



(Member of the American Kennel Club)

# **Saint Bernard Club of America Weight Pull Regulations**

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## **Table of Contents**

Introduction .....	3
Chapter 1 - Application to Sponsor SBCA Weight Pull Trial .....	3
Chapter 2 - Duties of the Weight Pull Trial Committee .....	4
Chapter 3 - Eligibility of Dogs To Compete.....	5
Chapter 4 - Point System and Titles .....	5
Point System .....	5
Titles.....	6
Weight Puller.....	6
Weight Puller Excellent .....	6
Weight Puller Superior.....	6
Title Requirements .....	7
Chapter 5 - Handler Conduct and Control of Dogs.....	7
Chapter 6 Prizes and Class Divisions.....	8
Prizes .....	8
Class Divisions .....	8
Chapter 7 - Procedures For Registration and Weigh In .....	8
Chapter 8 - Description of Set-up & Physical Area. ....	9
Chapter 9 - Equipment Requirements .....	9
General .....	9
Snow Vehicle .....	10
Wheeled Vehicle .....	10
Weight .....	10
Barriers .....	11
Chapter 10 - Weight Pull Officials and Their Duties .....	11
The Weight Pull Judge .....	11
The Chief Recorder .....	11
The Chief Timer .....	12
Chapter 11 - Procedures For The Weight Pull .....	12
Chapter 12- Protests .....	14
Chapter 13 - Weight Pull Year .....	14
End of Weight Pull Regulations .....	14

## **Introduction**

The Saint Bernard Club of America Weight Pull Trials are a series of events designed to develop and demonstrate the natural abilities of purebred Saint Bernard dogs in a capacity involving heavy-duty freight hauling that the breed displayed during the days of the Alaska Gold Rush. Performances in such weight pull trials are intended to demonstrate skills resulting both from natural ability and training that are applicable to realistic work situations. Efficiency in accomplishment of tasks is essential, evidenced by showing willingness and enjoyment of his work in a combination of controlled teamwork with his handler.

In conducting this program, the SBCA intends to give official recognition to the Saint Bernards that have achieved certain plateaus of performance in the field of weight pulling and to award SBCA titles to such dogs, which they may use in any Saint Bernard Club of America activity.

SBCA recognition of weight pulling achievements and the awarding of SBCA weight pulling titles will be limited to weight pulling trials sanctioned by the Working Dog Committee (WDC) of the SBCA or to those sponsored by other organized Weight Pulling groups granted recognition by the WDC of the SBCA; except that recognition of achievements accomplished during events sponsored by other organizations is conditional upon the criteria established by the SBCA WDC.

## **Chapter 1 - Application to Sponsor SBCA Weight Pull Trial**

1. Permission to sponsor a Weight Pull may be granted by the Working Dog Committee (WDC) of the Saint Bernard Club of America to a Weight Pull Trial Committee formed for that event. A Weight Pull Trial Committee must be made up of at least three people, one of which is to be the Committee Chairman, and another of which is to be the Trial Secretary. Such Weight Pull Committees may be sponsored by a regional Saint Bernard Club, in which case one member of the committee must be an officer of that regional club. In addition, an independent Weight Pull Trial Committee may be formed by any three individuals, one of which, the Chairman, must be a member in good standing with the SBCA.
2. Application forms are available from the SBCA WDC Chairman or Weight Pull Secretary. Completed applications, accompanied by a \$15.00 fee, shall contain:

- a. Names and addresses of the Weight Pull Committee members.
  - b. The name and address of the Chief Judge and his qualifications for judging a weight pull event.
  - c. The guarantee that all equipment, officials, and other necessary provisions shall be available at the site.
  - d. The certification that all SBCA Weight Pull Regulations will be followed.  
Exception: Other rules may be followed if approval received from the SBCA WDC.
  - e. The date of the proposed Weight Pull and the address and description of the selected site, including whether the pull will be on snow or wheels.
  - f. The signatures of the Weight Pull Chairman, the Trial Secretary, and one other Committee member, one of which must be a club officer if the Weight Pull is sponsored by a regional club.
3. Application to sponsor a Weight Pull Trial must be filed with the SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary at least thirty (30) days, but preferably four ( 4) months, prior to the date of the proposed Weight Pull; and must be accompanied by a self-addressed post card. The SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary will return the post card upon receipt of the application. The SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary will communicate approval or rejection of the application to the Weight Pull Trial Chairman within 10 days of the receipt of the completed application.
  4. The sanctioning kit will be sent separately and will include a copy of the SBCA Weight Pull Regulations and report forms.

