

BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG CLUB OF AMERICA

Draft Test Regulations January 2023 Edition



Purpose

The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America, Inc. (BMDCA) Draft Tests are a series of exercises designed to develop and demonstrate the natural abilities of purebred Bernese Mountain Dogs in a working capacity involving hauling. The Bernese Mountain Dog has historically functioned as a draft dog in various capacities, and performance of these exercises is intended to demonstrate skills resulting from both inherent ability and training, which are applicable to realistic work situations. It is desirable that the dog evidence willingness and enjoyment when performing his work in a combination of controlled teamwork with his handler and natural independence.

Guidelines

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) Draft Test Regulations shall apply at BMDCA Draft Tests. A copy of these regulations must be available at the Secretary's table at BMDCA Draft Tests. For issues of misconduct not explicitly covered by these regulations, the Constitution and By-laws of the BMDCA shall apply. If these do not adequately address issues of misconduct, the American Kennel Club (AKC) Booklet - Dealing with Misconduct at AKC Events, shall apply. For issues other than misconduct other AKC Regulations may be used as a guideline.

**BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.
DRAFT TEST REGULATIONS**

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REVISIONS IN THIS EDITION

The following changes appear in these Regulations *in italicized text*:

HANDLERS:

- Recall Exercise: A second command and/or signal may be used if the dog doesn't come to the handler.
- Open teams Harness and Hitch: the leash must be removed before the handler leaves the ring to get the cart.
- Between exercises verbal and gentle physical praise are allowed.
- Dogs may have a different handler for the group exercises.
- Under Working Capacity: Team may be failed if it is unable, unwilling, or incapable of completing any exercise in a reasonable time period.
- Grand Master Draft Dog (GMDD) will be a suffix Title, not just an award.
- Blind Dogs may compete.
- Test Secretaries still may not show a dog, but a dog owned by the Test Secretary can be shown by another handler.
- Club's discretion whether or not to require a certificate from a veterinarian as proof of a female in season.
- Club's discretion whether or not to require a certificate from a veterinarian as proof of a dog being injured.
- Leashes may be of any material.
- Collar and Leash must be two (2) individual pieces.
- Leash may be attached to collar, a D ring on the harness or a coupler.
- Cooling Coats may be used.
- Coupler requirement simplified to say, "In Brace classes the dogs may be coupled."
- Breeching Straps may be used in Maneuvering and/or the Group exercises (as a unit) at the sole discretion of the handler.

JUDGES:

- Outlines updated requirements to become a draft judge.

SECRETARIES/CLUBS

- Change to who actually plots the Freight Haul (FH) course.
- Change to required forms and booklets required at the draft test.
- Change to the statements required to be included in the premium list (PL).
- Addresses are no longer required for judges and test chair in the PL.
- Refund policy for bitches in season and injured dogs must be included in the PL.
- New specifications for dimensions for narrows.
- Arm band number no longer required.
- Running Order: A separate random draw to determine the running order for each class for each test.
- Misconduct Disciplinary Procedure – Replaces the Disciplinary Section. This is an expanded explanation of the Disciplinary Procedure.

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR DRAFT TEST PARTICIPANTS

Key words, which are defined in the Glossary, appear in **bolded text** in this section of the Regulations.

Exercises

Basic Control (Novice Draft Only)

Overview: Prior to hitching, the dog demonstrates a willingness to work with and respond to the handler while in the vicinity of the draft equipment. The team is to demonstrate Walking Under Control with changes of direction and speed, and a Recall to the vicinity of the draft rig.

Walking Under Control

Overview: Prior to the start of this exercise, the draft rig and harness will be brought into the ring and positioned by a steward. The dog is expected to walk under control within arm's length of the handler at all times. The dog may work on either side, in front, or behind the handler but may not interfere with the handler's movement. The handler may not **physically guide** the dog but may encourage the dog to remain within arm's length.

Judges' Commands to the Handler: "Are you ready?," "Forward," "**Slow**," "Fast," "Normal," "Right turn," "Left turn," "About turn," "**Halt**," and "Exercise finished." Judges will determine the pattern and order of the **commands**.

Failing Performance:

- Dog does not walk under control within arm's length of handler at all times.
- No change of pace.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog.
- Handler uses **leash guidance**.
- Dog interferes with handler's movement.

Recall

Overview: The recall is performed off leash and will be approximately thirty feet (30') feet in length. The exercise may start with the dog in any position. The dog must execute the **wait** with a single **command** and/or **signal**.

The handler leaves the dog, proceeds to a position close to the draft rig, and faces the dog.

At the judge's direction, the handler calls the dog with a single **command** and/or **signal**. *If the dog doesn't come to the handler, a second **command** and/or **signal** may be used.* After the dog has begun to move, additional **signals**, **commands** and praise are allowed. The dog is expected to come directly to the handler and stop near enough for the handler to touch.

Judges' Commands or Signals to the Handler: "Are you ready?," "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," and "Exercise finished."

Failing Performance:

- Handler gives more than one **wait command** and/or **signal**
- Dog does not **wait**.
- Dog does not come on first or second **command** and/or **signal**
- Dog does not come directly to handler.
- Dog remains out of reach.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog.

Harness and Hitch

Overview: Dog demonstrates a willingness to be harnessed and hitched to draft rig.

Novice: Prior to the start of this exercise the draft rig and harness will be brought into the ring and positioned by a steward. Following Basic Control, the Dog may receive gentle physical guidance to the vicinity of the draft rig.

Brace Novice: Prior to the start of this exercise the draft rig and harness will be brought into the ring and positioned by a steward. The team proceeds to the Harness and Hitch location designated by the judges. The leash is removed prior to harnessing.

Open and Brace Open: The team proceeds to the Harness and Hitch location designated by the judges. *The leash is removed. The dog must **wait** while the handler leaves the ring and brings the draft rig and harness into the ring and positions them close to the dog.* The handler harnesses and hitches the dog. The dog cooperates for the harnessing and hitching. All dogs may receive gentle physical guidance. When hitched, the handler indicates readiness to proceed (in the Novice classes by putting the leash back on the dog).

If the draft rig is a sled, toboggan or travois not designed for backing, the backing exercise (described below in Back-Up section) shall be performed prior to hitching, backing into position to be hitched.

Judges' Commands to the Handler: "Are you ready?," "Harness your dog," "Back your dog," "Hitch your dog," and "Exercise finished."

Failing Performance:

- Dog does not **wait** while draft rig is brought into the ring (Open).
- Dog is uncooperative.
- Dog is incorrectly harnessed or hitched.
- Rough handling of dog.

Clarifying Information:

The position of the team relative to the draft rig for the Harness and Hitch is a set-up point, not a position to be judged. The exercise may not begin until the team is close to the draft rig. The judge may ask the team to narrow the gap without penalty to the team. The leash must be off during the Novice Harness and Hitch.

Maneuvering and Practical Draft Work

Ring Exercises

Overview of Practical Draft Work: The team demonstrates working ability. The team encounters situations and distractions which might be met under everyday conditions.

The handler may work beside, behind, or in front of the dog, or any combination of these. The key factor to be judged is the exhibition of teamwork as well as completion of the exercises and willingness, ability, enthusiasm, and smoothness of performance.

Judges may require the Practical Draft Work exercises to be performed in any order. The different components of each exercise do not need to be performed consecutively.

At the beginning of these exercises the judge will ask, "Are you ready?" and at the conclusion the judge may state, "Exercise finished." Judges may give directions/**commands** to the team as needed during the Maneuvering course.

Except as specified, the Practical Draft Work exercises are performed with an empty draft rig. Practical Draft Work exercises may not be combined.

Overview of Maneuvering: The team is required to perform:

1. Circular patterns to the right and left.
2. 90 degree turns to the right and left.
3. Narrows: Movement through a narrow area that is twelve inches (12") wider than the widest recorded dimension for this team without touching the objects defining the narrow area. The handler, dog, and draft rig must all pass through the narrow area.
4. Movable Obstacle: The dog **waits** while the handler opens a gate or removes an obstacle such as a tree branch or child's toy. The team then proceeds through the gate or past the obstacle. The handler may be required to close the gate or replace the obstacle.

