaces. You can only use a milestone once for a title.
- c. Without any milestones, this title can be achieved by a combination of 1,500 points on two surfaces.
- d. Each additional combination of 1,000 additional points will earn another VCH. Ex: VCH2

## **3. Supreme Versatility Champion (SVCH)**

- a. Must have an elite title on all 3 surfaces.
- b. Must have a milestone for each of the three surfaces. (This title cannot be earned without at least one milestone on each surface.)
- c. Combination of 2,000 points across all 3 surfaces.
- d. For every additional 2,000 points the next level will be earned. Ex: SVCH2

## **4. National Champion**

- a. Any dog winning their class at nationals will earn the title of National Champion denoted as: NatCH-R25 (Rails),

NatCH-W25 (Wheels), NatCH-S25 (Snow), Or in the format:  
NatCH-[SURFACEInitial][YEAR].

#### **5. Event Awards**

- Awards are at the discretion of the host.
- If awards are to be distributed, then they must be awarded equally for all classes and overalls.
- No cash payments as awards will be permitted.
- Awards cannot exceed fifty dollars (value) per award unless approved by the board of directors prior to the event.

### **Section 11: Milestones**

Any dog earning any of the following milestones will be sent a certificate electronically. They may purchase a fancier printed version at their cost. Please contact the title chairperson. You can accumulate as many milestones as you like for each surface. The first milestone listed is the minimum to apply for CH Titles.

- A. Rails: 50x, 100x, 200x 10,000 lbs
- B. Wheels: 30x, 50x, 100x, 5,000 lbs
- C. Snow: 20x, 30x, 2,500 lbs, 3,000 lbs

\*Milestones will be grandfathered from other organizations for a period of one year. Proof to be sent to the organization secretary.

### **Section 12: Junior Handlers**

Any child from the age of 5 to 18 may compete with their dog in the junior classes. All junior handlers though will only compete among the other junior handlers that are entered. All points and titles will still be earned by these handlers. All titles and points earned by the dogs will also compete against the dogs entered, but these dogs must be trained and owned by the juniors. The juniors will have rankings by state and qualify for nationals.

Junior handlers are required to have a parent or legal guardian present at all times. Parent/Legal guardian assumes all risks for the junior and is solely responsible for the supervision and safety of the junior throughout the event.

#### **A. Junior Classes**

1. 5 to 9 age group: At this age the child must have assistance entering the chute with adult assistance. Once hooked, the adult must leave the chute to the rear. The adult may coach the junior on what to do. After the pull,

the adult enters the chute to assist the child and dog back to the holding area.

2. 10 to 13 age group: At this age the child can still have assistance entering the chute with adult assistance. If they wish. Once hooked, the adult must leave the chute to the rear. The adult cannot coach the junior. Once the pull is complete, the adult can assist the child and dog back to the holding area.
  3. 14 to age group: At this age, the child no longer has any adult assistance or coaching.
- B. Scholarship

For every child entered in that year \$1 per pull will be entered into the scholarship fund. Each year, one scholarship will be awarded. An essay will be sent to the scholarship committee with the topic of How My Time Pulling has affected my life. The essay is to be sent in by May 1<sup>st</sup> of their senior year.

### **Section 13: Event Scheduling, Judging, Fees**

- A. All event requests, from clubs or hosts, must be sent with at least thirty-day notice with an event sanctioning form submitted. The event sanctioning fee is \$20 per day. You can host a maximum of two pulls per day.
- B. After the event, five dollars per dog for each pull will be sent back to the organization for recording fees.
- C. After the event, all paperwork and fees need to be submitted within 10 business days through the event portal. Event fees can be sent electronically or mailed to the treasurer of the organization. Failure to do so will result in a \$20 per week late fee. After thirty business days of not being entered and payment received, the results will be null and void. The club/organizers will no longer be in good standing with the organization.
- D. Judge Requirements
  1. Apprentice
    - a. Be at least 14 years of age with 2 years of pulling experience.
    - b. Have completed and passed the judge education.
    - c. Apprenticeship under three different senior judges on each surface.
    - d. Cannot judge by themselves.
    - e. Must fully understand and be able to complete all event paperwork.
  2. Judge
    - a. Be at least 18 years of age.
    - b. Served as a backup judge for two years.

- c. Have completed and passed the Judge's educational package and exam.
- d. Understands how all parts of the online portal function and applicable software programs.

### 3. Senior Judge

- a. Served as a Judge for two years.
- b. Have completed and passed the senior judge educational package and exam.
- c. Understands how all parts of the online portal function and applicable software programs.

\*Judges need to remain active in the organization.

\*For the first two years 2025-2027 we are willing to grandfather-in judges from other organizations. Please contact the board of directors concerning this.

## **Section 14: National Championship**

### A. Host Club

- 1. Must submit their hosting bid in writing to the secretary within 6 months of the tentative date of the national championship.
  - a. Location of event.
  - b. Costs associated with facility rental.
  - c. End of season banquet location and cost.
  - d. Any additional costs associated with hosting, including equipment rental.
- 2. The board of directors will vote and notify those that applied.
- 3. The organization will supply all awards for the national event.

### B. Invitation to enter the National Championship.

- 1. For the first three seasons we will be inviting the top ten dogs from each weight class from each state on each surface. We understand that it may be difficult to have all three surfaces due to equipment availability and weather conditions, so if you are in the top ten on two out of three then you will be eligible to compete on the third surface at the National Championships. After the third National Championships we will re-evaluate the invitation requirements.
- 2. The dog needs to have pulled in at least five events and pulled a minimum of advanced puller title in the previous competition season.

3. Invitations to enter will be sent via the online portal.

NAWA and its Board and Organizers retain the right to make changes, alterations and revisions to these rules.