

Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America Inc.
Weight Pull Rules and Regulations

Section A, Eligibility for entry:

1. Only one pull per day following the GSMDCA guidelines is allowed.
2. All breeds are eligible to enter, although host club reserves the right to limit the pull to GSMDs only. Only GSMDs shall be allowed to enter and participate in the National Specialty Weight Pulls.
3. Dogs shall be at least 14 months of age to compete at fun or sanctioned pulls. Dogs between 14 and 18 months are required to stop pulling when the weight increment that is closest to but greater than 10 times their weight is passed.
4. No nursing or lactating bitches or bitches in heat shall be allowed to enter. If such a bitch is allowed to enter deceitfully, the Judge shall disqualify that dog and no entry fee shall be refunded.
5. No dog that is lame, has open sores, an obvious medical condition, including advanced pregnancy (day 40 and beyond), shall be allowed to enter. In addition, the judge may disqualify dogs that they deem are not fit to pull.
6. No dogs that are aggressive to humans shall be allowed to enter. (Muzzled or not muzzled). No aggressive action shall be allowed by dogs toward handler or any official during pull competition. If a dog of this temperament is allowed to enter in error, the Judge shall disqualify that dog and no entry fee shall be refunded. (Remember other persons than you may handle your dog). Excitement shall not to be interpreted as aggression. Furthermore, all dogs shall be subject to the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America's aggressive dog policy including possible disqualifications from future events. As stated in the standing rules "Any dog, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog or otherwise, shall be excluded from any Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America event that has been disqualified (DQ'd) for aggression by the American Kennel Club until fully reinstated. Furthermore, dogs found to be an excessive nuisance or threat may be asked to be removed from the event at the discretion of the event manager, host, and/or judge." Any aggressive action or abuse from handler to dog shall warrant an immediate expulsion from the weight pull. After such incident occurs, the weight pull division of the GSMDCA reserves the right to ban said handler from participating in any future club weight pulls.
7. All dogs entered in the pull are to be weighed in at the pull on the same scale as the other competitors. The Judge may opt to use the prior day's dogs' weights if it is a consecutive day pull and the same scale is being utilized.

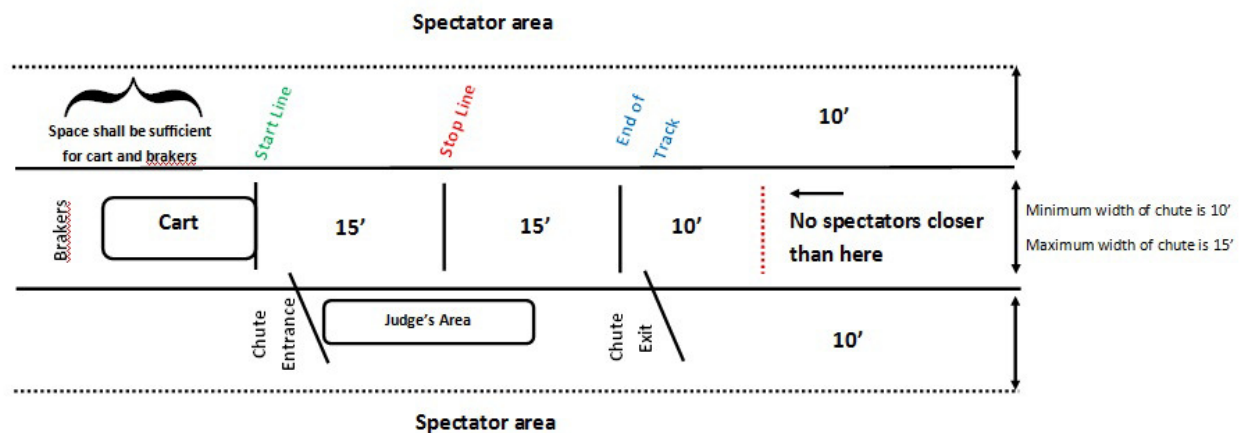
Section B, Weight Classes and Awards:

1. Dogs shall be weighed and placed into one of the following four weight divisions: Up to 89 lbs., 90 to 109 lbs., 110 to 129 lbs., 130 lbs. and over.
 - a. For pulls open to all-breeds, additional classes can be added for lighter and/or heavier weight classes. This is determined by the head judge.
2. Ribbons or trophies shall be awarded for first through fourth in each weight class. A trophy or rosette award shall be given for Most Weight Pulled (MWP) and Most Weight Pulled per Pound of Body Weight (MWPP).
3. At the organizer's discretion, MWP and MWPP awards may only be available to GSMDs. This should be specified when advertising the pull so it is clear to non-GSMD handlers. First through fourth place ribbons and/or awards should be given to any entry.
4. An optional class of Veterans (dogs and bitches age 7 and over) may be offered. When Veterans class is offered it is recommended that a trophy or rosette be awarded to the Veteran pulling the Most Weight Pulled and the Veteran Pulling the Most Weight Pulled per Pound of Body Weight. Ribbons or trophies shall be awarded for first through fourth when class is offered. Note this class is not divided by weight of dog.

Section C, Equipment and Pulling Area:

1. Owner of the dog shall supply harness. Clubs or pull organizer may have a harness to sell or to lend out. It is up to contestants to acquire their own harness. Harnesses must fit properly in order to pull. Any harness used must be a "standard harness". Shocks, springs, etc. cannot be used on harnesses.
2. No leashes will be attached to the dog, collar, or harness while the dog is pulling. The leashes can be given to the cart hooker, placed at the end of the chute prior to releasing the dog to pull, or be on the handler as long as the leash is out of sight.
3. If a collar is on the dog, it must be a flat buckle collar. Tags or anything dangling are not permitted. Choke collars (chain or fabric), pinch collars, and martingale collars, or the like, are not allowed when the dog is pulling. A dog may be led into the chute with a choke but it must be removed and out of sight before the handler leaves the dog.
4. All equipment used by contestants may be checked by the Head Judge prior to use.
5. No artificial aids shall be used on dogs. (Drugs, stick-em, etc.). Water is the only acceptable substance that can be used on the dog's feet. Dog's feet may be checked by the **head judge** to insure they are clean and free of stick-em.
6. The Judge shall certify the cart and weight. Total weight of the cart and traces shall be considered as part of the total weight pulled.
7. The cart shall be capable of safely holding 4000#. It shall have pneumatic tires that the organizer should inflate to the proper capacity as recommended by the manufacturer and posted on the tire wall. There shall be a spare tire available. It is recommended that the cart dimensions remain within 36 to 60 inches in width to the outside of the tires and 60 to 96 inches in total length. It is also recommended that the weight of the empty cart not exceed 350#.
8. Traces shall not be less than four feet, nor longer than six feet.

9. Traces should be “V” shaped with a sliding ring.
10. Time shall be taken with two digital stop watches and recorded to 2 decimal places. The time of the Judge calling “PULL” will be recorded. If the two timekeepers do not record the same time, within a reasonable amount, the Judge shall decide which time shall be recorded.
11. Pulling track shall be roped off (or otherwise blocked) a minimum of 6’ and preferably 10’ on each side of track, as well as past the end of the track, to prevent spectators and dogs from crowding pulling track and distracting the pulling contestant.
12. The holding area shall be positioned behind the pulling track, (if site permits) far enough away that the pulling dog will not be interfered with.
13. The width of the pulling track shall be a minimum of 10’ wide to a maximum of 15’ wide. The dimensions of the track shall not be changed after the pull has started. However, if requested by a handler at the beginning of the pull, track changes may be voted on by all the participant and judges.
14. Starting and finishing lines shall be marked plainly and be exactly 15’ apart. Length of pulling surface shall extend far enough beyond the 15’ so that the dog may remain on the pulling surface after pulling is completed. Chute set-up is similar for all three surfaces and as space allows.



15. Surface
 - a. Wheels - The surface shall be as smooth and level as possible. Any paved surface shall be covered with an adequate carpet, in order to protect the dog's feet.
 - b. Snow – The surface shall be as smooth and level as possible. Snow shall be packed as hard as possible.
 - c. Rails - Rails can be v-grove, flat, or round. Casters which fit around the rails are also acceptable. Provisions for positive stop of the cart shall be made at both ends of the rail. The rail shall have provisions for leveling or angling the track. The track may be angled uphill a maximum of 8" from the start line to the finish line. The increase in height from start line to the finish line shall be listed with the pull results, or listed as level.
16. Each handler shall have access to a copy of the rules.