Judges' Commands to the Handler May Include: "Right turn," "Left turn," "Right U-turn," "Left U-turn," "Circle right," "Circle left," "Weave," "**Halt**," "Remove the obstacle," and "Forward." Judges will direct handlers as necessary through the maneuvers.

Failing Performance:

- All maneuvers not executed.
- Any contact by the dog, handler, or draft rig with the objects defining the narrow area, or any other objects or obstacle that are part of the course.
- Dog does not **wait** while the handler removes obstacle.
- Dog upsets draft rig.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig.
- **Leash guidance.**
- Handler, dog, and draft rig do not pass through the narrow area.

Clarifying Information:

Halts, Body Blocking: Given that handlers may work beside, behind, or in front of the dog, a handler may step in front of a dog for a **halt** or other maneuvers. However, if the dog collides with the handler, attempts to go around the handler, or if the handler is forced to back up, the dog shall be failed for lack of control, no **halt**, or body blocking.

Change of Pace (“Slow”)

Overview: Normal pace and **halts** will occur multiple times throughout the draft test. The Change of Pace shall be required only once but may be used elsewhere in the draft test at the handler’s discretion. The **slow** pace shall last for a minimum of ten feet (10’).

Judges’ Commands to the Handler: “**Slow**” and “*Normal.*”

Failing Performance:

- No **Slow**.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig.
- **Leash guidance.**

Clarifying Information:

Slow: The dog’s change of pace is what is being judged. If the handler is ahead of the dog, slows down and then finishes the exercise behind the dog, chances are good that only the handler has demonstrated a change of pace.

Slow, Brace: The team must change pace and remain on course. If one dog demonstrates change of pace while the other does not and the rig veers or turns to one side, the team must be failed for either no slow or lack of control.

Back-Up

Overview: Novice dogs must back the draft rig a distance of at least one foot (1’). Open dogs must back the draft rig a distance of at least four feet (4’). The Back-Up shall be required only once but may be used elsewhere in the draft test at the handler’s discretion.

The judge will ask the handler if they are ready for the backing exercise and then place the measuring stick. The backing exercise begins when the judge gives the **command** “Back your dog.” The measuring stick shall not be moved during the exercise. The direction of backing should be approximately straight. One (1) minute shall be allowed for the backing exercise.

If the draft rig has a locking mechanism to assist in backing, the handler must notify the judges and time will be allowed for locking and unlocking the rig. If the draft rig is a sled, toboggan, or travois not designed for backing, the backing exercise shall be performed prior to hitching by backing into position to be hitched.

Judges’ Commands to the Handler: “Back your dog(s)” and “Exercise finished.”

Failing Performance:

- Dog does not back up the required distance.
- Dog substantially changes direction while backing.
- Dog upsets draft rig.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig.
- **Leash guidance.**

Clarifying Information:

Backing: The backing exercise is judged by the distance of the draft rig's movement. Once the judge says, "Back your dog," the exercise to back the required distance has begun. Should the dog move forward, it then has that distance plus the required distance to back.

Hovering: Excessive **hovering** to force the dog backwards may be failed. A dog that must be intimidated into performing an exercise has not done so willingly.

Control With Distractions

Overview: While the team is working, two (2) distractions, one (1) primarily auditory and one (1) primarily visual, shall occur approximately ten (10) feet from the working dog. When the distraction appears, the dog may stop what it is doing and/or watch but is not allowed to divert from the course it is following or to move the draft rig if the rig is at that moment stationary. The handler may speak to the dog with instructions concerning the distraction. If the dog has stopped to watch the distraction, the handler may encourage the dog to proceed with the exercise. When the distraction has passed, the handler may instruct the dog to continue the exercise it may have stopped.

Distractions are to be arranged at the discretion of the Draft Test Committee and should be distractions that might occur in everyday situations. Judges must approve the distractions prior to the start of judging. Stewards perform distractions under the direction of judges.

Possible Appropriate Distractions:**Auditory**

- Ringing bell
- Car or bicycle horn
- Crinkly food bag
- Musical instrument
- Radio
- Banging pans
- Squeaky toys

Visual

- Another animal on leash
- Ball or toy being thrown
- Person riding a bicycle
- Person on horseback
- Waving flag or blanket
- Opening/closing umbrella

Failing Performance:

- Dog changes direction in response to a distraction.
- Dog moves a stationary draft rig in response to a distraction.
- Dog chases distraction.
- Dog is fearful of distraction.
- Dog upsets draft rig.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig.
- **Leash guidance.**
- Dog barks out of control or shows aggression.
- Dog refuses to resume the exercise it was performing after the distraction is gone.
- Dog gives a failing performance in reaction to a naturally occurring distraction, even though the dog passes the official distractions.

Loading and Unloading

Overview: The team shall **halt**. The dog must **wait** in a stand, sit, or down position. The individual dogs of a Brace may be left in different positions. When the handler indicates readiness, a steward approaches, greets the handler, gives the handler a lightweight load (e.g., a blanket), and departs. The handler secures the load to the draft rig. The team then pulls the load to another part of the ring where they again **halt**. The dog must again **wait**, as above. When the handler indicates readiness, a steward approaches, greets the handler, greets, and pats the dog, receives the load from the handler, and departs. If the load should shift the handler may stop to reposition and secure the load.

Judges' Commands to the Handler May Include: "Halt," "Load your draft rig," "Forward," and "Unload your draft rig."

Failing Performance:

- Dog does not **halt** on **command**.
- Dog does not **wait**.
- Dog refuses to pull loaded draft rig.
- Load falls off of draft rig.
- Dog does not **wait** when greeted and patted.
- Dog shows aggression or shyness when greeted and patted.
- Dog upsets draft rig.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig.
- **Leash guidance.**

Group Stay

Overview: The dogs demonstrate their ability to remain on an off leash **stay** while hitched to loaded draft rigs. This is a group exercise.

- A group is a minimum of one (1) or maximum of six (6) teams.
- A team that has withdrawn from any portion of the test may not participate in the Group Exercises (Group **Stay** and Freight Haul).
- Novice and Novice Brace teams may be combined; Open and Open Brace teams may be combined.

Novice Draft and Brace Novice Draft: The handler stands across the ring from the dog.

Open Draft and Brace Open Draft: The handler is out of sight.

The handler is responsible for the proper loading of the draft rig. (See Freight Haul Load and Weights.) Stewards/volunteers may assist under the handler's direction. Judges must confirm the proper freight load from the Data Worksheet.

All teams come in on lead and before leaving the ring, the judges will **command** the Open teams to remove their leads.

Dogs may be gently placed in a stand, sit, or down. Draft rig shafts may be adjusted for the dog's comfort. **Leashes** are placed in the rig. The **stay command** and/or **signal** is given once, and no other **commands** or **signals** may be given during this exercise. The **Stay** is for three (3) minutes. The handlers shall return to the dog's side.

Judges' Commands to the Handlers: "Are you ready?," "Position your dogs for the **Stay**," "Leave your dogs," "Return to your dogs," and "Exercise finished."

Failing Performance:

- Handler gives more than one **Stay command**.
- Dog changes position e.g., from a down to a sit or a stand.
- Dog moves out of place.
- Dog barks or whines repeatedly.
- Rough placement of dog.
- Dog is incorrectly harnessed or hitched.

Distance Freight Haul

Overview: The teams traverse an outdoor Freight Haul course (FH) with the dogs hauling loaded draft rigs. This is a group exercise.

- A group is a minimum of one (1) or maximum of six (6) teams.
- The FH is a half-mile course, beginning and ending in the ring.
- The run order will be determined by the judges.
- All teams come in on lead and before leaving the ring, the judges will **command** the Open teams to remove their leads.
- All teams leave the ring on lead after the exercise is finished.
- Judges must confirm the proper freight load.
- Stewards will assist on the FH as needed/determined by the judges.

A half-mile course, beginning and ending in the ring, is traversed over the natural terrain of the area, ideally including uphill and downhill slopes, and changes of terrain. The judges must accompany the teams. The judges have the authority to stop the exercise if the load is too great for the dog under the working conditions. Only with the approval of a judge may the handler **physically guide** the dog and/or draft rig in unusual trail conditions. Only with the approval of a judge may a team pass another team.

