

# MASTIFF CLUB OF AMERICA

## DRAFT TEST REGULATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

The MCOA Draft Test is a series of exercises designed to demonstrate the abilities of purebred mastiffs in a land work capacity. The performance of these skills is intended to demonstrate teamwork between dog and handler resulting from both natural ability, and training that is applicable to realistic work situations.

Dogs must be willing to work with their handlers, and the exercises must be accomplished efficiently. The goal of each handler is to maintain control while encouraging the dog's natural independence. Each handler must also demonstrate a working knowledge of drafting and be familiar with training and equipment.

These rules are a set of standards by which dogs and handlers are judged at an MCOA Draft Test. These rules are not a training guide for draft work.

### **CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL RULES**

#### **1. APPLICATION FOR DRAFT TESTS**

A Draft Test will be held each year in conjunction with the MCOA National Specialty. Timing of the test must be coordinated with the National Specialty Chairperson at least 8 months prior to the Specialty.

In addition to the test at the National Specialty, Draft Tests may also be held with prior written approval of the MCOA Working Dog Committee:

- At MCOA Supported Entry or Regional Specialty Shows
- At a Draft Test hosted by a breed club with AKC Recognized Parent Club Draft Titles. Current breeds that have AKC title recognition for their draft titles are Bouvier des Flandres, Bernese Mountain Dog, Belgian Sheepdog, Briard, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, Mastiff, Leonberger, St. Bernard, and Rottweiler (carting).

#### **2. DRAFT TEST CHAIRMAN**

The Draft Test Chairman will coordinate the actual test and must enforce the regulations. The Draft Test Chairman will provide to the show secretary the following information:

- A. Date and location of test
- B. Judge's name
- C. Entry limit
- D. If only one type of freight haul will be offered and which type

- E. A statement regarding entrant's responsibility for obtaining a copy of these regulations.
- F. The name/address of Working Dog Committee Secretary from whom entrants can obtain a copy of the rules.
- G. An entry form that includes a signature and date line and a statement that reads: "I enter my dog in this draft test at my own risk. I agree to abide by the MCOA Draft Test Regulations. I have read and understand the draft test regulations." Entry forms must also include the standard AKC required information.

The MCOA National appointed Secretary or Regional Club representative will acknowledge entries and inform of start time, and location. If entries exceed the entry limit, alternates must be notified of their place on the alternate list. A copy of the rules must be available at the show site and to the judge. A written report must be submitted to the Working Dog Chairperson by the Draft Test Chair that includes judge's sheets, test description, exhibitor feedback, and problems.

### **3. JUDGES**

The judge will be selected from the list provided by the Mastiff Working Dog Committee. Individuals that are approved to judge Draft tests in the following breeds may also judge MCOA Draft tests: Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs, Bernese Mountain Dogs, St. Bernard, Rottweiler, and Newfoundland. A judge will be selected based on locale. A copy of MCOA rules must be provided to the judge 60 days prior to the test. MCOA members may apply to the Working Dog Committee to become a Draft Dog Judge after placing at least one Draft Dog Title and one Obedience title on a dog.

### **4. DOGS ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE**

MCOA Draft Tests are open to all purebred Mastiffs at least 18 months of age. Dog refers to either sex. ALL entered dogs must have an AKC #, ILP#, or foreign registration number. Dogs must have useable vision and hearing to compete. [If entry limitations allow, the Draft Test may be open to other breeds, with Mastiffs having preference over all other dogs.](#)

### **5. DOGS THAT MAY NOT COMPETE**

No dog belonging to in part or in whole or bred by the Draft Test Judge for this event or member of his/her family may compete. The Draft Test Chairperson may exhibit a dog in this event.

### **6. HANDLER**

The dog must be handled by the same person for all exercises, except for the long down and the freight haul. If a handler has more than one dog entered, an additional handler must be available for the group exercises (long down and freight haul).

## **7. INELIGIBILITY**

The judge for the following reasons must immediately disqualify dogs:

- A. The dog attacks a person or dog on the show grounds or shows aggression towards the judge or handler.
- B. The handler interferes with another handler or dog or shows unsportsmanlike behavior in or outside the ring. (i.e., abusive language, mistreating dog, etc)
- C. The dog shows any sign of lameness.
- D. The dog appears to be in undue distress.

The judge will mark the dog disqualified and state the reason on the judge's report.

## **8. BITCHES IN SEASON**

Bitches in season may not compete. A refund will be given upon receipt of a veterinarian letter stating date of season. Letters should be submitted to test chairperson prior to start of test.

## **9. JUDGES DECISIONS**

At the draft test, the judges' decision is final in all matters affecting scoring of the dogs, and any matters that might cause disqualification of the dog.