Section D, Procedure:

1. The starting weight for novice dogs shall be that of the empty cart and traces.
2. Dogs that have earned their WWD or higher titles but may have not yet submitted them, are experienced pullers who participate in weight pulls sanctioned by other organizations, or can demonstrate to the Judges satisfaction that they have at least an intermediate level of pulling experience, may choose to come in when the weight increment that is closest to, but less than equals 10 times on wheels (14 times on rails, 5 times on snow) their weight is reached (with an option to double pass). Dogs who have earned their WWDX may choose to come in when the weight increment that is closest to, but less than equals 15 times on wheels (21 times on rails, 10 times on snow) their weight is reached (with an option to double pass). Dogs who have earned their WWDS or higher may choose to come in when the weight increment that is closest to, but less than equals 20 times on wheels (28 times on rails, 15 times on snow) their weight is reached (with an option to double pass).
3. The Head Judge shall determine weight increments. All dogs shall pull or pass each increment. Increments can only be changed between rounds. Weight increments for wheeled pulls shall be as close to 100 lbs. as possible (a novice friendly increment). Dogs shall be able to pass up to 4 times in a row. It is recommended that novice dogs not pass more than twice. The Head Judge will have the final say on the exact weight increment based on track conditions, weather, etc. as to whether the increment will be above or below 100 lbs., if increment cannot be exactly 100 lbs. For rail pulls, increments are recommended to be as close to 150 lbs. as possible and snow pulls should be as close to 50 lbs. as possible.
4. Dogs may pull each round or a handler may choose to pass four times in a row. i.e. (pull, pull, pull, pull) (pull, pass, pass, pass, pass, pull), (pull, pass, pass, pass, pull), (pull, pass, pass, pull), (pull, pass, pull).
5. As weights increase and the number of participants decrease, dogs may be pulling more frequently. Handlers have the option of requesting a 5-minute break between rounds in order to rest their dogs.
6. A handler must state if they are passing or pulling in a given round, prior to the round starting.
7. Dogs shall be harnessed after being called to get ready and shall remain harnessed in the holding area until the dog is called to the pulling track. After each successful pull the dog shall remain in the holding area for the next pulling round. (Harnesses may be removed from dog between pulls, as long as contestant does not hold up the pull).
8. Time shall begin when the Handler signals the dog or the dog attempts to move the cart.
9. Dogs have 45 seconds to start the cart moving forward. As long as the cart is steadily moving forward time shall continue and the dog may successfully complete the pull.
10. The cart shall be placed with front wheels directly behind and touching the starting line. The wheels must be perpendicular to the start line. The cart must remain in close proximity of the same track for all dogs pulling. No test rolling of the cart shall be allowed. It is recommended that club supply equipment (pallet jack, hitch hoist, etc.) to assist moving the cart back to the start line as weights increase, but this is not required. The round is complete and time recorded when the same part of the front wheels first touch the finish line. This shall be determined by the head judge and shall be kept the same each round.