Control is an important part of this exercise. Handlers should be prepared to slow down or stop and **wait** at the request of a judge or to remain part of a group. Any narrow areas on the FH, such as between trees or through gates, must be as wide as or wider than the widest measurement recorded during the Equipment Check plus twelve inches (12"). Test committees should be aware of this when laying out the FH and judges should watch for this when inspecting the FH prior to judging.

Failing Performance:

- Handler loads the draft rig in a manner that causes it to become significantly unbalanced when moving.
- Load exceeds the dog's capacity to pull comfortably and safely.
- Dog upsets draft rig.
- Handler **physically guides** the dog and/or draft rig without judge approval.
- Dog refuses to move the loaded draft rig.
- Dog refuses to accompany handler.
- Team does not complete the course.
- **Leash guidance.**
- Dog or draft rig collides with any object.
- Dog is incorrectly harnessed or hitched prior to the freight haul.
- Cart isn't loaded with the proper amount of weight.

Freight Haul Load and Weights

- **Novice Draft:** Each dog must pull twenty (20) pounds.
- **Brace Novice Draft:** Each Brace must pull forty (40) pounds.
- **Open Draft:** Each dog must pull its own weight rounded down to the nearest multiple of ten, or sixty (60) pounds, whichever is greater. (See Table 1 – Calculating Freight Weight for Open Classes.)
- **Brace Open Draft:** Each Brace must pull the sum of the weights that the individual dogs would pull in Open Draft.

The Practical Draft Work exercises may not be performed with the Freight Haul load. No person or animal may serve as a freight load.

Table 1 – Calculating Freight Weight for Open Classes

	Open		Open Brace
Weight Basis	Based on dog's weight		Based on dog's weight
Weight Amount	The dog's weight rounded down to the nearest multiple of ten or sixty (60) pounds, whichever is greater.		Sum of the weights that the individual dogs must pull in Open Draft.
Calculating Weight Amount	Dog's Weight (lbs.) Up to 69 70 – 79 80 – 89 90 – 99 100 – 109 110 – 119 120 – 129	Load (lbs.) 60 (min.) 60 70 80 90 100 110 120	Example (based on open scale) Dog 1: 80–89 lbs., carries 80 lbs. Dog 2: 100–109 lbs., carries 100 lbs. Team carries 180 lbs.
Acceptable Weights	Weight of load must be verifiable with a scale. Examples include but are not limited to poundage-annotated weights, soft kettlebell weights, bags/packages of product (e.g., bird seed, bottled water, kitty litter), milk can filled with sand, etc.		
Misc. Weight Information	Weight amounts must be as stipulated. They may not be under or exceed the required amount. They must also be stable and secure within the rig.		

Other Rules for Handlers

Timeliness: Teams must be present with their equipment for their scheduled Equipment Check or forfeit their entry. Judges are not responsible for waiting for any handler or dog.

Leashes: Dogs must be kept on leash except when in the ring and must be brought into and taken out of the ring on leash, except that Open teams leave and return to the ring off leash for the Freight Haul. Dogs must be kept on leash when entering the ring for the Group exercises and to receive awards. *When entering and leaving the ring the leash may be attached to the collar, a D-ring on the harness, or a coupler.*

Multiple Commands: Multiple **commands**, **signals**, and verbal praise may be used in all the exercises of the draft test, except as specified. *Between exercises verbal and gentle physical praise are allowed.*

Food and Toys: The carrying of food or toys during any draft test exercise shall result in a failing performance.

Handlers: *Dogs may have a different handler for the group exercises.*

Control Outside of Ring: All entered dogs must be leashed or contained when not competing.

Training on the Grounds: Training on the draft test grounds is not permitted. Dogs, entered or not entered, may be hitched to draft rigs to aid in unloading and transporting equipment from vehicles to the competition area, as this is a typical and practical application of draft work.

Fouling the Ring or Freight Haul: A dog that fouls the ring or the Freight Haul course receives a failing mark.

Warm-Up: Entered teams are allowed to warm-up on leash and not hitched to a draft rig prior to the ring exercises. When getting ready for the group exercises dogs may be hitched to their draft rigs and warmed up on leash to verify and adjust the balance of the freight load.

Risk: The handler entering a dog in a draft test does so at his/her own risk and agrees to abide by the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations.

Responsibility: The handler is solely responsible for the dog's health, welfare, and safety. Handlers provide their own draft rigs, harnesses, Freight Haul loads, and means of securing loads. The condition of this equipment is the sole responsibility of the handler.

Classes and Titling Requirements

Qualifying Performance

Pass/Fail: A dog must pass all the exercises in a class at one draft test to qualify and earn a draft title.

Working Capacity: *While no specific time limit shall be given, except for the backing exercise, a team may be failed if it is unable, unwilling, or incapable of completing any exercise in a reasonable time period.* Teams shall be evaluated the entire time they are in the ring or on the Freight Haul and when entering and leaving the ring.

Classes

There shall be two (2) Individual Dog Classes:

- **Novice Draft:** The Novice Draft Dog (NDD) class shall be for all dogs regardless of prior titles. All exercises except the Harness and Hitch, and Group Stay are performed on leash.
- **Open Draft:** The Open Draft Dog (DD) class shall be for dogs that have earned the NDD title. All exercises are performed off leash.

There shall be two (2) Brace Classes:

- **Brace Novice Draft:** Brace Novice Draft Dog (BNDD) class shall be for dogs that have individually earned the NDD title. All exercises are the same as those of Novice Draft except there will be no Basic Control.
- **Brace Open Draft:** Brace Open Draft Dog (BDD) class shall be for dogs that have individually earned the DD title and the BNDD title. All exercises are the same as those of Open Draft.

Titles

The following titles are earned after passing the respective class:

- Novice Draft Dog (NDD) in Novice Draft.
- Draft Dog (DD) in Open Draft.
- Brace Novice Draft Dog (BNDD) in Brace Novice Draft.
- Brace Draft Dog (BDD) in Brace Open Draft.

The following titles are earned after passing the respective class five (5) times under at least seven (7) different judges:

- Advanced Novice Draft Dog (ANDD) in Novice Draft.
- Master Draft Dog (MDD) in Open Draft.
- Advanced Brace Novice Draft Dog (ABNDD) in Brace Novice Draft.
- Master Brace Draft Dog (MBDD) in Brace Open Draft.

Grand Master Draft Dog (GMDD) Title is earned when both the two (2) Advanced titles and the two (2) Master titles are earned.

Each dog earning a title shall receive a title certificate from the BMDCA.

ELIGIBILITY AND EQUIPMENT

Entry Requirements

Definitions: The term dog applies to dogs of both sexes as well as individual dogs and both dogs of a Brace. The term Brace means a handler and two (2) dogs. The term team means a handler and one (1) or two (2) dogs.

Weight Certificate: Each Open or Open Brace entry shall include the DWC Weight Certificate (“WC”) or a certificate that includes the same information that is contained in the DWC WC (available on the BMDCA website) and be signed and dated within 60 days prior to each draft test date. The handler is solely responsible for having a valid Weight Certificate. An incorrect Weight Certificate may result in the loss of any qualifying runs.

Braces: The two (2) dogs of a Brace need not be owned by the same person or by the handler. A separate entry form shall be filled out for each dog of the Brace and then submitted together.

Medical Withdrawals: A handler may withdraw a dog from a draft test for medical reasons. Entry fees shall be refunded if the dog is withdrawn before the start of the test. A veterinary certificate stating the reason for the medical withdrawal may be required at the discretion of the club.

Acceptable Entries: No entry may be accepted unless the Test Secretary receives such entry prior to the closing date and hour as published in the premium list. Only complete entries may be accepted. A complete entry includes:

- A completed Entry Form and Entry Agreement.
- Entry fee.
- Weight Certificates for Open or Open Brace entries.
- For Brace entries, separate entry forms for each dog, submitted together.
- No dog shall be entered more than once in each class.
- Any additional requirements as set forth in the premium list.

Eligibility:

Dog Breeds: Draft tests are open to all dogs, purebred, or mixed heritage, registered or listed, such as Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL), Indefinite Listing Privilege (ILP), Canine Partners or any future equivalents, with the American Kennel Club (AKC) or the Canadian Kennel Club, with the following restriction: National Specialty Draft Tests are open only to BMDs.

Age: Dogs must be at least two (2) years old on the day of the draft test.