## **Chapter 2 - Duties of the Weight Pull Trial Committee**

1. The Weight Pull Committee shall act as the official representative of SBCA and must see to the enforcement of these Regulations, and those approved regulations of other organizations where applicable. Any violation of these Regulations shall be reported in writing and attached to the committee report to the SBCA Working Dog Committee Weight Pull Secretary.
2. It is suggested, but not mandatory, that the Committee prints a Premium List that will be made available to St. Bernard owners potentially interested in entering their dogs in the Weight Pull. The Premium List should include the date, time, and location of the Pull; entry number limit (if any); closing date for entry (if any); a statement of entrant responsibility for obtaining the Regulations; name and address of the SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary from whom the Regulations can be obtained; and an entry form.

3. The Trial Secretary shall take all entries of dogs and shall notify each exhibitor, following entry closing (if any), of the time of weight-in, time judging will begin, and the address and location of site. The Trial Secretary shall be responsible for sending the WDC required reports to the WDC within 30 days after the date of the Trial.
4. The Committee shall have available at the show site for inspection a copy of these SBCA Weight Pull Regulations and those approved regulations of other organizations where applicable.

### **Chapter 3 - Eligibility of Dogs To Compete**

1. There shall be two classes of approved weight pulls; pulls that are open to Saint Bernards only and all-breed weight pulls that are conducted by other weight-pull organizations or by a Saint Bernard Club. Either type of weight pull may be sanctioned by the SBCA prior to the event.
2. These Pulls shall be open to purebred St. Bernards. Dogs less than twelve months of age will not be counted for points or be eligible to earn titles. If dogs under twelve months of age participate in these pulls, they must be in a class by themselves and not be allowed to pull over 1000 pounds.
3. Weight Pulls entered before a dog is eighteen months old will not be counted for Weight Puller Excellent or Weight Puller Superior titles.
4. As used in these regulations, the word "dog" refers to either sex.
5. All entries must have an AKC, ILP or foreign registration number or litter number.
6. Dogs showing signs of illness or injury will not be allowed on the trial grounds.
7. Female dogs in season are acceptable if the handler uses extra care to avoid problems with other dogs. The Chief Judge may require the dog to compete separately. Pregnant females are not allowed.
8. The Weight Pull Chairman has the ultimate decision in rejecting any entry.

### **Chapter 4 - Point System and Titles**

#### **Point System**

For purposes of recognizing continuing achievements in weight-pull competition, a schedule of points is established as follows:

1. In order for a SBCA sanctioned weight pull to be recognized and points recorded, it shall be the responsibility of the Weight Pull Committee to properly report in writing the weight pull results to the SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary.
2. In order for a dog to be eligible and counted for points, he must pull at least the starting weight.
3. Each dog will receive one (1) point per dog defeated in his class. At all-breed pulls, all qualifying dogs in his weight class may be counted.
4. In addition, five (5) points will be awarded for first place, four (4) points for second place, three (3) points for third place and two (2) points for fourth place in each division.
5. Wheeled events will be kept separate from snow events in statistical standings.
6. Dogs competing in weight pull events will be able to earn points if an event official completes and signs a report form and it is submitted to the SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary within ninety (90) days.
7. Owners must contact the SBCA WDC Weight Pull Secretary when they have qualified for a title. Certificates will not be mailed automatically. This will also enable the SBCA WDC to verify their records.

