

# APA Rules and Regulations

*Updated November 2016*

\*\*\*Starting in 2017 - NOVICE DOGS ONLY will be allowed to complete their pulls with a leash attached to their collar.

\*\*\*All results from pulls in September must be overnighted to APA/Missy Villines PO BOX 1799 West Plains, MO 65775 on the Monday following the pull. If the results are not overnighted the pulls will not count for the organizers dogs and the organizer will not be allowed to hold any future pulls in the month of September.

\*\*\*Starting January 1, 2015 the APA will only dual-sanction weight pulls with Iron Dog using APA Rules\*\*\*

\*\*\*Beginning in 2010 the APA will allow pulls to be sanctioned outside of the Regular Season in October, November, and December for points only. These pulls will not count towards any seasonal awards or Championships for the current or following season.

B. Organizers are limited to 2 pulls per day and 3 pulls per week. A week is defined as Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. No pulls will be allowed on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

## **I - REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE**

A. January 1st thru September 30th

## **II - MEMBERSHIP**

A. No membership fees, everyone is welcome!

B. Per dog fees are collected at event prior to dog(s) pulling

C. Entry fees may not exceed \$ 20.00 for regular season pulls.

## **III - CHAMPIONSHIPS**

A. Eligibility—If your dog has pulled at five APA events during one season it may compete in the APA Championships.

B. The Championships will be Rails/Carpet and Percent format every year.

## **IV - PULLING AREA**

A. Chute

1. Width: Min 6', Max 16'

2. Length: Min 35', Max none

3. Chute fence must be at least three feet high and see through.

C. Holding Area

1. Dogs competing in a weight class must stay in the holding area while the class is competing or until they are eliminated

2. Dogs that are not competing are not allowed in the holding area
3. No dogs allowed ahead of the start line

#### D. Pulling Surface

1. Track must be dirt, carpet or grass. No sand, blacktop, or large gravel.
2. Level or slightly uphill
3. Down hill tracks are not permitted
4. Dog must pull on the same surface the cart is on
5. Track can only be groomed between classes

### V EQUIPMENT

#### A. Cart

1. Wood or metal framing
2. Two axles and four tires. Must also have one spare tire
3. Width: Not more than 6' including tires & axles
4. Length a. Max 8', b. Min 5'
5. Must be equipped with two solid rings at the front for attaching the lead rope.
6. Tires
  - a. Max height 18"
  - b. Min height 13"
  - c. Pressure
    1. Must be equal in all four tires
    2. Must be checked before pull starts by APA Judge
7. Load Capacity
  - a. Cart must be capable of carrying 5000 lbs safely
8. Clubs have the option of using a smaller cart for the smaller weight class(s). There are no size requirements for the smaller cart. It should be capable of carrying up to 300 lbs safely.
9. Lead Rope
  - a. No less than 6' and no more than 7' from the start line
  - b. Must be free of knots
  - c. Must attach to the cart with closed metal links or rings
  - d. Must be "V" shaped w/sliding ring.
  - e. Cannot be made of chain or steel cable

#### B. Weight

1. The amount of weight added for each increment will be determined by the judge of each class and may vary as the pull progresses.

#### C. Dogs Equipment

1. Each dog must have an acceptable crate
2. Only Flat Buckled collars are allowed. No choke collars, pinch collars or anything considered a training device is permitted.
3. Harness
  - a. Must be acceptable freight harness w/spreader bar
  - c. Must be in good condition and cannot be in need of repair

4. No baiting is permitted during the pull. You can not have food or rewards of any kind on your person while pulling your dog.

a. You can reward or treat the dog during the class in the holding area only. This includes tugs or toys.

5. Water is permitted at all times.

## **V-a - RAIL SYSTEM SPECIFICATIONS**

### **A. Rail Type**

1. Rails can be v-grove, flat, or round. Casters which fit around the rails are also acceptable.
2. Provisions for positive stop of the cart shall be made at both ends of the rail.
3. The rail must have provisions for leveling or angling the track.
4. The track may be angled uphill a maximum of 8" from the start line to the finish line.
5. The increase in height from start line to the finish line shall be listed with the pull results. Or listed as level.