11. The Head Judge shall position the Primary Timekeeper in such a way as to ensure that timing will be accurate. The Timekeeper may be mobile or stationary. The Head Judge may choose to be the Primary Timekeeper.
12. No more than one foot of slack in line shall be allowed. No sling shots are permitted, if the dog backs up on its own after being released, it shall not be penalized.
13. Handler may be in any position and as close to the dog as desired as long as no touching of dog or equipment occurs. There shall be no treats or bait (example: food, toys, etc.) used in the chute at any time, or in the possession of the handler while in the chute. Treats or rewards can be given to the dog back at your site.
14. Handlers shall remain inside the pulling track area until the pull is completed or time is up. Only one handler shall be present in the chute with dog during the pull.
15. Double handling will not be permitted. Those who violate this will be given one warning. The second violation will result in disqualification.
16. Reasonable concessions will be made for any handler with a disability.
17. Handler may request no clapping, cheering or other noise be made by spectators and should be honored.
18. A pull is considered complete as long as no foul or alibi is committed.
19. Fouls shall be called and entrant will be disqualified in their weight class after three fouls are committed. Fouls carry over from round to round. (Example: foul, foul, out. Or 3 for the entire pull). Fouls may be committed intentionally or unintentionally. **Time used prior to fouls is added to the final time if the dog pulls a round successfully.** For example: If a dog is pulling and touches the handler at 15 seconds, a foul is called. The 15 seconds is recorded and the dog pulls again. The dog completes the next try in 20 seconds. The initial 15 seconds is added to the successful 20 second pull for a total of 35 seconds. Additionally, if a dog runs out of time, 45 seconds is recorded. The next attempt is completed in 30 seconds. The final time recorded would be 85 seconds.
The following is a list of fouls:
 - a. Touching the cart or dog in any way after time has been started.
 - b. Running out of time. (Taking longer than 45 seconds allowed to start pulling).
 - c. Double handling. (Any overt attempt from anyone outside the chute to directly encourage the dog to pull. I.e. command the dog, i.e. calling the dog by name or any gesturing command directed towards the dog.) However, anyone can clap, cheer, or otherwise encourage the dog from outside a 10 foot radius around the track. Additionally, the handler may be advised from outside the chute.
 - d. The dog soils the carpet. Soiling includes urine, feces. **This will constitute an immediate disqualification.** The owner and/or handler will be responsible for the cleaning of the carpet. If a dog has a tendency to mark or leak the handler has option to use a diaper or belly band to avoid a DQ. Diapers on bitches will be inspected during the pull to confirm that it is not in heat.
20. Fouls end the current pull. After assisting the dog through the pulling track, handlers may either pull again immediately or at the end of the round. Handler changes are allowed after the completion of a successful pull (no fouls).

21. Alibis are unintentional circumstances that occur whereby a dog would not be able to complete a pull. If the Judge feels circumstances are such that the dog may be injuring itself from equipment malfunction or if outside interference occurs that prevents the dog from completing the pull, the **Judge** will stop timing (but not reset the clock) and instruct the handlers to reset their dog. The handler may point out an alibi/interference, but the Judge will have the final decision. If a pull is interrupted by an alibi the dog shall be reset and the pull shall begin again from the point where the alibi occurred. Time shall continue when the handler calls the dog or the dog starts the cart moving forward. Two alibis = one foul.
22. In the event of a tie for Most Weight Pulled, Most Weight Pulled Per Pound or any Class Placement, that tie shall be broken according to elapsed time it took to complete the pull. Weight first, time second. In the rare situation that time does not resolve a tie it shall be broken by the greater achievement. If a smaller dog ties larger dog for Most Weight Pulled the greater achievement is the smaller dog's higher weight pulled per pound. The smaller dog shall be awarded Most Weight Pulled. If a larger dog ties a smaller dog for Most Weight Pulled Per Pound the greater achievement is the larger dog's higher weight pulled. The larger dog shall be awarded Most Weight Pulled Per Pound. The Judge's decision shall be final!

Section E, Personnel:

The following personnel are necessary for putting on a successful pull. In addition, at least three more people are required to be available before during and after the pull to facilitate breaks for those below as well as set up and tear down responsibilities.

1. Head Judge: Responsible for all aspects of the event. Final arbiter of any dispute. May also be a timekeeper.
2. Assistant Judge: Primary timekeeper. Judges when Head Judge is pulling or away from the chute. Distributes and checks completed entry forms. Collects money.
3. Record Keeper / Assistant Timekeeper: Maintains records, backs up primary timekeeper. Calls out pulling order.
4. Entrance Monitor: Insures upcoming pullers are ready to go. Amplifies upcoming pulling order. Checks equipment. Helps load cart and insures proper increment is loaded.
5. Cart Brake Person / Spotter 1: Brakes Cart after Judge has called "Pull". Returns Cart to starting line and repositions if necessary. Helps load cart. Prevents currently pulling dog from entangling itself in the cart by passively standing in the way if it attempts to go out the back of the chute.
6. Cart Hooker / Spotter 2: Hooks traces to dog's harness when handler is ready. Helps brake cart. Unhooks traces from dog's harness after each pull. Returns Cart to starting line and repositions if necessary. Helps load cart. Prevents currently pulling dog from entangling itself in the cart by passively standing in the way if it attempts to go out the back of the chute.

