



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MID-UNION SLED HAULERS (M.U.S.H.) SLED DOG RACE  
(FORT CUSTER, AUGUSTA MI)**

**February 15-16, 2014**

Augusta, Mich.— Michigan’s recent snow-storms have set the stage for great mushing trails! Come see mushers race at Fort Custer Recreation Area, 5163 Fort Custer Drive, Augusta, Michigan. Events begin at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, February 15, and 10:00 a.m. Sunday, February 16 and consist of dog sledding, weight pulling, skijoring, and the 100 yard dash for our youngest mushers. Spectators are welcome to view all M.U.S.H. events free of charge. Only dogs that are racing will be permitted in the staging area, please leave other pets at home. This race is sponsored by M.U.S.H.

**Schedule of Events**

**Saturday**

9:30 am Driver’s Meeting  
11:00 am 3-Dog Class & Junior Class  
12:00 pm 5-Dog Class  
1:30 pm 7-Dog Class  
2:00 pm Ski-Joring  
2:30 pm 1-Dog Class (ages 5-12)  
3:00 pm Weight Pull

**Sunday**

10:00 am 3-Dog Class & Junior Race  
11:00 am 5-Dog Class  
12:30 pm 7-Dog Class  
1:00 pm Ski-Joring  
1:30 pm 1-Dog Class (ages 5-12)  
2:30 pm Awards Ceremony

**About Mid-Union Sled Haulers**

Mid-Union Sled Haulers, Inc. (M.U.S.H.) is a non-profit organization located in the Mid-Western U.S.A. dedicated to dog sledding on an amateur basis, for the love of their dogs and the promotion of sled dog racing as a fun, family activity. M.U.S.H. was established in 1980.

**About our Events**

*Dog Sledding*

*The most easily-identifiable form of the sport is regular dog sledding. “Mushing”, as it’s termed, requires a team of well-behaved, social athletes who relish performing with like-minded canines. Anywhere from two-to-16 dogs, or more, generally comprise most teams. Why do the dogs run and pull? Because they love it!*

*Weight Pull*

*This sport can also be traced back to early Alaskan history, when dogs were used to haul freight, mail and other heavy loads in the Last Frontier. Similar to the team racing, as teams met in local villages friendly rivalries developed into challenges to determine the best pulling dog.*

### *Skijoring*

*Originating on the other side of the world, where skis and pulks had developed as a common method of travel across the frozen landscapes of Scandinavia, skijoring is another popular dog-powered sport available at M.U.S.H. events. The desire to test dogs' abilities against others led to impromptu competitions.*

### *The 100-Yard Dash*

*The 100-yard dash is a race specifically for our up-and-coming generation of mushers. This is a supervised race, with a length of 100-yards, designed to bolster the confidence of our young members and provide them with real-life experience on a race trail. These kids are the future of our sport!*

## **Sled Dogs are Athletes**

Sled dog racing is one of North America's oldest winter sports. All races and training sessions are held in various locations throughout the State of Michigan. As an organization, we start training in September. Cooler temperatures in fall are an ideal time to optimize the dogs' physical condition and build on team commands before race season. Race season usually starts in January, ending in March.

Arctic breeds such as Alaskan Malamutes, Samoyeds and Siberian Huskies are frequently used in sled dog racing. Other breeds and crossbreeds are common, such as the Alaskan Husky (a type of dog developed based on athletic ability) and the Eurohound, which is a mix of German Short-haired Pointer, English Pointer and even Greyhound.

The dogs of today's racing teams are true athletes and share an incredible bond with their driver. Most dogs range in size from 40 to 60 pounds and are kept at an optimal, healthy weight. Drivers favor dogs that are even-tempered, gentle and able to stand the pressures of a rigorous training schedule. A sled dog may put in hundreds of miles in a training season and will be transported in vehicles to races for many thousands of miles over the course of a three-month period. The dogs, and mushers, relish their active lifestyle!

## **More Events are Listed on**

[www.midunionsledhaulers.com](http://www.midunionsledhaulers.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/MidUnionSledHaulers>

## **For Current Race Conditions**

Call our "Cold" Line at (517) 554-8465. For the safety of our athletes, animal and human alike, several factors are considered directly before an event, such as weather and trail conditions. The Cold Line is updated the Thursday before the race, confirming if the race will take place. The race chairperson can also be contacted for current conditions.

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See you on the trail!

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