### **B. Pulling Surface**

1. Width of the pulling surface shall be a minimum of 22" and maximum of 52" between the rails.
2. Length of the pulling surface shall be a minimum of 25' from the start line to the end of the track.
3. The pulling surface can be dirt or carpet. Pulls shall not be held on surfaces that may be unsafe for the dogs, such as concrete or asphalt.
4. The start and finish line shall be clearly marked with a distance of 16' between them.
5. If the pulling surface is raised more than 12" off the ground, provisions will be made so the dog has access to the pulling surface without jumping or being lifted.

### **C. Cart**

1. The cart shall ride on rails along the outside edge of the pulling surface.
2. The load platform of the cart may not extend more than 12" beyond any outside caster.
3. The cart shall be equipped with a single pull lanyard measuring 4 to 6 feet from the front of the cart.
4. The cart shall be equipped with either a manual breaking lanyard or a mechanical breaking device.
5. Weight shall not overhang the cart at any point.

### **D. Casters**

1. Casters may be any configuration as long as they match the rail they are being used on.
2. Casters have no set diameter or configuration.
3. Bearing or bushings are acceptable on caster wheels.
4. The load rating of the casters shall be submitted to the Chief Judge before the pull starts.
5. Maximum load weight shall not exceed the combined load rating of the casters.

## **VI - PULL OFFICIALS**

### **A. Judges**

1. A list of APA approved Judges is listed on the APA website
2. Are responsible for upholding the rules and regulations of the APA as established in writing, and for adhering to the APA Code of Ethics.
3. The Chief Judge is responsible for supervising the event, handling disputes, and their decisions are final unless there is an APA Representative or Board Member present. The APA Board Members decision will take precedence over the Organizer, Chief Judge and Representative if everyone can not come to an agreement. If no Board Member is present the APA Representatives decision will be final.
4. Any judge in violation of the rules, regulations, or code of ethics may be removed or disciplined by the Board of Directors by way of a majority vote.
5. Judges cannot disallow a person to compete because of personal reasons.
6. Judges' decisions are final. If you disagree with a decision a grievance can be filed. (see Complaints/Grievances).

### **B. Cart/Course Marshall's**

1. There must be two cart marshalls. One "brakeman" at the rear of the cart and one "hooker" at the front of the cart.
2. Are responsible for loading the cart during competition and unloading the cart when the class is completed.

## **VII - ELIGIBILITY**

- A. All dogs competing for points must be 9 months of age.
- B. Novice dogs must be nine months of age and can pull for fun only, novice dogs do not earn or contribute points. You may not use your leash after your dog has been hooked to the cart until your dog is finished with the pull.
- C. All pulls that novice dogs compete in will count towards the five pulls they need to qualify for Championships.
- D. All dogs must be current on immunizations
- E. Handlers with more than two dogs in a class must have harnesses for all the dogs and will not delay the pull
- F. The use of performance altering drugs are prohibited
- G. No females in heat are allowed on the pull grounds
- H. No pregnant or lactating females are allowed to compete
- I. An APA entry form must be completed and entry fees submitted before the dog can

pull

J. Control of dogs/handler conduct

1. You must keep your dog under control at all times
2. You will promptly clean up after your dog
3. Vicious dogs

a. Any dog showing unprovoked aggression towards another dog or person will receive one warning. If the aggression continues, the handler will be asked to remove the dog from the area and it will not be allowed to compete.

b. If a dog attacks another dog the handler will be asked to remove the dog from the area immediately. If it has not yet pulled, entry fees will not be refunded. If it has pulled it will neither earn nor contribute points that day.

c. Any dog that bites or attempts to bite a person will be immediately DQ'd by the judge and asked to leave the pull site.

4. Animal abuse or aggressive behavior, including verbal abuse will not be tolerated. The judge will use his discretion and you will be DQ'd.

5. A handler can and will be asked to leave for any misconduct in or outside the pulling area/grounds. Misconduct includes rude, disruptive, unsportsmanlike conduct, or interfering with another dog pulling or the judge.

K. We must actively strive to promote a positive image of the sport and the dogs involved at all times. All dogs competing in the APA must be in good health. No dog will be allowed to participate at an APA show that is determined to be too thin. A dog will be defined as being too thin when there is one or more of the following; hip bones clearly protruding, over pronounced spine, or a sunken in head. A slight outline of the hip is acceptable. If your dog is determined to be too thin you will not be allowed to compete in the weight pull for that specific weekend. Photo documentation will be taken whenever possible of any dog denied entry into a pulling event. No grievance can be filed by any owner that refuses to allow a picture taken of their dog when they have been denied entry.