Section F, Hosting a GSMDCA Sanctioned Pull:

1. At least 6 weeks prior to hosting a pull, the host will complete and submit the Application for Hosting a Working Event (located on the GSMDCA website and in the GSMDCA Weight Pull Judge's Yahoo group files) to the Weight Pull Chair(s). Exceptions to the timeline can be made based on individual circumstances. Only one (1) pull per day is allowed.
2. When holding a sanctioned weight pull, the club shall have at least one GSMDCA certified Judges or the weight pull will not be considered sanctioned. The club shall choose judges from the approved judge's list for sanctioned weight pull events. (Emergency situations will be considered on an Individual basis).
3. Pre-entries can be done and same day entries may be accepted at the discretion of the hosting club. Pre-entries may be offered at a reduced rate if the host chooses to allow this. If the rate is different, this must be advertised.
4. Entry forms, pull sheets, final stat sheets, and title leg confirmation forms shall be uniform and originals from which copies may be made. Blank originals can be obtained from the current GSMDCA Weight Pull Chair(s) or in the GSMDCA Weight Pull Judge's Yahoo group files.
5. Once the pull is complete, copies of the pull sheets and final stat sheets shall be returned to the current Weight Pull Chair(s) within 14 days after the pull. GSMDCA Weight Pull Judges are encouraged to provide electronic (scanned/faxed) copies to the GSMDCA Weight Pull Judge's Yahoo group files.
6. When there are co-chairs for Weight Pull, requests, records, etc. must be sent to both chairs.

Section G, Qualifying Weight Pull Judges:

1. It will be the club's responsibility to qualify at least one (preferably more) club member(s) or local area person prominent in weight pulling activities to be a certified Weight Pull Judge.
2. This person must:
 - a. Be familiar with the current GSMDCA weight pull rules and regulations
 - b. Apprentice at two different GSMDCA sanctioned weight pulls
 - c. Permission to apprentice at a pull, must go through the GSMDCA Weight Pull Chair(s)
 - d. The Head Judge at the pull in which one plans to apprentice must be an experienced judge. The decision on whether the judge is experienced enough to have other judges apprentice under him/her is up to the GSMDCA Weight Pull Chair(s) and/or Committee.
 - e. These weight pulls should have at least 8 dogs (of any breed) entered, not including the apprentice's dogs.
 - f. Apprenticing entails running the pull as though you were the head judge. This includes: running the handlers meeting, delegating responsibilities to personnel and making sure they understand their job, making sure that rules are being followed by all participants, working with the judge you are apprenticing under to make pull related decisions and completing paperwork (qualifying leg sheets and recordkeeping).
 - g. Apprentices are encouraged to ask questions of the judge they are apprenticing under.

- h. The Head Judge will communicate with the GSMDCA Weight Pull Chair(s) about experience with the apprentice judge. At the discretion of the Head Judge and Weight Pull Chair(s), an apprenticing judge may be asked to apprentice more than twice before they can move to the next step of the process.
 - i. Pass the GSMDCA Weight Pull Judges Test (this can be gotten from the GSMDCA Weight Pull Chair(s) once the apprenticing requirements have been completed).
 - j. Maintain membership in the GSMDCA.
 - k. Be willing to travel to judge other sanctioned weight pulls in nearby areas.
 - l. Be approved by the GSMDCA Board of Directors upon the Weight Pull committee's recommendation.
3. New judges are encouraged to have the phone number(s) on hand of the judge they apprenticed under or weight pull chair(s), and call them with any questions or situations that arise for which they are unsure. If there is another GSMDCA Approved Judge at the pull, they can consult with him or her.
 4. A list of all certified Weight Pull Judges shall be kept on file by the GSMDCA's weight pull chair and GSMDCA secretary, with a copy on the GSMDCA website and shall be sent to club members upon request.