## **Titles**

The following titles shall be offered by the SBCA to all eligible Saint Bernards:

1. **WEIGHT PULLER** is based on a minimum level of performance. A dog that competes in three (3) Weight Pull Trials and pulls a load of a minimum of eight (8) times its weight on snow or ten (10) times its weight on wheels, is entitled to use the title "**WEIGHT PULLER**" in any SBCA activity. The abbreviation for this title shall be "**WP**". Dogs must be at least 12 months of age before entering these trials.
2. **WEIGHT PULLER EXCELLENT** is based upon an increase in difficulty. A dog that competes in at least three additional Weight Pull Trials, after achieving the Weight Puller Title and pulls a load of at least ten (10) times its weight on snow or twelve (12) times its weight on wheels. Dogs must be at least eighteen (18) months of age before entering these trials. The dog is then entitled to use the title "**WEIGHT PULLER EXCELLENT**" in any SBCA activity. The abbreviation for this title shall be "**WPX**".

**3. WEIGHT PULLER SUPERIOR** is based upon further increasing difficulty.

A dog that competes in at least three (3) additional Weight Pull Trials after obtaining the Weight Puller Excellent title and pulls a load of at least twelve (12) times its weight on snow or fourteen (14) times its weight on wheels. The dog must have pulled a minimum of ten (10) times its body weight in at least one SBCA Sanctioned Weight Pull during its career before the Weight Puller Superior title will be awarded. The dog is then entitled to use the title "**WEIGHT PULLER SUPERIOR**" in any SBCA activity. The abbreviation for this title shall be "**WPS**".

Title Requirements					
Title	Minimum Trials Entered	Trials entered since last title	Requirements for each trial since last title	Minimum Age	Additional Requirements
WP	3	NA	Snow: 8 x body weight	12 mon.	
			Wheels: 10 x body weight		
WPX	6	3	Snow: 10 x body weight	18 mon.	
			Wheels: 12 x body weight		
WPS	9	3	Snow: 12 x body weight	18 mon.	Pulled 10 x body weight in at least one SBCA sanctioned weight pull
			Wheels: 14 x body weight		

### Chapter 5 - Handler Conduct and Control of Dogs

1. All entrants shall be responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their dogs during the contest.
2. Unmanageable or aggressive dogs, as determined by the Weight Pull Judge, shall be barred from competition.
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct or abusive or inhumane treatment of a dog shall be strictly prohibited and will be cause for disqualification.

4. All dogs will be under physical control, on lead, while in the pull area except when hooked to the weight pull vehicle.

## **Chapter 6 - Prizes and Class Divisions**

### **Prizes**

Since there is a common practice to give prize money of significant amounts at weight pulling events, and since it is the desire of the SBCA to maintain a more amateur like setting for its official functions, any prize moneys awarded at SBCA Weight Pull Trials must be distributed over fifty percent of the entries with no one entry receiving more than twenty percent of the total purse. This goal can be achieved by either offering more classes or by making awards beyond the normal four places.

### **Class Divisions**

It shall be the option of the weight pull committee for each trial to determine whether or not to divide the entries into weight classes rather than to have all entries compete in one open class.

## **Chapter 7 - Procedures For Registration and Weigh In**

1. Registration will be in the time, place and manner specified by the officials. Pre-entries are encouraged.
2. Late registration (after the event starting time) will not be accepted.
3. Entry fees will be required prior to weigh-in. These are non-refundable except by extraordinary approval of the weight pull chairman.
4. After the information and registration forms are submitted, the dog will be weighed. The dog's weight for the contest shall be according to the official readings on the equipment provided.
  - a. Only one weighing will be done.
  - b. During the weight reading the dog must not be subject to vertical or horizontal pull or pressure. (This does not exclude the use of sling type scales.) During the weight reading, if the dog does not remain quiet for the reading within a reasonable time the Weight Official will make a conservative judgment of the weight reading.