L. Weight Classes are as follows:

- 20# Class: 0-20 lbs
- 30# Class: 21-30 lbs
- 40# Class: 31-40 lbs
- 50# Class: 41-50 lbs
- 60# Class: 51-60 lbs
- 70# Class: 61-70 lbs
- 80# Class: 71-80 lbs
- 90# Class: 81-90 lbs
- 100# Class: 91-100 lbs
- 110# Class: 101-110 lbs
- 120# Class: 111-120 lbs
- Unlimited Class: 121 lbs & up

M. Weigh-Ins

1. Must be within 24 hrs prior to the pull.

2. All dogs must be weighed in on the same scale
3. Dogs may only wear a regular flat buckle collar or no collar at all during weigh-In.
4. Each dog can only be weighed two times per day. The handler can choose which of the two weights he wants to keep.
5. All dogs must be weighed in by an APA judge. Judges can not weigh in their own dogs unless it's witnessed by two separate people.
6. A dog that weighs 81 lbs, but less than 91 is a 90 lb dog and will be pulling in the 90 lbs class. A dog weighing 91 lbs will pull in the 100 lb class

## **VIII - PULL PROCEDURES**

A. A handler can choose what weight to bring the dog in at. It must be within the established weight increments. If the dog does not pull the start weight the dog is done pulling for the day and the entry fee will not be refunded. The handler can call a pass up until the dog is hooked to the cart

1. Dogs will be allowed up to 5 minutes rest between pulls when it comes down to the last few dogs pulling.

B. Any dog showing illness or injury, at the chief judge's discretion, will be dismissed and will not be allowed to compete that day.

C. Cart Placement

1. The cart will be placed at the start line. The point on the cart that is at the starting line will be the same point that must cross the finish line for the pull to be completed

2. A handler can only have the cart moved one time per round once it has been placed by the cart assistant

3. No test rolling of the cart will be permitted

4. Dogs will be notified when they are on deck

5. Dogs will be ready to pull when called up or they can be passed by the judge.

6. The dog will be hooked by the cart assistant or by the handler of the dog

7. When the dog is hooked the handler must ensure that enough slack has been taken out of the line that the dog will not sling shot. No slingshot starts are permitted, if the dog backs up on its own after being released it shall not be penalized. A walking start is permitted.

8. At no time is the handler allowed to be behind the dog inside the width of the cart, including crossing over the tracer behind the dog. If you are behind the dog when it is released, you must immediately step outside the width of the cart.

9. The time will start when the dog attempts to pull the cart or the handler calls/signals the dog.

10. The judge can time the pull himself or elect a "timer" before the pull starts.

11. Dogs must pull 16' in 60 sec. If the dog can not complete the pull in 60 sec. it will be a No Pull and the dog will be done competing for the day. However, if the cart is moving forward at 60 sec. the pull will count and the dog will move onto the next round. If at any point after 60 sec., and before the pull is completed, the cart stops forward motion a No Pull will then be called. The time will show the seconds the pull was completed in to 1/100th of a second.

12. Dogs must complete the entire pull within the chute barriers.

13. After a dog comes in on a weight increment, there is no limit to the number of times the handler can pass. Be ready to pull when it is your turn, the judge can pass you if you're not there to pull when it's your turn. The handler can not pass once the dog is hooked to the cart.

14. If your dog touches you before the pull is completed you will be DQ'd by the judge.

15. A tangle will be called ONLY if the dog could be injured in the harness or equipment. If the judge calls a tangle the cart will be repositioned back at the start line. The dog will then have 60 seconds to pull the weight.

16. You are allowed one tangle per round. If your dog tangles twice in a round it will be DQ'd by the judge.

17. If your dog gets completely out of its harness at any time during the pull it will be DQ'd.

18. In the event of an equipment failure, the repair will be made and the cart will be repositioned at the start line. The dog will then have 60 seconds to re pull the current weight.

19. Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated and you will be DQ'd at the chief judges discretion.