Section H, Titles:

GSMDs may earn working titles from the GSMDCA by participating at Weight Pull Events. In order to gain a title, the GSMD must earn legs toward the title as follows:

WWD: Working Weight Dog:

To earn this title the GSMD must earn four qualifying legs by pulling at least:
 Ten times its weight on wheels.
 Five times its weight on snow.
 Fourteen times its weight on rails. (Thirteen times prior to 7/1/2010)

WWDX: Working Weight Dog Excellent:

To earn this title the GSMD must earn four qualifying legs by pulling at least:
 Fifteen times its weight on wheels.
 Ten times its weight on snow.
 Twenty-one times its weight on rails. (Nineteen times prior to 7/1/2010)

WWDS: Working Weight Dog Superior:

To earn this title the GSMD must earn three qualifying legs by pulling at least:

Twenty times its weight on wheels.

Fifteen times its weight on snow.

Twenty-eight times its weight on rails. (Twenty-six times prior to 7/1/2010)

1. Title legs shall be earned from the regular / open class. Veterans is considered a regular class.
2. Title legs may be redeemed for a lower title or saved and redeemed for a higher title after the lower title is awarded, example: WWDX and WWDS legs may be used for the WWD title, WWDS legs may be used for the WWDX title.
3. It is permissible to use legs from different surfaces for a title. For example, three WWD legs on wheels may be combined with a WWD leg on snow to receive the WWD title (4 legs needed).
4. Titles are awarded in order lowest to highest- i.e. you must have a lower title before the next title is awarded.
5. Title legs may be earned at non-GSMDCA events as long as they are sanctioned by approved organizations. Since this list changes, please see the GSMDCA website for a list of organizations that are currently approved.
6. To receive credit for title legs earned at non-GSMDCA events the Weight Pull Chair shall receive a confirmation letter signed by the judge for that event and or a certified GSMDCA.

ACE Award (Points Schedule Effective- date of board approval):

Dogs must have completed the 3 titles (WWD, WWDX, and WWDS). With continued competition (after the WWDS title) dogs shall be awarded points (owner/handler shall be responsible for tracking their dog's points and submitting the points confirmation forms to the Working Titles Chair once the award has been earned).

Points shall be awarded as follows: MWP-15 points, MWPP-15 points, 1st place- 10 points, 2nd place- 7 points, 3rd place- 5 points, and any other qualifying dogs in the class, 4th place and beyond- 2 points, with the understanding that the dog must beat at least one other dog in its class in order to earn the points. If a dog is the only dog in its class or comes in last place, 2 points can still be awarded as long as the dog pulls enough to have earned a WWDX leg (i.e. at least 15x on wheels, 10x on snow, or 21x on rails).

(Prior to June 1, 2016, MWP and MWPP were each 10 points)

ACE Awards have different levels depending on the number of points earned. These levels are as follows:

ACE- 100 points

Bronze ACE- 200 points

Silver ACE- 300 points

Gold ACE- 400 points

Platinum ACE- 500 points

As dogs continue to earn ACE points, award levels may be increased exponentially (2, 3, 4, etc.), while collecting additional points:

Platinum ACE²- additional 500 points Platinum ACE³- additional 500 points, etc.

(Previously earned ACE points (prior to June 1, 2016) are redeemable for additional ACE levels using the points schedule valid at the time the pull occurred.

Section I, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Record Breaking:

1. There is not a record for the overall breed; records will be broken down by weight class, surface, and sex:
 - a. Weight classes for records will be the same as the GSMDCA weight classes: 89 and under, 90 to 109, 110 to 129, and 130+.
 - b. Surfaces will be: wheels on natural, wheels on carpet, rails, and snow.
 - c. Sexes will be: dog (males) and bitches (females).
2. Records can ONLY be broken at sanctioned (judged) events through approved organizations (see list of acceptable organizations on the GSMDCA website). Provisional organizations (in existence less than 5 years) are not accepted for breaking records.
3. Information on current record holders, as well as previous record holders, is maintained in a spreadsheet by the Weight Pull Chair. Members are encouraged to send in their pull sheets from other pulling organizations to be logged in the database.
4. Whenever possible records should be video-taped and sent to the weight pull chairperson who, with your permission, would like to post a link to the video on the GSMDCA website. If a video is not possible, a GSMDCA Title Leg Confirmation form is to be completed by the judge at the pull.
5. Optional ideas for videos of record pulls:
 - a. Include the date and the weight somewhere that is visible on the cart (hand-written piece of paper taped is fine).
 - b. Include the time(s) recorded on the stopwatch