## **10. ENTRY LIMIT**

Entries must be received prior to the closing date of the test. Test Chairperson may set the number of entries accepted. An announcement of test limits must be prominently displayed in the premium list. Priority will be given to dogs that have not yet earned a draft title. An Alternate list will be maintained with all entries received beyond the limit. If absentees occur prior to the start of the test, alternates will be allowed to compete based on their position on the list.

## **11. PASSING SCORE AND TITLES**

For a dog to receive a qualifying score, the judge must mark the dog passed in each exercise. A dog receiving a qualifying score in the Novice division may use the initials DD: Draft Dog. A dog receiving a qualifying score in the OPEN division may use the initials DDX after its name, and any dogs receiving a qualifying score in the Brace division may use the DDB after their name in any MCOA activity. The DD and DDX certificate will also satisfy the Draft portion of the Working Dog titles.

[AKC recognizes the MCOA draft titles, and you can complete an Approved Parent Club Title Application to add your MCOA draft title to your dog's registered name. However, when this program was established, as the AKC normalized the test requirements and titles between the](#)

breeds, our titles and requirements were adjusted for AKC recognition: an MCOA Novice title would be NDD, an MCOA Brace title would be NBDD, and our Open title would be DD. We did not want to change the MCOA titles for the dogs that had already received titles, so the MCOA titles remain the same as they have been.

## **12. STEWARDS**

At least two stewards will be provided to assist the judge for each exercise.

## **13. SAFETY OFFICER:**

A safety officer will be appointed and is responsible for ensuring that all non-participating dogs are kept on lead or crated and outside and away from the main test area.

## **14. TEST AREA**

The ring for basic control will be at least 40' x 50'. Test areas for maneuvering should be at least 80' x 100'. Only the currently competing team may enter the ring.

## **15. EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE TEST WILL BE AS FOLLOWS**

- A. Ropes and Stakes or ring gates necessary to define the ring for the basic control and maneuvering course.
- B. Minimum of 4 markers to define the serpentine portion of the maneuvering course.
- C. A removable obstacle, ideally an object which might be found in everyday carting situations (i.e., gates, sawhorses, logs, branches, highway construction cones)
- D. A minimum of 4 markers to define narrow passes.
- E. A tape measure of at least 6 ft. in length
- F. One distraction, either visual or auditory
- G. A stopwatch, or watch to time down stay
- H. Exhibitor numbers
- I. Material suitable for the freight haul. Bags of dog food with weight marked on the bag are acceptable.
- J. Clipboard and pen for the judge.

## **16. CLASSES**

There shall be three classes: **NOVICE DRAFT, OPEN DRAFT, AND BRACE DRAFT.**

- A. **NOVICE DRAFT:** the Novice draft class shall be open to all dogs who have not earned a title and for those dogs with a Novice DD title who wish to compete at the same level. All obedience exercises are performed off leash. All drafting exercises are performed on leash. The leash must be visibly slack and is not to be used to guide the dog during the exercises. Guiding, jerking, and /or using a tight leash will result in a failing performance.

- B. **OPEN DRAFT:** The OPEN Draft class shall be open to any dog that has earned a Novice DD Title. All exercises shall be performed off leash.
- C. **BRACE DRAFT:** The BRACE Draft Class shall be for two or more dogs working together. Both dogs must have a Novice DD title. All obedience exercises are performed off leash. All drafting exercises will be performed on leash.

Because drafting events are not held very often, handlers may enter a dog without a DD title in both the NOVICE and OPEN divisions for an event. If the dog successfully completes the NOVICE level, they may go on to the OPEN class at the same event. If the dog does not successfully complete the NOVICE level, the entry fee for the OPEN class will not be refunded. In the same manner, handlers may enter dogs without DD titles in the NOVICE and BRACE divisions for an event. If either dog does not successfully complete the NOVICE level, the entry fee for the BRACE class will not be refunded.

## **CHAPTER 2 - REGULATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE AND JUDGING**

### **1. STANDARDIZED JUDGING**

Each dog will be judged in a fair and impartial manner. Judges may make minimal adaptations to fit the available site, but no exercise should be substantially changed.

### **2. JUDGES SHEETS**

The judge will record pass/fail information for each dog on the Judge's Record Sheets following the conclusion of the test. These sheets may be posted for entrants to view.

### **3. CATALOG ORDER**

Catalog order will be determined by the order in which entries are received. Handlers and Dogs must exhibit in catalog order unless the judge is notified of a potential conflict. The judge is not required to wait for a team that is not ready for judging and may mark them absent. Handlers with one or more dogs entered in a class are encouraged to speak to the judge prior to the commencement of the class about possible timing conflicts.