20. Any attempt to cheat and you will be DQ'd. This will be determined by the chief judge of the pull event.

21. Double handling will not be permitted. However, anyone can clap, cheer, call the dog's name, or otherwise encourage the dog from outside a 10 foot radius around the track. No one but the handler, judge, or cart handlers are allowed to walk behind the dog within the 10 foot radius. Double Handling will result in a disqualification at the judges discretion.

22. Winners of a weight class are determined by either the dog with the most weight pulled per pound (best percentage), or by most weight pulled. Ties will be broken by time. If two dogs have the same body pound percent, or pull the same weight, based on the format used, the winner will be determined by the time from the previous round(s).

23. The organizer of an event will decide which format percent, or most weight pulled will be used when the sanctioning request is made.

24. When pulling on carpet, water will be the only substance allowed on the dogs feet.

25. You may not use your leash after your dog has been hooked to the cart until your dog is finished with the pull.

26. The judge will allow 30 seconds for the handler to call the dog, or the dog to begin pulling on its own once it's been hooked up. Time for the pull will start when the 30 seconds has expired.

27. Reasonable concessions will be made for anyone with a disability.

28. It is the organizer's responsibility to send in the Entry Forms, Score Sheets, Results Forms and \$5.00 per dog within 7 days. If the organizer does not send in their paperwork on time, the first time, they will be charged a \$50.00 fee. The second time they will be charged a \$75.00 fee and the pull doesn't count for points or towards

Championships for their dogs. The third time they will be charged a \$100.00 fee, the pull doesn't count for points or towards Championships for their dogs, and they are suspended as an organizer for one year. Late fees must be paid before the results will be posted on the web site. If the organizer does not fill out the results forms correctly, the first time, they will be shown the correct way to fill them out and get a warning. The second time they will be charged a \$50.00 fee and the pull doesn't count for points or towards Championships for their dogs. The third time they will be charged a \$100.00 fee, the pull doesn't count for points or towards Championships for their dogs, and they are suspended as an organizer for one year. Fees must be paid before another pull will be sanctioned for that organizer. If they already have a pull sanctioned they must send the fee in with the results from that pull or the pull won't count for points or towards the Championships for the organizer.

## **IX - COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES**

- A. The chief judge has the right to reject someone from competition. The reason must be known to the individual and a letter of why they were refused must be sent in with the pull reports.
- B. All written grievances must be sent in with the pull report to the APA.
- C. Any grievance that is filed must be addressed to the judge of the class. If a verbal complaint is given to the judge and the judge corrects the problem immediately, no further action need be taken. A formal written grievance can be given to the chief judge immediately following the pull. If the issue can not be resolved by the Chief Judge, or if the Chief Judge is directly involved, the written complaint may be emailed to any current APA Board Member.
- D. If a grievance is filed for activity outside the chute, it must be given to the chief judge. You can and will be asked to leave for any misconduct in or outside the pulling area. No refund of entry fees will be given in this instance.
- E. No drugs or alcoholic beverages are allowed during competition.
- F. If you are banned from pulling with the APA, you may file a motion to reverse the decision. The letter must be sent to the APA President and will be discussed by the Board of Directors. The Board will vote and a final decision will be reached. You will be notified, in writing, of the decision.

## **X - APA POINT SYSTEM**

- A. 1st place = 10 pts
- 2nd place = 7 pts
- 3rd place = 3 pts

Light Weight Division (20, 30, 40) MWPP = 15 pts

Middle Weight Division (50, 60, 70) MWPP = 15pts

Light Heavy Weight Division (80, 90, 100) MWPP = 15pts

Heavy Weight Division (110, 120, UNL) MWPP = 15pts

Most Weight Pulled 70 Pounds & Under = 15 pts \* If two or more dogs pull the same

weight, MWP will go to the dog with the faster time.

Most Weight Pulled 71 Pounds & Over = 15 pts \* If two or more dogs pull the same weight, MWP will go to the dog with the faster time.

Championship Divisional MWPP and MWP Over & Under = 30pts

\*\* If a dog wins MWPP in their Division and MWP 70 & Under or 71 & Over there must be 12 or more dogs in their Division to receive points for both trophies.

B. For every dog you beat that pulls

23 x it's weight = 2 pts

18 x it's weight = 1 pt

12 x it's weight = .5 pt

### **XI - APA World Records**

A. All records will be set at the Championships.

### **XII - Drug Testing**

A. The APA reserves the right to do random drug testing at any APA Sanctioned event.