- c. If the classes are divided, the dog's weight will determine its class. No dog may enter a class other than the class determined by its weight. Classes will not be divided between males and females.
  - d. An alternate official should weigh any dog handled by the Weight Official.
5. A handlers' meeting will follow registration. An official will answer any question applicable to the event rules.
  6. A drawing will then be made for pulling order. A pulling order armband may be issued, which should be worn prominently. The dogs in their pulling order will be entered on the recorder's sheets.
  7. Any handler with more than one dog in a weight class should draw first and then draw again for the second dog's pulling order. If the second draw is next in order to the first he may draw again until the conflict is corrected.

## **Chapter 8 - Description of Set-up & Physical Area**

1. The weight-pulling chute shall be in an area not less than ten feet or more than twenty feet wide, and not less than thirty-five feet long.
2. The chute will be open on the end toward which the pull is made. The chute shall be as level as natural conditions permit. If there is any perceptible slope to the chute, the direction of the pull will be toward the higher end.
3. There shall be at least one physical barrier separating the crowd from the chute.
4. Dogs shall achieve traction on the same surface as that on which the sled or cart rides.
5. The surface for snow shall be hard-packed snow; and for wheeled events, natural conditions of grass, hard dirt, gravel, or carpeting on man-made surface.
6. The same physical dimensions shall be used for an indoor pull.
7. A safe and adequate holding area shall be provided for both snow and wheeled pulls. All competing dogs shall remain in the designated holding area, which shall be large enough for all the dogs.

## **Chapter 9 - Equipment Requirements**

### **General**

The weight pull committee must insure that all equipment and supplies are available at the weight pull trial grounds. This equipment will include such items as stopwatch, tape measure, scale (for weighing dogs), pencils, score sheets, and so forth.

## **Snow Vehicle**

If the event is held on a snow-covered surface, the sled must be capable of safely carrying a load of 3,500 pounds. The two runners must be two to four inches wide, and seven to ten feet on the contact surface, and curved on the front end in a reasonable manner for a sled.

The runners shall consist of p-tex material or a steel runner. The sled must be minimum of 30 inches in width and no more than 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's harness will not exceed six feet from the sled.

## **Wheeled Vehicle**

If the pull is held on a natural surface other than snow, a wheeled cart will be used that meets the following criteria:

1. It must be capable of safely carrying a load of 3,500 pounds without any significant deflection, distortion or deformation; that is, the cart must be designed so that no component bends, sags, twists or undergoes any perceptible change as a result of the cart being loaded.

Note that stiffness is the most important characteristic of such carts, since imperceptible changes in cart geometry (that is; relationships of one part to another) can have a negative impact on the force required to move the cart. This will impact the dog's weight-to-load ratios and penalize the heavier dogs that would have to overcome a greater resistance to movement in addition to the heavier weight.

2. It is suggested that the cart platform be no less than 30 inches in width nor more than 48 inches; and that the platform length be approximately 72 inches.
3. The bridle and tug-line will be a minimum of six feet but no longer than the length of the cart.
4. The rig must be fitted with four pneumatic tires, which must all have the same air pressure prior to the event; with the inflated tire diameter being no more than 18 inches

and no less than 8 inches, with solid metal axles equipped with roller bearings midway on the axle for support.

## **Weight**

Weighted material must be available for both snow and wheeled events. An adequate supply of pre-weighed, inert material suitable for safe, stable stacking shall be provided. Note: the vehicle weight is to be added to the load weight when recording "weight pulled".

## **Barriers**

Adequate barrier material must be provided, and the best possible barriers should be encouraged. The following would be considered appropriate: plywood, snow fence, wood planks, hog panels, or other material that possesses a bouncing-off or glancing ability when struck by the sled or cart; so that the sled will not become stuck.

# **Chapter 10 - Weight Pull Officials and Their Duties**

## **The Weight Pull Judge**

The judge shall supervise the overall event. He/she will make all final decisions in any protest or dispute, before, during and after the event. The judge has the right to disqualify any dog or handler for any violation of the rules or unsportsmanlike conduct, before during and after the event. The judge must be qualified by proof of practical experience. Applications will include a Judge's Profile that will show the judge's qualifications, unless the proposed judge has been pre-approved by the SBCA or other recognized weight pull organization.