### **4. FAILED EXERCISES**

During the test, the judge may allow the handler to assist the dog in completing an exercise once failed. Only gentle guidance by the collar is allowed as discipline. If a dog fails an exercise, it will not be re-judged, unless in the judges' opinion, an unusual circumstance affected the dogs' performance. Any display of fear or nervousness by the dog, or any uncontrolled behavior of the dog such as snapping, barking, or running away from the handler, whether it occurs before, during, or between exercises, must be penalized according to the seriousness of the misbehavior, and the judge may expel or excuse the dog from further competition in the class.

### **5. EXCUSING A DOG:**

Judges must immediately excuse any dog for the following reasons:

- A. The dog attacks or attempts to attack any person or dog on the test grounds.
- B. The handler behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner in or outside the testing area, which includes but is not limited to directing angry, abusive language at a person or a dog, showing discourtesies to judges, stewards, or others.
- C. The dog is lame, wears corrective bandages or other attachments.
- D. The dog fouls the ring.

### **6. EVALUATIONS:**

Dogs shall be judged for willingness, ability, enthusiasm, naturalness as a team and smoothness of performance. Each exercise shall be judged on a pass/fail basis.

## **7. DOG IN DISTRESS**

If at any time during the test, it becomes apparent to the judge or handler that the dog is in distress, the exercise will be terminated, and the dog marked as failed. Distress will include both mental and physical distress. A dog may repeat the exercise if in the opinion of the judge, there was an unusual circumstance that contributed to the dogs' distress.

## **8. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT**

The handler must provide collar, lead, harness, traces, and cart.

- A. **COLLARS:** All dogs must wear a well-fitted buckle, slip, or snap around slip collar. No special collars are permitted.
- B. **LEASHES:** Any suitable leather, nylon or cloth leash is acceptable ranging in length from 2 ft. to 6 ft. Couplers may be used in the Brace Draft.
- C. **HARNESS:** The harness must fit the dog. The Harness must be of a type and construction to allow the dog to pull comfortably in the maneuvering and freight haul portions of the test. Traces should be of proper length to allow the dog proper distance from the cart.
- D. **DRAFT RIG:** Rig may be any cart capable of hauling the required weight and terrain of the freight haul. Carts may be either 2 or 4 wheel vehicles. Handler must supply any appropriate tie downs to secure the load in the rig for the freight haul. The handler must secure the load so that it does not shift when the rig moves. Judges may excuse any team from competition if the harness or draft rig is deemed inadequate or faulty. No person or animal may serve as freight load. Cart should be designed to prevent rig from running up on the dog when hauling downhill. Shaft brakes are sufficient for this purpose. No more than two dogs entered in the same class (i.e., NOVICE or OPEN) may share a cart.

## **9. USE OF LEASH:**

These exercises involve a combination of on and off leash exercises. Dogs must be brought to the ring on leash.

## **10. PRAISE**

Physical praise and petting are allowed between and after exercises. Verbal praise is allowed during the exercises. No food or toys may be offered or carried into the ring.

## **11. COMMANDS / SIGNALS/ ENCOURAGEMENT:**

During the testing a handler may give commands, signals, and encouragement to the dog by voice, and or arm/hand signal. Multiple commands and/or signals are allowed. The handler may not physically guide the dog. While a handler may encourage his/her dog in a pleasant upbeat manner, constant yelling or reprimands are undesirable and may cause an exercise to be failed.

#### **12. HANDLING BETWEEN EXERCISES:**

A dog may be gently guided by the collar between exercises in the NOVICE class only. No other physical guidance is permitted.

#### **13. CHECK IN**

Handlers must check in 60 minutes prior to the start of the test. Thirty minutes prior to the start, handlers and stewards must meet with the judge for instructions. Questions will be answered at this time.

#### **14. PASSING PERFORMANCE**

A dog's ability to perform assigned tasks with its handler is the primary quality emphasized in a draft test. In addition, a judge must consider the dog's willingness and smoothness of performance. A dog that willingly completes each exercise with out physical assistance from the handler should be marked as passes. To earn a title, all exercises must be marked passed. Each entrant will be informed if they have passed or failed at the completion of each series of exercises.



## **CHAPTER 3 – INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES**

### **1. BASIC CONTROL**

The **BASIC CONTROL** portion of the test will pertain to NOVICE & BRACE Draft only. Each dog and handler complete the basic control section first in catalog order, and then return for the group exercise. When this series is complete, dogs perform **HITCHING and MANUEVERING** in catalog order. The handler and dog are tested **on BASIC CONTROL** to verify handler's control over dog. Handlers are permitted to talk to and encourage their dogs during the exercises. This series takes place in a 40'x50' ring. Four exercises make up this series: a heel off lead, a recall, a three-minute group down, and a stand stay for harnessing.