Deaf and Blind Dogs: Deaf and/or blind dogs may enter BMDCA Draft Tests with no special accommodations.

Ineligible Dogs and Handlers:

Bitches in Season: Bitches in season are not permitted to compete. Entry fees shall be refunded. A veterinary certificate stating an entered bitch is in season at the time of the draft test may be required.

Dogs Owned by the Judges: No dog belonging wholly or in part to a Test Judge who judges, or was scheduled to judge the test, or to any member of their immediate family may compete in that test.

Officials Who May Not Handle a Team: The Test Judges and Test Secretary of Record shall not handle any dog in that test. *Note: Dog(s) owned by the Test Secretary may be shown by a handler other than the Test Secretary.*

Equipment

Draft Rig: The same draft rig must be used for all exercises. Lightweight decorations are allowed on or in the draft rig and are not considered part of the rig or load, therefore their loss or failure is of no consequence. Any rig substitution/repair after Equipment Check or between maneuvering and group exercises must be approved by the judges.

Since BMDs live in a variety of climates and perform draft work in a variety of situations, any of the following draft rigs may be used: cart, wagon, sled, toboggan, or travois. Each of these must be equipped such that the draft rig cannot run up on the dog when hauling downhill. The only acceptable Brace hitch is one dog beside the other, coupled or uncoupled.

Collars: Dogs must wear a properly fitted buckle, slip, or limited slip (martingale) style of collar. No special training collars such as electronic collars or prong collars are permitted. ID, rabies, and license tags are allowed.

Leashes: Leashes need be only of sufficient length to provide adequate **slack**. *Collar and Leash must be two (2) individual pieces.*

Cooling Coats: *Cooling Coats may be used.*

Couplers: *In Brace classes the dogs may be coupled.*

Breeching Straps: *A Breeching strap may be used in Maneuvering and/or the Group exercises (as a unit) at the sole discretion of the handler.*

JUDGES AND JUDGING GUIDELINES

Judges

All BMDCA judges (including Apprentice and Provisional Judges) must be BMDCA members in good standing.

Apprentice: A DWC approved judging applicant who is learning how to judge draft tests.

Provisional: An equal partner in the judging team who is gaining experience under the watchful and supportive eye of Mentor Judges.

Approved: A fully qualified Draft Judge.

Mentor: An Approved Judge who has both indicated a desire to take on additional educational responsibilities and demonstrated this desire through timely submissions of evaluations. A Mentor Judge must have judged at least 10 draft tests, as a BMDCA Approved Judge. Mentoring assignments must be approved by the DWC.

Emeritus: An Approved Judge who has retired and may no longer accept assignments.

Test Requirements

There shall be two (2) judges, one (1) of whom must be an Approved BMDCA Draft Judge. The other may be either an Approved BMDCA Draft Judge or a Provisional BMDCA Draft Judge. All judges must be thoroughly familiar with the current BMDCA Draft Test Regulations and AKC Booklet – Dealing with Misconduct at AKC Events.

The DWC shall maintain a list of all BMDCA Draft Judges on the BMDCA website <https://www.BMDCA.org/draft>

Becoming a Judge and Continuing Education

Judging applicants must fulfill specific pre-application requirements, submit an application, and complete Apprentice and Provisional Judging assignments. All applications, evaluations, and reports will be reviewed and evaluated for approval by the DWC Judges Committee comprised of two (2) or more DWC members.

Pre-Application Requirements:

- *Trained and titled a dog to earn a BMDCA Draft Dog title, BMDCA Brace Draft Dog title, and competed in a minimum of ten (10) BMDCA Draft Tests.*
- *Titled at least one other dog to a Novice Draft Dog and a Draft Dog or Brace Novice Draft Dog.*
- *Active in the sport for a minimum of five (5) years.*
- *Performed all of the following and at least one within the last three (3) years:*
 - *Draft Test Chair for a BMDCA Draft Test*
 - *Draft Test Head Steward for a BMDCA Draft Test*
 - *Draft Test Secretary for a BMDCA Draft Test*
- *All applicants must be BMDCA members in good standing.*

Applying to Judge:

1. A BMDCA Draft Judge Application must be obtained from the DWC Chairperson. The completed application shall contain the following:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone number
 - Email address
 - A list of BMDCA Draft titles earned by the applicant, including the date, host club, dog's call name(s) and AKC registered name
 - A list of the BMDCA Draft Tests in which the applicant has competed, including the dates and host clubs
 - A summary of the applicant's Draft experience (e.g., chair, secretary, steward; conducting workshops, seminars, or classes; etc.), including dates, host clubs, and other relevant information
 - A list of other performance titles earned by the applicant, including the date and registry.
 - A summary of other experience relevant to Draft judging skills.
 - A statement expressing why the applicant wants to become a BMDCA Draft Judge.
 - A separate sheet, requiring signature and date, with the following statement: "I understand and will respect, uphold, and be subject to the requirements of the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations."
2. The Draft Judge Application shall be returned to the DWC Chairperson within four (4) weeks of its receipt by the applicant. These signed documents shall be kept on file by the DWC for all Draft Judges.
3. The DWC Chairperson shall send prompt acknowledgment of receipt of the application.
4. Applicants approved by the DWC Judges Committee will be given an open book test on the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations. The test must be returned to the DWC within four (4) weeks of its receipt by the applicant.

In order to progress to Apprentice status 85% or more of the answers must be correct. Applicants receiving less than 85% correct answers may be asked to reapply in no less than one (1) year. Approved applicant's incorrect answers shall be discussed one-on-one with a DWC member, as an educational process and to promote consistency in judging.
5. Within four (4) weeks after receipt of the open book test, the DWC Chairperson shall notify the applicant, in writing, either of their approval as an Apprentice Judge or of the need for further preparation and reapplication.

Apprentice Judges: An Apprentice shall observe and discuss all aspects of judging a draft test with Mentor Judges and fill out a Judge's Worksheet for each team. Apprentices and Mentors shall complete the DWC-provided Self-evaluation Form and Evaluation Form respectively after each assignment. All expenses of the Apprentice are the responsibility of the Apprentice.

An Apprentice Judge Must:

- Complete a minimum of three (3) apprentice judging assignments, each with two (2) Mentor Judges. Of these assignments, at least two (2) shall have different host clubs. The Apprentice is responsible for arranging these assignments through the DWC.
- Apprentice under at least four (4) different Mentors.
- Design and submit two (2) Maneuvering course layouts to the Mentors, at least two (2) weeks prior to each draft test, for evaluation and discussion.
- Conduct Draft workshops, seminars, and/or classes with a minimum of fifteen (15) or more different teams.
- Judge no fewer than ten (10) different teams at a Draft Match with an Approved Judge. The Apprentice and a Mentor shall score and discuss each team. The Apprentice shall submit a Self-Evaluation Form plus both sets of Judging Worksheets to the DWC within ten days of completion of the apprentice assignment. The Mentor shall submit the Apprentice Evaluation Form.
- Receive positive evaluations. All evaluations shall be sent to the DWC within ten (10) days of the assignment. Evaluations shall be kept on file and applicants may request copies of their evaluations.
- Within ten (10) days of the Apprentice assignment submit a Judge's Report to the DWC.

Within four (4) weeks of completion of the Apprentice requirements, the DWC Chairperson shall notify the Apprentice, in writing (communication may be done electronically), of approval as a Provisional Judge or of the need for further Apprentice experience.

Provisional Judges: A Provisional Judge shall have equal responsibility with a Mentor Judge in judging and shall actively participate in all aspects of judging, including Maneuvering course layout, Freight Haul evaluation, Equipment Check(s), briefings, course walk-throughs, paperwork, and calling commands for a minimum of half the teams at the test.

Provisional and Mentor Judges shall complete the DWC-provided Self-Evaluation Form and Evaluation Form respectively after each assignment.

A Provisional Judge Must:

- Complete a minimum of three (3) Provisional judging assignments with a Mentor Judge. Of these Provisional assignments, at least three (3) shall have different host clubs.
- For Provisional and Apprentice assignments combined, be mentored by at least six (6) different Mentors.
- Design and submit two (2) Maneuvering course layouts to the Mentor at least two (2) weeks prior to each Test for use at the Test.
- Receive a positive evaluation of the Provisional judging skills and abilities. All evaluation forms shall be sent to the **DWC** within ten (10) days of the assignment. Evaluations shall be kept on file and applicants may request copies of their evaluations.
- Within ten (10) days of the Provisional Judging assignment submit a Judge's Report of the Provisional assignment to the **DWC** for evaluation and approval.