## **The Chief Recorder**

The Chief Recorder will be responsible for the completion of all forms and information required by the SBCA. The forms will be used for official SBCA WDC records and to publish results of the event.

1. After the handlers meeting, the dogs in pulling order will be entered on the record sheets. The dogs' weights registered for that event should then be entered on the record sheet.
2. The record will show the pull times, pull weights, passes, and placements. NOTE: The term "Pass" is defined as the handler deciding to skip a round of pulling; that is, to have his dog not pull at a particular weight.

3. The recorder will mark and notify the announcer of the places when they are determined (For example, when only two dogs continue, third place will be the best record of the last dog to drop out.)
4. The recorder will calculate the "pound per pound" (pulled weight divided by the dog's weight) when the leaders become apparent.
5. The recorder will monitor the order of calls to pull, on deck calls, pass announcements, etc., and notify the announcer if there is confusion. The record sheet will be the basic guide should confusion develop.
6. The recorder will notify the announcer of the "on deck" or next dog waiting to pull, skipping over pass notices. The recorder will notify the announcer (or the assistant) of passes.

### **The Chief Timer**

1. The timer should measure from a vantage point about two-thirds down the course and off to one side, in position to see and judge both the start and finish.
2. The timer is responsible for starting and stopping the time according to the procedures delineated in Chapter 11.
3. When the pull is completed successfully, the timer announces the seconds elapsed, leaving it registered on the stopwatch until verification that the recording officials received the time. "No time" is announced for an incomplete pull.
4. The timer should announce the time when approximately 45 seconds have elapsed as a warning to the handler.

## **Chapter 11 - Procedures For The Weight Pull**

1. For each round, each dog competing in that round shall be required to pull the loaded sled/cart at least a measured 16 feet within 60 seconds.
2. The time begins when the handler has released the dog and the dog first begins to pull, or when the handler has released the dog and calls or signals the dog to pull.
3. If the sled is in motion at the expiration of 60 seconds, the dog will be allowed to continue until the sled/cart has crossed the finish line or stops its forward motion.. The time recorded will be the actual time required to complete the pull.

4. In case of a "tie", the winner will be determined by the least time used in the pull. If this also produces a tie, the winner is determined by the least time in the previous pull, etc.
5. Handling the Dog:
  - a. Dogs may be handled from any position in the pull area, front, side, or back.
  - b. No physical handling of the dog shall be allowed once the dog is in position in front of the sled/cart. Handling consists of anyone touching the dog, its harness, the sled or cart, or any other part of the equipment or load once the handler signals the start of the pull.
  - c. Only one handler is allowed to communicate with the dog either with hand signals and/or voice commands from the appropriate course area.
  - d. No dog will be allowed to begin its pull until it has been positioned at the end of the tug line directly in front of the sled.
6. The handler may pass as many times as they desire. The starting weight may be included in these passes.
7. The starting weight to be pulled is 500 pounds, and additional weight must be at least 100 pounds, as determined by a consensus of the handlers.
8. In the event of a tangle, the Judge will stop the clock and the handler must realign the dog and harness before the pull is resumed. Two tangles on the same pull will constitute a failure to pull and will result in the dog's removal from competition. If the sled/cart becomes stuck on a barrier or on the edge of the pulling pad it shall be considered a tangle. The time would be stopped and the sled/cart would then be freed at the point at which it had become stuck. The dog would then be allowed to continue the pull with the remaining time left on the clock. A tangle will be called by the Judge only if the dog or any of the equipment in use becomes entangled.
9. If any part of the harness or other equipment breaks, the handler may repeat the pull after repairs. He/she may choose to accept this interrupted pull as a pass.
10. No food, treats, bait, whips, noisemakers, muzzles, or any form of restraint or aid shall be permitted to be used from the time the event begins until the dog is eliminated from competition and removed from the pull area; nor shall food or bait be permitted on the person of the handler while in the pulling area.
11. No dogs, including those not entered in competition, shall be allowed in the area ahead of the starting line except for the dog that is pulling.