#### **HEEL OFF LEAD**

The dog will heel within arm's length of the handler. The handler may not touch the dog but may encourage the dog to remain within arm's reach at all times. The following commands will be called: forward, slow, normal, fast, right turn, left turn, about turn, and halt. The same pattern will be called for each dog.

#### *Principle Parts of the Heel Off Lead*

1. The dog performs the heeling pattern on the left side of the handler and remains within arm's reach.
2. It is preferable for the dog to perform an automatic sit after each halt but is not necessary for a passing score. Handler may verbally ask the dog to sit after each halt.

#### *Failing Performance*

- a. Handler adapts pace to dog.
- b. Dog frequently heels out of handler's reach.
- c. No change of pace when called for
- d. Handler physically guides or touches the dog
- e. Dog leaves ring.

#### **RECALL**

The dog performs the recall across the full length of the ring. The dog will stay in place until called by the handler. The dog must respond to the first command to come. Hand and voice may both be used. Extra commands or encouragement are allowed after the dog is up and moving. The dog must come to the handler close enough to be touched and may sit facing the handler. The following commands are called: sit your dog, leave your dog, call your dog, finish (not required to pass) and exercise finished.

#### *Principal parts of the Recall*

1. The recall uses the entire length of the ring.
2. The dog remains in place until the judge instructs the handler to call. Both hand and voice may be used, and encouragement after the dog is moving.

### *Failing Performance*

- a. Handler gives more than one stay command.
- b. Dog does not stay when told.
- c. Dog does not respond to the first come command.
- d. Dog does not go to handler or remains out of reach.
- e. Dog must be physically guided.
- f. Dog leaves the ring

### **STAND FOR HARNESSING**

Judge instructs handler to harness dog. The handler tells dog to stay (either sit, down, or stand), and gets harness from steward. Handler commands dog to stand and stay and proceeds to harness the dog. It is important that the handler demonstrate a working knowledge of the harness and equipment. The handler may touch the dog only as required to harness, but not to discipline. Once harnessed with traces secured up and off the ground, the handler will again command stay and leave the dog to a distance of 6 feet. The judge will approach and touch the dog. The judge will then command return to your dog. The dog may move feet on the stand stay; however, he may not move from the area where commanded to stay. The judge will then command exercise finished.

### *Principal Parts of the Stand for harnessing*

1. The handler leaves the dog in any position and gets harness from steward. Upon return, commands the dog to stand/stay and harnesses. The dog may be guided into a stand.
2. The dog remains in stand stay for the judge to examine dog and remains on stay until the handler returns.

### *Failing Performance*

- a. Dog does not remain in place while handler gets harness.
- b. Dog resists harnessing or leaves the place where stand/stay command was given.
- c. Dog shows resistance to judge's examination.
- d. Handler does not properly harness the dog with well-fitting harness.

### **THREE MINUTE DOWN**

The three-minute down is a group exercise and will be held after all entrants have completed the basic control section of the test. The down will be done with the dogs in harness, but not hitched. This exercise will be performed off lead with the handlers across the ring. Each group will be a maximum of ten dogs. Leads will be placed behind the dogs. [At the judges' command, the handler tells their dog to down.](#) The commands are down your dogs, leave your dogs, return, exercise finished. In NOVICE and BRACE Draft handlers will, upon the judge's command of "leave your dogs" walk to the opposite side of the ring and turn and face their dog until told to return.

### *Principal Parts of the Group Down*

1. The exercise is performed with the handlers across the length of the ring, and the dogs in harness.
2. [The dog lies down at the handler's command.](#)
3. The dogs remain down until the judge instructs handlers to return, and gives the exercise finished statement.

### *Failing Performance*

- a. Handler gives more than one stay command
- b. Dog sits or stands before handler returns or moves a substantial distance from original position even though staying down.

## **2. HITCHING**

This test section begins immediately following the long down. Each dog is called in catalog order and will individually complete the following exercises. A draft test demonstrates cooperation between the handler and the dog. Since a handler's draft work knowledge and abilities are essential to draft work, the judges must evaluate a handler's ability to select the appropriate type and size of equipment for their dog, and the handler's knowledge about using the equipment properly. Any equipment used must remain in safe working condition throughout the draft test. Judges may fail improper or unsafe equipment during the scheduled equipment check or any time during the remainder of the course.

### ***Pre-test Rig placement***

Prior to the start of this exercise, the handler brings the draft apparatus to the steward who places it in the test area as instructed by the judge. Rig is empty with no weights.

