

The Rules For Our Tug Towing Competitions

SAILING RULES

For teams of 2 or 3 tugs, these cover both standard and novice formats.

1. Boats used should be models of ships designed and built for the purpose of towing; deep sea, estuary, harbour and river tugs are all acceptable. (Pusher tugs may be used but must tow via a rope).
2. One tug to be attached to the bow of the tow, one to the stem. Tugs may be tethered either way round, ie. bow-bow, stern-bow etc. The third tug cannot be tethered to the tow.
3. (a)The towline length and composition are for the competitor to decide. Working winches are OK (b)The tow line must not be used to pull the tug 'tight' onto the tow
4. (a) Two tug teams may manoeuvre the tow by hull to hull contact. (b)Three tug teams, only the free running tug may use hull to hull contact to manoeuvre the tow. A tethered tug using hull contact to manoeuvre the tow will be penalised. Accidental or passive touches; for instance where a tethered tug is laying alongside the tow during manoeuvres in a confined space such as a docking area, will not be penalised.
5. The pondside inside the dock area is dead, outside the dock area the pondside is live to all tugs and tows.
6. All buoys and other artefacts used to represent hazards are live to all tugs and tows at all times.
7. All tugs and tow must sail the course as given. The third tug, if used, can work from outside a hazard but must pass through the hazard on the course as given.
8. In the event of a breakdown, including the tow rope fouling a propeller, the judge should be informed immediately, the tugs and tow will be recovered manually if necessary. When the breakdown has been corrected the round can be restarted from the position the breakdown occurred. No penalty will be awarded for a breakdown.

PENALTIES

Touch\scrape by tug\tow on any buoy 1 point

Touch\scrape by tug\tow on pondside outside dock area 1 point Tethered tugs using hull contact to manoeuvre tow (3 tugs) 3 points Sail wrong course per tug\tow 5 points

Miss a gate completely 15 points

TOWS

Team tows; standard (heavy) tows should displace between 150 to 250 pounds (70 to 115 kg), novice (light) tows should displace between 50 and 150 pounds (22 to 70 kg). Single tug tows should displace 50 to 80 pounds (22 to 36 kg). In all cases the idea is to make the tugs work, a tow which meekly follows the tug wherever it goes doesn't present the skipper or tug with any great challenge. The weight and inertia of the tow should play a role in deciding how the team

(or individuals) solve the problems which they have been set.

Tows should have sufficient freeboard, or be provided with push areas by way of a raised bulwark, so that tugs can push on the tow without the risk of the tug over-riding the tow. The tow does not have to be a ship, it can be any 'object' which could be reasonably be expected to be towed by one, two or three tugs but should have a recognisable 'bow' and 'stern' in order to avoid any confusion in scoring where the orientation of the tow is important. The tow should be provided with a bollard in the bow and a bollard in the stern for the tugs to fasten on to and these must be firmly mounted in the deck so as not to pull out with prolonged use.

The same criteria for construction applies to these bollards as it does to the towing bollards mounted in the tugs. The area around the bollards should be clear of any objects which could snag the tow ropes. It is not necessary to provide a 'bullring' in the bow of the tow or a towing fairlead in the stern.

COURSES

Should, if possible, consist of two different courses (which may be totally separate or have sections common to both), each course with its own tow. During the day all teams sail both courses. A two course format provides action throughout the day with something on the water all the time, also it ensures that in a large entry event, eg 20 teams competing, the 20th team doesn't have to wait until half past four in the afternoon to get a sail.

The course should not be an obstacle course, the tugs must be allowed the room to work in a reasonably true to prototype manner.

The courses should not contain long sections between hazards, these are merely battery killers and serve no useful purpose, usually disadvantaging the smaller boats.

Contestants should be set manoeuvrability problems where accuracy and team work are essential in order to succeed. Generally 'gates' should be 3 to 4 feet wide, but an occasional gate which is narrower is acceptable, for instance as an entrance to a dock area.

ROPES

There is no ideal length of tow rope, it is for the competitor to decide what length of rope is most suitable for his tug, the way he intends to use it, for the particular tow and course in use on the day; however measurements taken of ropes in use in team towing indicate that a length of 38" to 42" would be a good starting point.

As with rope lengths, rope compositions are for the competitor to decide. Medium weight parcels string as sold in DIV stores has been found to work satisfactorily. Floatation collars le corks, on the line to prevent the rope sinking are OK; however, floatation collars will not prevent a rope from fouling a propellor, practical experience is the only way to overcome this problem. Ropes should have a loop at each end. To fasten on to the tug, wrap the loop once round the tow 'hook'(or whatever it may be) and then bring the rope back through the tip of the loop and pull gently to tighten. On the tow, drop the loop over the bollard then wind one side of the loop round the bollard until all the slack in the loop is taken up.