Within four (4) weeks of completion of the **Provisional Judge** requirements, the **DWC** Chairperson shall notify the **Provisional Judge**, in writing, of approval as a BMDCA Draft Judge or of the need for further Provisional experience.

Approved Judges: Must be a BMDCA Member in good standing. One (1) year following approval, and every three (3) years thereafter, the Judge must complete an open book test covering the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations. When requested by the **DWC** to complete an open book test, the Judge must complete the test satisfactorily (85% correct answers) within 60 days or prior to the Judge's next judging assignment. Failure to complete an open book test as requested may result in suspension of judging privileges.

Emeritus Judges who wish to return to Approved Status must get the approval of the Judges Committee/**DWC**. The requirements to return will vary depending on the situation and may include reapplying to become a Judge.

Continuing Education – Open Book Test: The open book test required of applicants and Approved BMDCA Draft Judges, shall consist of objective multiple choice, yes/no, and short essay questions. Incorrectly answered questions shall be returned to a Judge for further consideration and resubmission, after which incorrect answers shall be discussed one-on-one with a **DWC** member. The goal is education and promoting standardized judging.

Judges Comportment

All BMDCA Draft Judges in attendance at a BMDCA Draft Test, whether judging, exhibiting, working, or spectating, shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner.

Standardized Judging

Standardized judging is of great importance. Judges are not permitted to change the exercises. In no case shall the Judges add, delete, or change any requirements of the draft tests.

Pre-Judging Responsibilities

- **Responsibilities:** Judges are responsible for establishing the Maneuvering course, approving the Freight Haul course, and conducting the Equipment Check.
- **Explanation of Ring Procedure:** Immediately prior to the start of judging, the Judges shall explain ring procedures, and walk the Maneuvering and Freight Haul courses with all stewards and interested handlers. Handlers are not required to attend, but the walk-through may or may not be repeated at the Judges' discretion.

Judging Guidelines

Pass/Fail: All judging is on a pass/fail basis.

Decisions: Two (2) judges evaluate the teams. Judges shall reach a mutual decision regarding the passing or failing performance of each team. Judges' decisions are final in all cases.

Excusing a Team: The judges must excuse any dog that attempts to attack any person in the ring. The judges must excuse a dog that attacks another dog or that appears dangerous to other dogs. The judges must excuse any dog that is lame or appears to pull weight in excess of its ability, any handler who willfully interferes with another team, any handler who abuses their dog. A judge marking an excused team must state the reason in the Judges' Report.

Behavior: Any display of fear by the dog or any uncontrolled behavior of a dog such as snapping, barking, or running away from its handler, whether it occurs before, during, or between exercises, must be penalized according to the seriousness of the behavior, and the judge may expel or excuse the dog from further competition in the class.

Equipment: The judges may excuse any team whose equipment is inadequate or faulty.

Group Exercises: A minimum of one (1) or maximum of six (6) teams may be judged together in the group exercises. Novice and Novice Brace teams may be combined, Open and Open Brace teams may be combined.

Evaluations: Dogs shall be judged for willingness, ability, enthusiasm, naturalness as a team, and smoothness of performance. Upon completion of all exercises, each handler shall receive a written evaluation from both judges of the team's performance in each exercise. Judges are encouraged to discuss evaluations with the exhibitors.

Test Reports

Required Judges' Test Reports:

- The day of the test, Judges must complete and sign the Draft Test Judges' Report which the Draft Test Secretary must return to the DWC Chairperson.
- Each Judge must submit a Draft Judge's Report to the DWC Chairperson and the Draft Test Chair within ten (10) days after each test at which they officiate. Judges' Reports shall include:
 - Name of host club.
 - Date and location of test.
 - Number of entries with class breakdowns.
 - Number of absentees.
 - Number of passes for each class.
 - Comments on the most common causes of failure, unusual incidents, and disciplinary incidents.
 - *Any other comments that are beneficial to the judging community.*

ADMINISTRATION

Application to Hold a Draft Test

BMDCA Approval: Written approval by the BMDCA DWC must be obtained to hold a draft test at which dogs earn BMDCA Draft Titles. Only the BMDCA and its recognized regional clubs may sponsor draft tests.

Table 2 – Draft Test Application

	Key Information
Downloadable Form	Available on the BMDCA website, Draft page: https://www.BMDCA.org/draft
Required Information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name of the draft test sponsoring club 2. Date of the proposed draft test 3. Closing date, which shall be a minimum of 10 days prior to the test 4. Name and address of the selected site 5. Whether this is a BMD-only or all-eligible dog draft test 6. Test Limit (number of entrants) 7. Names of the two (2) Judges 8. Name, address, phone number, and email address of the Draft Test Secretary 9. Names of additional Draft Test Committee members 10. Certification that all BMDCA Draft Test Regulations will be followed 11. Guarantee that all equipment, personnel, and other required provisions will be available at the draft test
Required Signatures	Draft Test Chairperson and Draft Test Secretary
Fee	A BMDCA-approved administrative fee. Amount listed on the downloadable form. Payable to the BMDCA. Fee is waived for a draft test held in conjunction with the BMDCA National Specialty.
Filing Time Requirements	Application to hold a draft test must be made at least six (6) months prior to the date of the proposed draft test.
Time Requirements for DWC Review and Approval	DWC shall communicate approval or rejection of the application to the Draft Test Chairperson within thirty (30) days of receipt of the completed application.
Governing Draft Regulations	Tests shall be held under the BMDCA Draft Regulations in effect at the time of approval.

Table 3 – Required Draft Test Forms

Required Forms	Source	Additional Information
1. Judging Worksheets	Mailed to the secretary by the DWC or printed by the hosting club	Glossary
2. Data Worksheet	<p align="center">Downloadable Available online https://www.BMDCA.org/draft</p>	Glossary
3. Judges' Report		
4. Draft Test Final Report		
5. Apprentice and Provisional Judge Evaluation Report		

**Draft Test Committee Roles, Requirements,
Duties, and Responsibilities**

Official BMDCA Representatives

The Draft Test Committee shall act as official representatives of the BMDCA and ensure the enforcement of these Draft Test Regulations. Any violations of these Draft Test Regulations must be reported by the Draft Test Committee to the DWC in writing and be included with the Draft Test Report.

Draft Test Committee

The Draft Test Committee of the sponsoring club shall consist of a minimum of three (3) people, one of whom shall be named Chairperson.

The Draft Test Committee shall appoint a Draft Test Secretary.

Both the Draft Test Chairperson and Secretary must be members in good standing of the BMDCA.

The Draft Test Committee must provide reasonable choices for the Freight Haul. The judges shall determine the Freight Haul course.

The Draft Test Committee shall publish a premium list after receiving approval to hold a draft test. The premium list shall be submitted to the DWC for approval prior to publication.

Draft Test Secretary

A Draft Test Secretary “Secretary” must be a member in good standing of the BMDCA. The Draft Test Committee may appoint different secretaries of record for each test. A Secretary designated by the Draft Test Committee shall receive all entries.

Within four (4) days after the test’s closing date the designated Secretary shall notify each entrant of the status of their entry and confirm the test date, site, judges, and Equipment Check time.

At the draft test, the Secretary of record shall have available for inspection:

1. BMDCA Draft Test Regulations
2. BMDCA Constitution and Bylaws
3. Completed entry form for each exhibitor
4. *AKC Booklet – Dealing with Misconduct at AKC Events*
5. Copies of the BMDCA Misconduct Report and associated forms.

The Secretary is responsible for sending all test materials to the DWC Chairperson, or assigned representative, within ten (10) days following the draft test. These include:

1. Judges’ Worksheets
2. Data Worksheets
3. Judges’ Report
4. Draft Test Final Report
5. Reports on test violations including dog and handler violations
6. One (1) marked catalog with move-ups clearly marked
7. Complete entry forms (including Weight Certificates)
8. Diagrams of the Maneuvering

Premium List Requirements

Resources: Instructions for premium lists and entry forms and the Premium List Template, visit <https://www.BMDCA.org/draft>.

Required content:

- Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America Draft Test
- Entrants are responsible for obtaining the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations and being familiar with them. Regulations may be downloaded from www.BMDCA.org at no charge and, if available, may be ordered from BMDCA Ways and Means (fee applies)”
- *A DWC Approved Weight Certificate (WC) form is included in this premium list. This form (or a certificate that includes the same information) must be used for all entries that require a WC*
- Name of test-giving club
- Date and location of the draft test
- Entry Fee

- Statement “This is a BMD-Only or All-Eligible Dog Draft Test”
- List of the officers and board of directors of the test-giving club
- List of the members of the Draft Test Committee, including address, phone, and email for the Secretary
- The names of the Judges
- Name, address, and telephone number of the Draft Test Veterinarian
- List of the classes offered
- Test limit
- Closing date and time followed by the statement, ...after which time entries cannot be accepted, cancelled, or altered, except as specifically allowed in the current BMDCA Draft Test Regulations.
- Refund Policy for bitches in season and injured dogs
- BMDCA Draft Test Entry Form, which includes the following:
 - Name of the test-giving club
 - Test date
 - Closing date and time followed by the statement, ... after which time entries cannot be accepted, cancelled, or altered, except as specifically allowed in the current BMDCA Draft Test Regulations.
 - Address where entries shall be accepted
 - Breed
 - Sex
 - Name of class entered and place for indicating whether the dog already has the title offered in the entered class
 - Place to indicate that a Weight Certificate is included for Open dogs
- Dog information:
 - Registered Name of dog
 - Call name of dog
 - Registration number and registry (see “Eligible Dogs”)
 - Dog’s Berner-Garde number (BMD’s only)
 - DNA Number (BMDCA National Specialty only)
 - Date of dog’s birth
 - Name of breeder(s)
 - Name of sire
 - Name of dam
 - Name of Owner(s)
 - Address, phone number, and email of owner(s)/co-owner(s)
- **Entry Agreement**

ENTRY AGREEMENT

I understand that the club holding this event has the right to refuse this entry. I agree that I am solely responsible for the actions of myself and the dog (“the dog”) that accompanies me in relationship to this entry.

In consideration of the acceptance of my entry and the opportunity to participate in this event, I agree to HOLD HARMLESS and INDEMNIFY the following listed parties from any claim for loss, damage, or injury alleged to have been caused directly or indirectly by my actions or by the actions of the dog in relationship to this event: the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) and the event-giving club, their members, officers, and agents; the owner and/or lessor of the premises; any provider of services at this event; any employees or volunteers of the parties listed here, and any BMDCA Draft Judge judging at this event. I personally assume all responsibility and liability for any such claim. I agree to be responsible for any loss and expense (including legal fees) incurred by any of the listed parties based on claims related in any way to my participation or the actions of the dog in relationship to this event, whether the claims are made by third parties or by myself.

Additionally, I agree to assume the sole responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury (including death) to myself or to the dog in relationship to this event. I agree to RELEASE, INDEMNIFY, and promise not to sue the parties listed above for any such loss, damage or injury to myself or the dog, regardless of the cause, and whether or not the loss, damage or injury may have been caused by the negligence of the listed parties.

I AGREE THAT ANY CAUSE OF ACTION, CONTROVERSY, OR CLAIM ARISING OUT OF OR RELATED TO THE ENTRY, EXHIBITION, OR ATTENDANCE AT THE EVENT SHALL BE SETTLED BY ARBITRATION PURSUANT TO THE APPLICABLE RULES OF THE AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION. HOWEVER, PRIOR TO ARBITRATION ALL APPLICABLE BMDCA BYLAWS, RULES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES MUST FIRST BE FOLLOWED AS SET FORTH IN THE BMDCA CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS, RULES, REGULATIONS, PUBLISHED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES.

In consideration of the acceptance of this entry, I agree to abide by rules and Draft Regulations of the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) in effect at the time of this BMDCA Draft Test and by any additional rules appearing in the premium list for this event. I certify and represent that the dog entered is not a hazard to persons or other dogs. I also certify that all the information I provide with this entry is true and correct. This entry is submitted for acceptance on the foregoing representation and Entry Agreement. I agree to conduct myself in accordance with all such Rules and Regulations (including all provisions applying to discipline) and to abide by any decisions made in accord with them.

Submitting this form constitutes your agreement to the terms of the Entry Agreement.

Equipment and Supplies

The sponsoring club shall provide the following:

- Ring gates, ropes, fencing, or other barriers necessary to define a ring with a minimum of ten thousand (10,000) square feet with no dimension less than seventy-five (75) feet.
- A minimum of four (4) markers to define the Maneuvering course. The markers should be large enough to be clearly visible to both handlers and spectators.
- A gate or movable obstacle, ideally an object that might be encountered in everyday carting situations.
- A minimum of two (2) markers to define a narrow area. *The markers must be three to four feet (3-4') in height and length.*
- A lightweight load (e.g., a blanket).
- A four-foot stick or dowel clearly marked one foot from one end, for measuring the Back-Up exercise.
- A tape measure at least six feet (6') in length.
- A scale (such as a bathroom scale) which can weigh at least one hundred fifty (150) pounds, for verifying freight load weights.
- Two (2) distractions, one (1) primarily auditory and one (1) primarily visual.
- A timing device for Group Stays and the Back-Up.
- Markers for the Freight Haul course.
- Draft rig numbers and draft rig parking space numbers.
- A catalog identifying each entered dog, which includes registered name, call name, registration number, Berner-Garde number, breed, sire, dam, date of birth, sex, breeder, owner. For Open classes (and novice teams that include a Weight Certificate to indicate a possible move-up) the catalog shall include the weight the dog(s) must pull in the Freight Haul.
- A designated area near the ring for the draft equipment and Freight Haul loads of all entrants.

All such equipment and loads shall remain in this area pending use in the test.

Recommended:

- A system by which spectators may be silently informed whether each team passed or failed each exercise.
- A diagram of the Maneuvering course clearly posted at ringside.

Stewards

Six to eight (6-8) stewards shall be provided to assist the judges. The judges are in sole charge of the draft test area until their assignment is completed. Stewards may act only on the judges' instructions. Stewards will assist on the Freight Haul as needed/determined by the judges.

Veterinarian

The services of a veterinarian must be available during a draft test. The name and address of an available veterinarian must be listed in the catalog along with driving directions from the test site.

Prizes

Test-sponsoring clubs are encouraged to offer ribbons and/or trophies for passing teams. Any such ribbon prizes and/or trophies must be listed in the premium list.

Notification of Changes

If the Draft Test Committee is informed at any time prior to the opening of its draft test that an advertised judge will not fulfill their engagement to judge, then the Draft Test Committee shall substitute a judge. The substitute judge must be approved by the DWC Chairperson who shall be notified. In the event of an emergency on the day of the test, where one of the judges is unable to judge, a good faith effort shall be made to contact the DWC Chair before the test committee makes a substitution.

Limitation of Entries

The Draft Test Committee establishes the limit for the total test entry. Test limits are subject to approval by the DWC. Entrants must notify the Draft Test Secretary if a dog has a title or advanced/master title in the entered class, including if the title or advanced/master title is earned after the entry has been submitted and/or after entries have closed.

If entries exceed the test limit, entry priority shall be given in the following order:

1. Untitled BMDs
 2. Titled BMDs without Advanced/Master titles in the entered class
 3. Titled BMDs with Advanced/Master titles in the entered class
 4. Untitled other dogs
 5. Titled other dogs without Advanced/Master titles in the entered class
 6. Titled other dogs with Advanced/Master titles in the entered class
- * For Brace teams, the dog with the lowest level title in the entered class determines the team's priority. If a Brace has a BMD and a non-BMD, it is considered a "BMD team" for the above.

For the first group that exceeds the test limit, a random draw shall determine which entries in that group are in the test and which are alternates. A random draw is then held for each remaining group. Entries exceeding the limit are added to the Alternate List in the order drawn.

In the event that a dog earns its title or advanced/master title after the draw and continues competing in that class (i.e., does not "Move-up"), its test priority shall be the last dog of whichever above group (#1-#6) it now belongs in. This may allow the dog to continue competing in the entered class or, if a random draw was needed for that group because the test limit was exceeded, move the dog to the Alternate List at the end of its respective group.

Running Order

For the dogs entered in the test, *a separate random draw shall determine the running order for each class* (Novice/Novice Brace are combined– Open and Open Brace are combined). If there is an Alternate List, those entries will follow after the entered dogs in the same order as drawn for the Alternate List.

Example: If a dog earns a title in its entered class after the draw and wishes to still show in that class, its test priority becomes the last dog of whichever group to which it now belongs. If a BMD earned a NDD after the draw, its entry priority is now that of Group 2, “Titled BMDs without Advance/Master titles in the entered class.”

If all dogs in Group 2 made it into the test, that BMD may show in the Novice class. However, if some dogs in Group 2 were alternates, this BMD is now the last alternate from Group 2 and ahead of the alternates from Group 3 etc.

Final Jurisdiction

During the planning and conducting of a draft test all matters not related to the judging shall be resolved by the Draft Test Committee by direct reference to these Regulations. All unusual situations and their resolutions must be reported in the Draft Test Final Report. Violations of the Draft Test Regulations shall be addressed under the Misconduct Disciplinary Procedure.

Misconduct Disciplinary Procedure

The BMDCA and the DWC take dog aggression very seriously and shall investigate and penalize such incidences as appropriate.

The following procedures apply to incidents at BMDCA Draft Tests involving dog aggression or other inappropriate behavior by dogs and/or handlers/owners. Any incident involving dog aggression or inappropriate behavior by dogs and/or handlers/owners must be reported and will be reviewed and investigated by the DWC. Incidents outside the ring may be reported by anyone involved or who witnessed the incident. Reports can be made to any one of the following: Draft Secretary, Draft Chair, member(s) of the Draft Committee, Judge(s) or the DWC Chair. Incidents in the ring or on a freight haul will be reported by the Judge(s) directly to the DWC Chair. Reports should be made as soon as possible, preferably on the day of the incident or the last day of the test weekend.

Should an incidence be deemed severe enough by the judges to ban a dog or handler from competing for the remainder of the draft test(s), the judges may enforce such discipline. An attempt shall be made to contact the DWC Chair before banning. A report must be written up at the end of the day.

Responses/Penalties for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *A warning letter from the DWC to owner/handler advising of inappropriate behavior.*
- *Ban dog and/or owner/handler from BMDCA Draft Test competition for a specified period.*
- *If a dog and/or owner/handler is banned from BMDCA Draft Test competition for a specified period of time, the DWC may also require a reinstatement process.*
- *The DWC's recommendation will be forwarded to the BMDCA Board for approval.*
- *The recommendation agreed upon by the BMDCA Board and the DWC will be communicated to the owner/handler.*

Procedures for Alterations or Additions to the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations

All proposed alterations or additions to the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations shall occur through the following procedures:

1. The BMDCA DWC defines the scope of the projected changes to the Draft regulations and the goals.
2. The DWC appoints DWC member(s) to direct the project, who may in turn select additional persons to be members of the Project Committee, which reports to the DWC Chair.
3. The Project Committee drafts an outline of proposed alterations or additions, which may or may not be in existing Draft Regulations.
4. Request for Comment (RFC) containing the results from #3 is communicated to all active BMDCA Draft Judges (including Apprentice and Provisional Judges) requesting feedback and comments with a four (4) week response time.
5. The Project Committee incorporates the comments and suggestions from the RFC process into the project outline and prepares the complete proposal in regulation language.
6. RFC containing the results from #4 and #5 is communicated to all active BMDCA Draft Judges (including Apprentice and Provisional Judges) requesting feedback and comments with a four (4) week response time.
7. The Project Committee submits the entire proposal to the BMDCA membership for review and comment, with a (4) week response time.
8. The Project Committee prepares the final version and submits it to the DWC for review. The DWC submits their final version to the active judges and then to the BMDCA Board of Directors for approval and subsequent electronic and/or printed publication. The latter may be either a new edition of the BMDCA Draft Regulations or an insert. At the time of submission to the BMDCA Board, the DWC also submits its recommendation for a date when alterations/additions take effect.

9. In the event of a significant change to a proposal, that proposal alone shall be submitted to the BMDCA Judges with a two (2) week response time.
10. The approved alterations or additions take effect on the date agreed upon by the DWC and the BMDCA Board and approved by the Board. Notification of this date shall be communicated to the BMDCA membership.

Competition Site and Spectators

Site

Ring: The ring for all exercises, except the Freight Haul, shall be:

- A minimum of ten thousand (10,000) square feet with no dimension less than seventy-five feet (75’).
- The ring area should be flat and shall be defined by ring gates, ropes, fencing, or other barriers.
- The ring entrance shall be a minimum of six feet (6’) wide or twelve inches (12”) wider than the widest measurement recorded during the Equipment Check, whichever is the widest.

Only members of the Draft Test Committee, judges and stewards shall have unlimited access to the ring. Handlers are permitted in the ring for the walk-through. Teams are permitted in the ring only when they are called for testing. Spectators are not allowed in the ring at any time.

Maneuvering Course: The Maneuvering course shall be clearly defined with markers and may include signage directing handlers through the course.

Freight Haul Course: The half mile Freight Haul course must be clearly marked and should ideally include both uphill and downhill slopes and changes of terrain.

Spectators

Applause: Because BMDs working under natural conditions may often be in places where there are a variety of everyday sounds, spectators are encouraged to applaud and cheer for the performing dog. Spectators and dogs not entered are not to interfere with the performance in any way. Judges’ discretion is to be used to determine interference.

Dogs Not Entered: All dogs not entered in the draft test must be leashed or contained at all times.

Procedures and Scheduling

Equipment Check

Judges shall check all draft equipment, collars, leashes, couplers, cooling coats, breeching straps, and weights to be used in the draft test. Measurements may be made by judges, committee members, or stewards. A judge must supervise all measurements. Dogs shall not be required at the Equipment Check. After the Equipment Check, no alterations or substitutions may be made to the equipment without the approval of a judge, with the exception that the handler may remove collar and lead from the draft rig.

The following shall be recorded on the Draft Test Data Worksheet:

- Class
- Width of the widest recorded part of the draft rig or the hitched dog(s)
- Weight of dog(s) (Open classes only)
- Weight of load. Opened or non-commercially labeled loads shall be weighed

Multiple Equipment Checks may be held at the host club's discretion, with the judges' pre-approval. Each team will be assigned to a specific Equipment Check based on the judging schedule. The Test Secretary shall notify each exhibitor of the time of their Equipment Check when verifying their entry after the closing date.

Order of Group Exercises

The Freight Haul shall immediately follow the Group Stay exercise and shall start and finish in the ring. Draft Test Committees should bear this in mind when laying out the ring location and Freight Haul course.

Scheduling

The Draft Test Committee should plan for the judging of three (3) to four (4) teams per hour. This figure includes time for the Group Stay and the Freight Haul.

Move-ups

Move-ups to a more advanced class are allowed after the close of entries under the following conditions:

- A dog may be moved up from one individual class to another or from one Brace class to another, but not between individual and Brace classes.
- The weight certificate(s) must be included with the Novice entry with notification to the Test Secretary that a move-up is possible.
- The weight of the Freight Haul load must be printed in the catalog.
- The Test Secretary must be notified of the move-up no later than thirty (30) minutes prior to the first Equipment Check. The Test Secretary shall clearly mark the move-up in the catalog for the DWC.

DRAFT REGULATIONS GLOSSARY

Term	Definition	Page First Used
<u>ABNDD</u>	Advanced Brace Novice Draft Dog.	17
<u>AKC</u>	American Kennel Club.	3
<u>Alternate</u>	A team that may compete if a slot becomes available because a team is absent or unable to compete.	32
<u>ANDD</u>	Advanced Novice Draft Dog.	17
<u>Apprentice and Provisional Judge Evaluation Report</u>	Filled out by the Mentor Judge officiating at the draft test and returned to the BMDCA Draft Work Committee within ten days.	27
<u>Apprentice Judge</u>	A DWC approved judging applicant who is learning how to judge and when in the ring, works with two (2) Approved Judges.	21
<u>Approved Judge</u>	A fully qualified Draft Judge.	20
<u>Basic Control</u>	Prior to hitching, the dog demonstrates willingness to work with and respond to the handler while in the vicinity of the draft equipment. The team is to demonstrate walking under control with changes of direction and speed, and a recall to the vicinity of the draft rig.	7
<u>BMDCA</u>	Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America, Inc.	3
<u>Body Blocking</u>	Since the handler may work in front of the dog, the handler may step in front of the dog to command the dog to halt or change direction. However, if the dog collides with the handler, attempts to go around the handler, or if the handler is forced to back up, the dog should be failed for lack of control, no halt, or body blocking.	10
<u>BDD</u>	Brace Draft Dog In Open Brace.	17
<u>BNDD</u>	Brace Novice Draft Dog.	17
<u>Brace</u>	A handler and two (2) dogs.	8
<u>Brace Novice Draft</u>	Brace Novice Draft shall be for dogs that have individually earned the NDD title.	8
<u>Brace Open Draft</u>	Brace Open Draft shall be for dogs that have individually earned the DD title and the BNDD title.	8

Term	Definition	Page First Used
Catalog	Identifies each entered dog, including registered name, call name, registration number, Berner-Garde number, breed, sire, dam, date of birth, sex, breeder, owner. For Open classes (and novice teams that include a Weight Certificate to indicate a possible move-up) the catalog shall show the weight the dog(s) must pull in the Freight Haul.	28
Change of Pace	A pace distinctly different and slower than the pace immediately preceding and followed by a return to the preceding pace.	7
Collars	Dogs must wear a properly fitted buckle, slip, or limited slip (martingale) style of collar.	19
Command	A verbal order which may begin or end with the dog's call name.	7
Command and/or Signal	Handler may give a command, a signal, or both a command and signal simultaneously. (See also Signal)	7
Data Worksheet	A worksheet of rig widths and Freight Haul load descriptions and weights filled out by the Judges or representatives.	13
DD	Draft Dog in Open Draft	17
Dog	Applies to dogs of both sexes, as well as individual dogs and both dogs of a Brace.	7
Draft Rig	Cart, wagon, travois, or toboggan.	7
Draft Test Committee	Consists of three sponsoring club people, one of whom shall be Chairperson of the Draft Test Committee.	11
Draft Test Final Report	Test summary and checklist filled out by the Draft Test Secretary.	27
Draft Test Secretary	Receives all entries, then notifies all entrants of their status and confirms test date, site, judges, and Equipment Check time.	20
DWC	BMDCA Draft Work Committee	18
Emeritus Judge	An Approved Judge who has retired and may no longer accept assignments.	23
Entry Agreement	Describes the terms and requirements agreed to by each competitor entering a draft test.	18
Equipment Check	Judges shall check all draft equipment, collars, leashes, couplers, and weights.	14

Term	Definition	Page First Used
Explanation of Ring Procedure	Immediately prior to the start of judging, the judges shall explain ring procedures, and walk the Maneuvering and Freight Haul Courses with all stewards and interested handlers.	24
Fouling the Ring or Freight Haul	A dog is considered to have fouled the ring or freight haul if it urinates or defecates during the test.	16
Freight Haul Course	A half-mile course, beginning and ending in the ring, which must be clearly marked and should ideally include both uphill and downhill slopes and changes of terrain.	13
GMDD	Grand Master Draft Dog is earned when both the two (2) Advanced titles and the two (2) Master titles are earned.	17
Halt	On the Judge's command, the handler must command the dog to stop. The dog should promptly start to respond to the handler, and the dog and the draft rig should stop within a short distance. "Halt" is the concept being judged, NOT the command. Handlers may use any commands they wish.	7
Harness and Hitch	Dog demonstrates willingness to be harnessed and hitched to the draft rig.	8
Hovering	Bending of the handler's upper body directly over the dog to force the dog backwards.	11
ILP	Indefinite Listing Privilege.	18
Immediate Family	A parent; sibling; child by blood, adoption, or marriage; spouse; domestic partners and/or their children; grandparent or grandchild.	19
Judges' Report	A pass/fail summary of each exercise for all teams, verified by each judge.	24
Judging Worksheet	The judge's evaluation of a team's performance.	22
Load	See Weight.	12
Leash Guidance	A leash "guides" the dog as the slack is reduced. A tight or taut leash is only the most extreme example of leash guidance.	7
Leashes	Needs to be of sufficient length to provide adequate slack.	7
Loose Leash	See Slack/Loose Leash	19
Maneuvering Course	Shall be clearly defined with markers and may include signage directing handlers through the course.	9

Term	Definition	Page First Used
MBDD	Master Brace Draft Dog in Brace Open Draft.	17
MDD	Master Draft Dog in Open Draft.	17
Medical Withdrawals	A handler may withdraw a dog from a draft test for medical reasons.	18
Mentor Judge	Approved Judge who has both indicated a desire to take on additional educational responsibilities and demonstrated this desire through timely submissions of evaluations.	20
Move-ups	Are allowed to a more advanced class after the close of entries under certain conditions (See Procedures and Scheduling).	28
Movable Obstacle	The dog waits while the handler opens a gate or removes an obstacle such as a tree branch or child's toy. The team then proceeds through the gate or past the obstacle. The handler may be required to close the gate or replace the obstacle.	9
Narrows	The dog maneuvers through a narrow area that is 12 inches wider than the widest recorded dimension for this team without touching the narrow area. The handler, dog, and draft rig must all pass through the narrow area.	9
NDD	Novice Draft Dog.	17
Novice Draft	The Novice Draft class shall be for all dogs regardless of prior titles. All exercises, except the Recall, Harness and Hitch, and the Group Stay are performed on leash.	7
Open Draft	The Open Draft class shall be for dogs that have earned the NDD title. All exercises are performed off- leash.	13
PAL	Purebred Alternative Listing.	18
Physically Guide	Contact of any part of the handler's body with the dog or draft rig with the intent of exerting control.	7
Practical Draft Work	The team demonstrates working ability. The team encounters situations and distractions such as might be met under everyday conditions.	9
Premium List	A document that contains the details and description of a particular draft test including time, date, location, judges, and entry requirements.	18

Term	Definition	Page First Used
Provisional Judge	An equal partner in the judging team who is gaining experience under the watchful and supportive eye of Mentor Judges.	20
RFC	Request for Comment regarding “Procedures for Alterations or Additions to the BMDCA Draft Test Regulations.”	34
Ring	The ring for all exercises, except the Freight Haul, shall be a minimum of 10,000 square feet with no dimension less than 75 feet. The ring area should be flat and shall be defined by ring gates, ropes, fencing, or other barriers. The ring entrance should be a minimum of six feet wide or twelve inches wider than the widest measurement recorded during the Equipment Check, whichever is the widest.	7
Signal	A single, continuous motion of one or more body parts which must start in and immediately return to a natural position.	7
Slack/Loose Leash	A slack or loose leash has a visible U or J shape between the dog and the handler.	19
Slow	See Change of Pace.	7
Stay or Group Stay	The dog remains in the location and position (sit, stand, comma, or down) indicated by the handler. Minor movements such as adjusting of feet or rolling to the opposite hip are acceptable. “Stay” is the concept being judged, NOT the command. Handlers may use any command they wish.	13
Team	Handler and one (1) or two (2) dogs.	7
Test Limit	Number of entrants permitted.	26
Wait	Dog remains in the same location but may shift its feet or change position (such as sit, stand, down, hip roll, etc.). “Wait” is the concept being judged, NOT the command. Handlers may use any command they wish. The position of the dog is being judged, not the position of the cart, as the cart may move when a dog changes position.	7
Walking under Control	Prior to the start of this exercise the draft rig and harness will be brought into the ring and positioned by a steward. The dog is expected to walk under control within an arm’s length of the handler at all times.	7

Term	Definition	Page First Used
Weight	The weight added to the cart for the freight haul. Weight inserts are included as part of the required weight if they are added to the cart AFTER the maneuvering course. Weight inserts that are in the cart for the maneuvering course are NOT included as part of the required weight. Live loads are not permitted.	13
Weight Certificate (WC)	A veterinarian's certificate(s) stating the dog's name and weight, including the date the dog was weighed, the vet's name/address, and be signed within 60 days prior to the draft test date.	18