Log Rolling Rules
University of Washington

Rules & Definition of Terms

A log rolling match consists of two people rolling on the same log at the same time with the objective of staying on longer than one’s opponent. The match is officiated by judges. There are two main rules in competitive log rolling: do not touch or cross the center line, and do not touch the opponent. Judges for the match will monitor the opponents and enforce the rules.

Definition of a Fall:

- Fall is the term used for scoring. The person with their foot on the log last wins the fall.

What Constitutes a Fall:

- With two people competing on the same log, the first person to lose contact with the log with both feet and subsequently falls into the water loses the fall. In most competitions you advance by winning either three out of five or two out of three falls (see also tournament formats).
- Jumping up into the air while falling off the log to prolong hitting the water, straddling, sitting, falling to both shins, and lying across the log are considered out of contact with both feet.
- Inadvertent contact (at the discretion of the judge) between two rollers on the log will result in the loss of a fall for the roller who initiated the contact.
- Deliberate contact results in the initiator being disqualified from the match.
- A roller that steps on or across the center-line (neutral zone).
- A roller purposely jumps in the water before time is started or delays the start of a match.

What Constitutes a Draw:

- A fall will be ruled a draw if the judges cannot see specific and noticeable differences in the fall. Each judge shall make a decision after a moment of recall. No discussion of the fall will take place between the judges.
- Each judge shall write down their determination on a note and hand it to the head judge. If there is the slightest doubt in the mind of the judge, it should be ruled a draw. The decision from the judges may be split, in which case the majority rules. If there is no majority decision, then it is ruled a draw.
- A draw results in a redo; it does not count as a fall. The match continues until a competitor wins the pre-determined number of falls. For example, if the score is 1-0 and a draw occurs, the match continues at 1-0, if there are multiple draws, the match continues until the majority of falls are won.

Match Procedure

- Opponents are called to the starting platform and line up to take their places on the log based upon their individual rolling preference / dominant foot strength. Note that if the competitors are of the same foot dominance (i.e. a bucking match) therefore, facing the opposite direction on the log, the loser of each fall may determine which side of the log they would like to roll on for the next fall. If the rollers are opposite foot dominance (i.e. running match) rollers backs must be facing away from the starting platform.
- The match begins and the time clock will start upon the call of “time in.”
• After each fall, rollers are allowed 30 seconds of rest on the starting platform.
• The match continues until a fall occurs or the time limit expires. See below for time limit instructions.
• If either roller falls before the match begins, s/he shall get back on the log immediately without leaving the vicinity of the starting area.
• If the judge determines that there was a quick fall after the whistle was blown, h/she may determine a “quick whistle” and restart the fall.
• A contestant may lose a fall or be disqualified for purposely jumping in the water before the time is started or for unnecessarily delaying the match. A match will be decided by the best three out of five falls.
• During a match, the Head judge should blow the whistle and stop time if the falls may occur within 10 feet of any pool edge, dock, or object that could obstruct the match or hurt the rollers. Upon hearing the whistle, rollers should carefully get off the log and get into the starting position to restart the match.
• Judges need to continue to keep the time on each fall within the match, stopping the round (fall) at one minute to remove a trainer.

**Using Key Log Trainers® in Competition**

• In general, Key Log matches begin with three Trainers. As competitors develop their skills over time, the number of Trainers can be identified prior to the match through an Ability Rating System (as described later in this section).
• If the rollers are able to roll continuously for one minute without a fall, one Trainer is removed. If there is a fall within the first minute, the match proceeds with three Trainers.
• Two Trainers, one on each end of the Key Log, is the second level. If rollers are able to roll together for one continuous minute on two Trainers, another Trainer is removed.
• One Trainer is placed in the center of the log. After one minute of continuous rolling, the Trainer is removed.
• You may find it necessary to remove more than one Trainer during a single match if the competitors surpass the one-minute time limit more than once.
• After a Trainer is removed, it is not added again during the match.

**Details for Starting the Match**

**Assisted Start** – this is the best method for less experienced rollers, starting in the water.

• For assisted starts, the log must be oriented perpendicular to the dock or pool edge for safety. In a beachfront/shoreline situation, the log is situated parallel to the shoreline with the judges standing in the water on each end.
• The log is held steady at each end by the judges while the competitors climb up and position themselves.
• Once both competitors are steady, the judge will say “Ready, Steady, Letting Go”, at which time the log will be released. The competitors begin stepping while trying to remain neutral, until the head judge determines that the log is steady and both rollers have equal control of the log, s/he will blow a whistle or call “time in” to officially start the fall (round).
If it is difficult to get a clean and fair start, the head judge may, at his/her discretion, combine the two steps above and substitute “Ready, Steady, Letting Go” with “Ready, Steady, Time In” in order to start the fall immediately upon release of the log. This is not the preferred method of starting a match.

**Pole Start** – this is the traditional method for starting a match with experienced rollers.

- Competing rollers grasp a starting pole held by the judges, step onto the log which is parallel to a pool deck or dock, and are pushed away a safe distance from the platform.
- The head judge then instructs the rollers “Ready, Steady the Log.”
- When the head judge believes the log is steady and both rollers have equal control of the log, s/he will say, “Throw your poles” and each roller must let go of their pole.
- After the poles are released and the head judge determines that the log is steady and both rollers have equal control of the log, s/he will blow a whistle or call “time in.”

**Establishing an Ability Rating System**

As the sport of Key Log Rolling continues to grow, an Ability Rating System designates the number of Key Log Trainers and/or diameter size of Key Log used when rolling against someone of the same or better ability. The goal is to have athletes beginning their matches with the number of Trainers that match their ability, rather than test out the levels to three Trainers and less during the match. This log rolling ability rating is not a ranking. Until the national rating system is established, competitors shall state their log rating at the beginning of a tournament and start accordingly.

0 rating = Can roll for 1 minute or more with another roller of equal ability without the use of Key Log Trainers.

1 rating = Can roll for 1 minute or more with another roller of equal ability using one Key Log Trainers.

2 rating = Can roll for 1 minute or more with another roller of equal ability using two Key Log Trainers.

3 rating = Can roll for 1 minute or more with another roller using three Key Log Trainers.