

NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF SLED DOG SPORTS

LONG DISTANCE/CROSS COUNTRY RACE RULES

EFFECTIVE APRIL 1999

Based on the April 1983 version of the "Long Distance/Cross Country Race Rules" of the International Sled Dog Racing Association, Inc. The ISDRA has not amended these rules up to and including January 1994.
Amended as per the "NZFSS Amendments to ISDRA Rules and Procedures" document.

PART I - ENTRY RULES

A. ELIGIBILITY

1. ENTRIES

a. An entry for a race shall be submitted prior to the start of the race, subject to entry deadlines as determined by the race-giving organisation.

b. The race-giving organisation may reject any entry for just cause.

2. DRIVERS

a. The driver starting a team at the beginning of a race shall drive that team throughout the race.

i. In the event that, and at the option of the race-giving organisation, two drivers are allowed to work as partners driving a team, only one designated driver may compete for NZFSS awards and that driver must complete the entire trail with the team.

b. The minimum age of drivers is at the option of the race-giving organisation.

c. Drivers must attend the drivers' meeting (time and place to be announced by the race-giving organisation to all entrants prior to entry) held prior to the start of the race in order to qualify to compete in the race.

d. Any driver disqualified at any point in the race is not eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.

3. DOGS

a. The Race Marshal may disallow entry of any team or dog for just cause.

b. Any team or dog coming to the starting line which, in the opinion of the Race Marshal, is unfit or incapable of completing the course, shall be disqualified.

c. Dogs may be required to undergo a physical examination prior to the start of the race by a licensed veterinarian.

i. If an organisation intends to examine dogs, it shall notify all entrants in advance of entry.

ii. If any driver or owner refuses to let his dogs be examined, that team shall be disqualified from the race.

iii. No dog shall start the race that did not pass the examination.

d. No dogs may be added to the team after the start of the race.

e. Any team or dog disqualified at any point in the race is not eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.

f. Dogs participating in a race shall be at least twelve (12) months old.

4. DISEASE.

a. No dog, equipment or clothing shall be brought from a kennel where rabies, distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, or any other contagious disease exists.

b. If the Race Veterinarian diagnoses any dog present in the race area to have a contagious disease, that team shall be disqualified and shall immediately leave the race area.

5. IDENTIFICATION

a. Dogs shall be marked and/or photographed for identification.

6. SIZE OF TEAM

a. An Unlimited Class Team shall consist of not less than seven (7) dogs at the start of the race, and not less than five (5) dogs during the course of the race.

b. A Limited Eight-Dog Class Team shall consist of not more than eight (8) dogs, and not less than four (4) dogs.

c. A Limited Six-Dog Class Team shall consist of not more than six (6) dogs, and not less than three (3) dogs.

d. After the start of the race, a driver may voluntarily reduce the size of the team, subject to class minimums.

e. The Race Marshal may reduce the size of any team that he determines is too large for the designated driver.

B. MEDICATION

1. PROHIBITED DRUGS

a. See the "NZFSS List of Forbidden Substances and Methods for Dogs".

2. NZFSS will allow a positive test for previously declared paracetamides in the test for prohibited substances in sled dogs. It is incumbent upon the driver/owner to declare all foreign substances used in his/her sled dogs before testing occurs.
3. Drug Testing
 - a. If an organisation intends to test for prohibited drugs, it shall use NZFSS Drug Testing Procedures and shall declare so on the entry form.
 - b. Whenever a specimen is requested for testing, the owner or driver shall be present (or his/her representative) and shall declare in writing to the sampling official all medications administered to the dog(s) within 72 hours preceding the start of the event.
 - c. If an owner or driver refuses to allow a sample to be collected from a dog, that team shall be disqualified from the event.
 - d. If any dog in a team shows a positive test of a prohibited drug, that team is subject to disqualification, the decision to be made following a hearing.
 - e. The external use of DMSO and Topical Cortico-Steroids are limited to the use on feet only, in ointments, and provided by a registered veterinarian.
 - f. Where testing is due to an appeal, the person lodging the appeal shall be required to pay the costs at the time the appeal is lodged eg \$250 per dog. Where the appeal is lodged against a team the decision as to which dogs are tested rests with the person lodging the appeal.

C. EQUIPMENT

1. HARNESSSES AND LINES
 - a. All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file.
 - b. All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest areas.
 - c. All dogs shall be fastened to the tug line by a neck line and tail line with the exception of the leader(s) who shall be harnessed in the team by a tail line but may run without a neck line.
 - d. A snub line may be carried on the sled but shall not be used in any manner that would constitute abuse of the dogs or interfere with the progress of another team.
2. SLEDS
 - a. Some type of sled shall be drawn.
 - b. A sled shall be capable of adequately carrying the driver and have a basket capable of carrying a dog and all other trail equipment.
 - i. The type of sled used is at the option of the driver but subject to the approval of the Race Marshal.
 - ii. Sleds may be replaced during the course of the race.
 - c. A sled shall be equipped with an adequate brake, brushbow, and snowhook and/or snubline.
 - i. The race-sponsoring organisation may require that the sled be equipped with both a snowhook and snubline and shall be declared on the entry form.
 - d. A dog bag capable of safely restraining a struggling dog and if necessary, covering a severely injured or dead dog, may be required at the option of the race-giving organisation and shall be so declared on the entry form.
3. SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT
 - a. As a minimum, the following equipment shall be carried on the sled:
 - i. Sleeping bag.
 - ii. Protective clothing (parka, boots, headgear, mittens, sox, etc.).
 - iii. Hand axe and/or saw.
 - iv. One (1) pair of snowshoes and bindings.
 - v. Night light and fire-making equipment.
 - vi. First aid kit for human and animal-related emergencies.
 - vii. Knife.
 - viii. Extra harness(es) and collar(s).
 - ix. At the option of the race-giving organisation and declared on the entry form, one set of dog booties for each dog on the team, either on the sled or in use.
 - b. No driver shall start the race or leave any checkpoint without the following items. The Race Marshal may except designated checkpoints from this requirement and they shall be so declared on the entry form.
 - i. One (1) day's dog food ration for each dog - minimum 1 kg (2 pounds) per dog.
 - ii. One (1) day's food ration for the driver.
4. OTHER EQUIPMENT
 - a. A muzzle or any collar that can be hooked as a full choke shall be prohibited.
 - b. A racing number for each driver shall be provided by the race-giving organisation. It shall be carried throughout the race but not necessarily displayed on the driver's person except at stations designated

by the Race Marshal.

- i. The Race Marshal may designate alternate methods to display the racing number and shall announce them at the drivers' meeting prior to the start of the race.

D. INSPECTIONS

1. All equipment and teams shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the Race Marshal.
2. PRE-RACE and POST-RACE INSPECTIONS
 - a. