

Weight Pulling for Beginners – What to Expect at an Event

For those who are just starting into this wonderful pulling sport who may not know what to expect, NADSR (North American Dog Sports & Registry) has put together a few tips to help you get a feel for how the event will run and what to expect.

The day always starts with set up. Feel free help club officials set up fence sides, carpet, weights and any other pre-event things there may be to set up. Club officials will measure the distance for the start and stop line as well as making sure we are pulling up hill or level for the day.

After set up is done registration starts. If it is your first time pulling, try and have your registration application filled out. If you are already registered with NADSR, please have your ID number ready (registration and IDs will be provided at the event if you don't have this info already). If you are registering the day of the event, it is a good idea to have a good photo of your dog for your certificate or ID card to insure we do not miss it. We will have a way to take a photo of your dog if you don't have a good one or forget to bring one.

After paperwork is done, we will weigh the dogs in. Weight in is very important as pulling class and titles are determined by the dogs weight. Please stand in line with your dog and wait for your turn in an orderly fashion.

Once all dogs have been weighed, the judge will get the pulling order set and the pull will start. We always have a handlers meeting to help those who have questions on rules and procedures. Generally pulls go from smallest to largest starting with the novice dogs. All weight classes will pull each round, but we may do all the novices before starting the regular class.

Weight pulling is a round for round sport. All dogs will pull the weight round and then wait to pull the next weight round (so they will get to rest between rounds). A handler may pass up to 3 rounds per event, but not consecutively. The weight starts low where all the dogs can pull and goes up in 100 to 200 lbs increments per round, depending on the skill level of the dogs in the pull and by the incline of the pulling surface that day.

The last weight a dog successfully pulls (with no assistance) in the required time is the recorded weight pull for that dog. You always want to leave a pull on a high note, so if a dog gets stuck or can't pull the weight in the time allowed, the cart will be pushed through BUT that weight round will not count. You never want to let the dog think he can't pull something or else you may get mental blocks.

Rules are online at www.nadsr.com or you may request a copy from the office to be sent to you. They will also be on hand the day of the pull. Please read the rules carefully.

Hear are a few helpful things to remember. Once the pull has started you may not touch the dog, the cart, or anything attached to the dog or cart. You may call from the front of the dog or drive from behind the cart like in other sledding sports. Always keep 1 foot of space between you and your dog until the pull is complete. Your dog has 60 seconds to pull the cart a distance of 15 feet. Please have a crate, dog box, or drop line/leash to put your canine friend in when not pulling. Once the pull begins, the dog must remain in site of the judge even between rounds. As a courtesy and for safety reasons, please allow lots of personal space between dogs and do not let dogs come face to face.

Most weight pull events go 10-15 rounds, and will take 2-4 hours (depending on the number of entries). Once the pull is done, please help clean up and put things away always keep grounds clean. After all is put away awards and prize dog food will be handed out.

Thank you for your interest in weight pulling - good luck, and most importantly have FUN!

Adam P. Lattimer
NADSR field rep.