### **HITCHING**

Upon judge's instruction the dog and handler enter the ring on lead. Dogs are still in harness. The judge will start the exercise at least 6 feet from the apparatus. Handlers will begin hitching their dogs when instructed by the judge. In NOVICE, the handler will hitch the dog by either backing the dog into the shafts or placing the dog on a stand stay while bringing the apparatus to the dog. In OPEN the dog MUST back towards the shafts and stand to be hitched to the cart. In BRACE, teams may be hitched by placing one dog at a time next to the tongue, or by having the dogs standing together with a coupler and bringing the tongue up between them.

### **Equipment check**

When the dog is hitched, the judge will indicate that the handler and dog move to a predetermined location at least 20 feet ahead and stop for a mandatory equipment check. During this time the judge observes the equipment to verify it is on safe operating order. When the dog and handler have stopped at the designated location, the judge may allow the handler to make needed adjustments; however, if the adjustments are needed it is the handler's responsibility to recognize this need and to

make any adjustment themselves. If in the judge's opinion, a serious problem exists with any of the equipment and it goes unrecognized by the handler, the judge may fail the dog in this exercise. If the handler does not recognize a need for a MINOR adjustment that the judge feels should be made, the judge may bring this need to the handler's attention and the handler must make the adjustment without further assistance.

#### *Principal Parts of Hitching*

1. The apparatus is placed in ring by steward, according to judges' instructions.
2. The dog willingly backs for hitching (required in OPEN), or does a stand stay while hitched.
3. The handler must properly hitch dog in a safe manner. The handler may touch dog only as required to hitch, but may not touch to discipline
4. The handler uses equipment correctly and appropriately.
5. The dog and handler move 20 ft to indicate readiness for next portion of test, and pass judge's inspection of equipment.

#### *Failing Performance*

- a. Dog refuses to back up within 30 seconds (OPEN only) or moves away when cart is brought up behind him.
- b. Dog is uncooperative and/or resists hitching.
- c. The hitch is unsafe, or the apparatus balance is unsafe or poorly designed.
- d. Dog does not proceed forward on a loose lead or must be forced to halt.

### **3. MANEUVERING**

#### **Novice Draft and Brace Draft Maneuvering Course**

The maneuvering course for NOVICE and BRACE shall be the same pattern. The only exception being that allowances in the widths of obstacles may be made to accommodate the larger size of some BRACE carts. The maneuvering course will include the following:

- Serpentine (there must be at least 9 feet between pylons in the serpentine exercise.)
- Ninety-degree turns to the left and right,
- Two narrow areas at least six feet long, one low to the ground (i.e., logs), and one a solid narrow area at least two feet high (i.e., bales of hay),
- A removable obstacle (may be a gate to pass thru and then secure).
- There will also be a back of 3 feet required.

During BRACE Draft, two stewards in addition to the Judge will remain on the course and at a distance so as not to interfere with the performance of the team, but to be available in case of a problem arising.

#### **Open Draft Maneuvering Course**

OPEN draft dogs may use any obstacles found on the novice draft course and may use circular patterns to the right and left, figure eight patterns, and dogs must demonstrate a slow and fast at some point on the course. The slow and fast are only required in OPEN. The command for slow pace will be "Haul Slowly" at which time the handler will decrease their speed to a very slow walk. The command for fast shall be "Haul Fast" at which time the handler will increase their speed to a brisk trot. OPEN Draft will be required to back 4 feet.

#### *Principle Parts of Maneuvering*

1. The course may be worked on or off lead for NOVICE and BRACE Dogs, and OFF lead for OPEN. When on lead, the lead must remain loose.
2. The handler may work next to, in front of, or behind the dog. The handler may not impede the dog's forward movement at any time. This includes stepping in front of the dog to enforce a halt command or stepping in front of a dog that tries to change directions against the handler's command.
3. The dog will haul at a normal forward speed unless instructed otherwise by the judge.
4. At the beginning of the maneuvering course, the judge will tell the handler to take the course. There are no time constraints as long as the dog continues to work.
5. At appropriate locations along the course, the judge will command in any order the dog and handler to slow, halt, back up at least three feet in NOVICE and BRACE, and four feet in OPEN. The Dog should back in a willing manner and in an approximate straight line. A maximum of 3 attempts may be made to accomplish a three-foot back up. The Judge will instruct handlers using the following commands: haul forward, haul slowly, stop, and back your dog. The sequence for the commands will be the same time and location for all dogs. BRACE dogs will be required to back one foot.
6. At the removable obstacle, the dog waits (handler instructions allowed) for the handler to remove the obstacle and proceeds only on command. The judge will instruct the handler to leave the dog and return the obstacle to its former position.
7. The dog shows definite pace changes when asked to haul slowly and haul fast in OPEN.
8. The handler may not touch the draft apparatus unless special permission is received from the judge.

#### *Failing Performance*

- a. Handler impedes dog's forward movement
- b. Handler touches dog or apparatus without judges' permission.
- c. Dog refuses to obey commands or does not accompany handler.
- d. Dog is worked on a tight lead.
- e. Dog refuses to back the required distance.

- f. Dog tries to pass moveable obstacle without waiting for handler to move it, does not wait for handler's command to move forward, or does not stay when handler while handler returns obstacle to original position.
- g. Dog upsets draft apparatus.
- h. Dog or handler knocks over course markers. Light bumps are acceptable
- i. No change in pace when called for in OPEN.

#### 4. FREIGHT HAUL

This part of the test is a group exercise that begins after all class entries have completed the maneuvering course. Because the exercise is designed to be completed as a group, no more than two dogs entered in the same class (i.e., NOVICE or OPEN) may share a cart. The dogs will be inside the arena when freight is loaded.

The Freight Haul may consist of either a Short Haul (shorter distance/heavier weight) or a Long Haul (longer distance/lighter weight). Depending on the test grounds, number of entrants, weather conditions, and other relevant factors, the judge will determine which freight hauls will be offered. If the judge offers both options, the handlers may choose which one they wish to participate in. If only one type of freight haul will be offered, the information will be included in the premium list.

Freight Haul	Distance	Freight Weight	
		NOVICE	OPEN/BRACE
Short Haul	¼ mile	50 lbs	100 lbs
Long Haul	½ mile	25 lbs	50 lbs

The Freight Haul will be conducted outside if the test grounds and conditions permit. Freight hauls will be held in a group, off lead (OPEN only), and may encounter various terrains. Enough stewards will be provided for each dog for reasons of safety. Stewards will follow at a safe distance and shall do nothing to impede the haul of the dog or interfere with the handler unless a dangerous situation occurs.

##### **Freight**

The handler may provide their own freight material, otherwise sealed bags of pet food may be used. Animals or people may not be used as freight. It is the handler's responsibility to see that the freight load is secured and balanced properly

##### **Freight Haul**

The judge will issue the following commands: retrieve and load freight, haul forward, and stop. The dog is instructed to stay while the handler retrieves and loads the freight. The handler must secure the load without additional assistance. The freight load must be properly balanced. The judge will command haul forward, at which time the dog and handler will proceed around the full perimeter of the ring, returning to the initial starting point, or stopping at the judge's command. The dog must remain on a loose

lead. The judge will command the handler to unload and unhitch, at which time the handler will command the dog to stay, and proceed to unload freight, and unhitch the apparatus.

### **Intriguing Distraction**

An intriguing distraction will occur during this portion of the test, near the dog and handler while working the perimeter of the ring. The dog may stop and notice the distraction but may not pursue the distraction. The handler may redirect the dog to continue working. The distraction will remain the same for all dogs tested. Distractions are not limited to but may consist of any of the following: ringing bell; crinkly food bag; squeaky toys; radio; camera flash; person on a bike; children playing; toy being thrown.

#### *Principal Parts of Freight Haul and Intriguing Distraction*

1. The dog stays while freight is retrieved and loaded.
2. The dog willingly moves forward with load
3. The dog proceeded around the perimeter of the ring loose lead.
4. The dog willingly negotiates the longer haul over any type of terrain.
5. The dog works through distraction on course.
6. The dog stands for unloading/unhitching.

#### *Failing Performance*

- a. Handler touches the dog or apparatus during the freight haul.
- b. Dog does not cooperate while loading or unloading.
- c. Dog refuses to move loaded apparatus.
- d. Dog becomes distressed while hauling freight
- e. Load is too heavy for the dog
- f. Load becomes unbalanced during the haul.
- g. Handler works dog on tight lead.
- h. Dog pursues or flees from distraction.
- i. Dog repeatedly barks at distraction.
- j. Dog refuses to move after distraction.

## **5. COMPLETION**

After all dogs have completed all sections of the test, all passing teams will be called back into the ring and awards will be given. These events are pass/fail.

## **CHAPTER 4 – SPECIAL COMPETITION (VIRTUAL DRAFT DOG)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

With improvements in technology, competing virtually has become possible. Because MCOA draft tests are held infrequently and can be geographically and logistically challenging to attend, a Virtual Draft Dog (VDD) title has been created. This title has been added to the Draft portion of the Working Dog titles.

In the virtual test, the handler is solely responsible to ensure the safety of the dog from the equipment and the show area. At a physical test the judge, carting chair, and stewards are helping with this. The dog should be showing willingness and enjoyment to work and the handler should be demonstrating understanding of draft work equipment and regulations.

### **2. RULES**

The applicable rules from Chapter 1 regarding eligibility apply to the Virtual Draft Test. This includes Dogs Eligible to Compete, Ineligibility, and Judge's Decision. Because the test is virtual, the following sections are not applicable: Bitches in Season, Dogs that May Not Compete, and Entry Limit.

The other draft titles are not pre-requisites for VDD. This is a stand-alone challenge.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The handler is responsible for always prioritizing the safety of their dog. The handler is responsible for setting up a course and obstacles that meet the requirements of this test, and depending on the venue, using stewards or safety officers to ensure their test can be completed safely.

### **4. VIDEO REQUIREMENTS**

- Prior to beginning the performance, the handler will be near to and facing the camera to state the dog's name, verbally confirm they will not have any food or toys with them during the exercises, and show the dog's collar, harness, and cart to the camera.
- Minimum resolution to view videos is 720p HD. Check the camera settings before filming and set the video to the highest resolution.
- Filming must be done in landscape (horizontal) mode. Do not use the selfie mode as this will put the dog on the wrong side of the handler.
- The camera should be elevated to approximately eye level.
- The camera can be stationary (tripod) or a second person may do the filming as long as the team, including the dog, handler, and cart, is in full view throughout the performance.



- The video must contain audio. The judge must be able to hear the sounds closest to the camera. Background noises are expected but do not add music to the performance.
- There are three parts of the Virtual Draft Test. Parts 1 and 2 should each be filmed in a continuous sequence, with no pauses and no edits. Part 3 should be filmed as continuous as possible, but due to space limitations, editing is allowed. For final submission, the videos for the three parts should be edited together, to form one complete video.
- Upload the video to YouTube and share the video link on your entry form. Be sure your video is set to Public or Unlisted. Do not set the video to Private or the judge will not be able to see it.

## 5. EXERCISES

The following exercises make up the Virtual Draft Dog Test. Unless stated differently here, they are conducted and evaluated as described in Chapter 3. Remember, Parts 1 and 2 should be filmed in a continuous sequence. Part 3 should be filmed as continuous as possible, but due to space limitations, editing is allowed.

### PART 1: HARNESS AND HITCH

Remember, Part 1 should be filmed in a continuous sequence with no pauses and no edits. The handler should pre-position the harness and cart for easy access during this part.

#### STAND FOR HARNESSING

This exercise is conducted the same as in Chapter 3, except the handler or a helper can take the part of the judge in the stand for exam after harnessing.

#### HITCHING

This exercise is conducted the same as in Chapter 3, except the handler or a helper can take the part of the judge in the equipment check. The dog does not need to back into the shafts. ***The handler should demonstrate their understanding of the drafting equipment by explaining what they are checking (harness fit, shaft width/length, equipment condition, etc.)***

#### STAY WHILE HITCHED

The stay will be done with the dog in harness ***and hitched***. The handler can choose to leave the dog in a ***sit or down*** position and will drop/place the leash on the ground alongside the dog. The handler may command the dog into position, pause, then give the command and/or signal to stay, and immediately proceed ***to walk around the dog (approximately 10' from dog) in a circle in either direction***. Upon completing a full perimeter walk around the dog, the handler will approach the dog from the front and

return to heel position. The handler does not have to circle around behind the dog and cart to return to heel. After an obvious pause, the exercise is finished.

## **PART 2: MANUEVERING**

Remember, Part 2 should be filmed in a continuous sequence with no pauses and no edits. This part starts with the dog already hitched to the cart. ***For this part, no weight is required in the cart, but it can be added if the handler wishes.*** If a weight is used, make sure the weight of the object is visible to the camera and easily verified (i.e., a marked plate weight, bag of dog food, etc.), and safely secured/balanced. Persons or animals may not serve as freight weight.

These exercises may be performed on or off leash. Whether on or off leash, the dog should walk close to the handler's side (left or right is acceptable as required by the course) without moving wide away from, lagging behind, forging ahead of, or crowding the handler. If on leash, the leash should be loose and not used to guide or force the dog into position.

The handler can determine their own course and it should demonstrate the following maneuvering skills:

- **Serpentine** (4 cones) OR **Figure 8**. For the Figure 8, the team should pass through the middle of the pattern three times.
- **Left Turn** and **Right Turn**. These are both 90° turns and can be worked into the course naturally.
- **Fast Haul** and **Slow Haul**. The pace change should be noticeable but does not need to be extreme and should be demonstrated for ~10'.
- **Back** (4') OR **Pivot** (180°). In the pivot exercise, the cart should remain stationary, and the dog should pivot 180° so that the dog and cart are facing in the opposite direction at the end of the maneuver (like a turn on the haunches but with a cart).

The handler can change position as needed for the maneuvering course (i.e., work from the left or right side of the dog, or step in front of the dog). The handler should not bodily impede the dog's forward movement or 'walk into' the dog to force a change of position (i.e., back or turn). Review the *failing performance* criteria in Chapter 3 for maneuvering. The handler can touch the draft apparatus if necessary to adjust for the comfort or safety of the dog. Because a judge is not present to ask, the handler should stop the dog, address the camera to explain the adjustment being made, then resume the maneuvering course.

## **PART 3: OBSTACLES**

Remember, Part 3 should be filmed in as few continuous sequences as possible, but due to space limitations and availability of obstacles, the video may be edited. This part starts with the dog already hitched to the cart. ***For this part, a 25 lb. weight (minimum) should be added to the cart.*** Make sure the weight of the object is visible to the camera and easily verified (i.e., a marked plate weight, bag of dog food, etc.), and safely secured/balanced. Persons or animals may not serve as freight weight.

These exercises may be performed on or off leash. Whether on or off leash, the dog should walk close to the handler's side (left or right is acceptable as required by the course) without moving wide away from, lagging behind, forging ahead of, or crowding the handler. If on leash, the leash should be loose and not used to guide or force the dog into position.

The handler can determine their own course and it should demonstrate the following obstacles:

- **High Narrow and Low Narrow.** Areas should be at least six feet long, one low to the ground (i.e., logs), and one a solid narrow area at least two feet high (i.e., bales of hay).
- **Removable Obstacle.** This is a gate or other removable obstacle to pass thru and then secure/return to position.
- **Bump.** This obstacle should cause a gentle bump/rattle in the cart. A bump obstacle could be something like a 3" drop from pavement to grass, a 2x4 board in the path, or a speed bump in a road. The dog should remain calm and not startle from the cart noise.
- **Intriguing Distraction.** See Chapter 3 for examples.

## 6. SUBMISSION

Upload your completed video to YouTube. Make sure you have someone else check the link to make sure it's working. Complete the MCOA Virtual Draft Test Submission form and email to the Working Dog Chairperson. The chairperson will assign the video to an MCOA approved draft judge.

If you are successful, you will be notified via email and sent a certificate. Either the email or the certificate can be used as documentation for the Working Dog titles.

If you are not successful, you will receive feedback. If there are only minor issues with part of your submission, you may correct and resubmit, using parts of the original submission. For example, there were no issues with the performance, but no freight/weight was used in Part 3. Part 3 could be repeated and then edited into a video with the original Parts 1 and 2.

## MCOA Draft Test Judge's Sheet

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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<i>Class</i>	<b>NOVICE</b>	<b>BRACE</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
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### Obedience (NOVICE/BRACE Only)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Heel Off Leash</li> <li>— Recall</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Stand For Harnessing</li> <li>— Long Down (Group)</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### Hitching/Maneuvering

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Hitching</li> <li>— Left Turn</li> <li>— Right Turn</li> <li>— Serpentine</li> <li>— High Narrow</li> <li>— Low Narrow</li> <li>— Gate</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Back – 3 foot (NOVICE/BRACE)</li> <li>— Back – 4 foot (OPEN)</li> <li>— Figure 8 (OPEN)</li> <li>— Slow Haul (OPEN)</li> <li>— Fast Haul (OPEN)</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### Freight Haul

Freight Haul	Distance	Freight Weight	
		NOVICE	OPEN/BRACE
Short Haul	¼ mile	50 lbs	100 lbs
Long Haul	½ mile	25 lbs	50 lbs

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Freight Haul</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Intriguing Distraction</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

<b>Armband:</b>	<b>PASS</b>	<b>FAIL</b>	<b>EXCUSED</b>
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## MCOA Virtual Draft Test Submission

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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Dog's registered name and titles that are to appear on certificate:

AKC/CKC #:

Date of Birth:

Call Name:

Owner(s) Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email Address:

Date of MCOA membership:

<b>YouTube Link</b>	
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### PART 1: Harness and Hitch

- Stand For Harnessing
- Hitching
- Stay

### PART 2: Maneuvering

Include:

- Left Turn
- Right Turn
- Slow Haul
- Fast Haul

Choose One:

- Serpentine
- Figure 8

Choose One:

- Back (4 feet)
- Pivot (180°)

### PART 3: Obstacles

Include:

- High Narrow
- Low Narrow
- Removable Obstacle
- Bump
- Intriguing Distraction