12. 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. If the weights and times are the same, then the weight and times from the previous round of pulls is used.
13. The number of dogs entered in a given class by one handler shall be limited to no more than two dogs per class.
14. Weights falling off the sled/cart will not disqualify the pull or change its rated weight.
15. If the timer neglects to time a pull and the pull is successful, it will be called a successful pull. If the time is required to break a tie, the time of the previous pull will be used.
16. Leads must be dropped or removed before the pull attempt.
17. When called on deck the handler may call out "pass" to skip a turn.
18. The handler may request weight/load ratio calculations after winning the class and before attempting greater weights.
19. The Weight Pull Committee shall determine if the handler has the option of having the cart placed anywhere on the starting line. If the position of the cart is changed, the wheels must be perpendicular to the start line. No test rolling of the cart shall be allowed. If the Weight Pull Committee decides to run the Pull without the option of the handler being able to position the cart, it will be the responsibility of the Chief Judge to assure that all dogs compete under the same conditions. The cart must remain in close proximity of the same track until all dogs pulling that weight have completed their pull. The cart may then be moved to another location in the chute only if, in the opinion of the judge or a consensus of the handlers, it is determined that the track has been damaged.

## **Chapter 12- Protests**

1. Any entrant protesting a violation of the rules shall do so immediately following the contest.
2. The protest may be verbal but shall be followed by a written statement directed to the Chief Judge within one hour after the end of the contest.
3. A hearing shall be scheduled and decision rendered. The decisions of the Judge are final.

## Chapter 13 - Weight Pull Year

1. For statistical purposes, records shall be kept on the basis of a weight pull year.
2. The weight pull year shall run from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year.

### End of Weight Pull Regulations

## INDEX

abusive .....	7
aggressive .....	7
application .....	2, 3, 4, 11
bait .....	13
barriers .....	10,11
bridle .....	10
cart platform .....	10
certificates .....	6
certification .....	4
Chief Judge .....	3, 5, 14
Chief Recorder .....	11
Chief Timer .....	12
chute .....	9
disqualification .....	8
dogs' weight .....	11
eligibility .....	5
entry number limit .....	4
equipment .....	3, 8, 9, 12, 13
first place .....	6
food .....	13
fourth place .....	6
harness .....	10, 12, 13
hearing .....	14
holding area .....	9
illness .....	5
ILP .....	5

in season .....	5
inhumane.....	7
injury .....	5
litter number .....	5
muzzles .....	13
noisemakers .....	13
officials .....	3, 8, 11-12
pass .....	11-13
point system .....	5
premium list .....	4
prize moneys .....	8
protests .....	14
pull area .....	7, 12, 13
pulling order .....	9, 11
regional club .....	3, 4
registration number .....	5
reports .....	4
round .....	5, 9, 11, 12, 13
sanctioning kit .....	4
SBCA WDC .....	3-6, 11
scale .....	8, 9
score sheets .....	9
second place .....	6
slope.....	9
snow events .....	6
starting weight .....	5, 13
steel runner .....	10
stop watch .....	9, 12
tangles .....	13
third place .....	6, 11
tie .....	3, 4, 11, 12, 13
tires .....	10
traction .....	9
treats .....	13
trial committee .....	3, 4
trial secretary .....	3, 4
tug line .....	10, 12
unmanageable .....	7
unsportsmanlike .....	7, 11
violation .....	4, 11, 14
weight class .....	6, 8, 9
weight official .....	8
weight pull chairman .....	4, 5, 8
weight pull judge .....	7, 11
weight pull regulations .....	4, 5, 14
weight puller .....	5-7

weight puller excellent .....	5, 7
weight puller superior .....	5, 7
wheeled events .....	6, 9, 10
whips .....	13
WP .....	6, 7
WPS .....	6, 7
WPX .....	6, 7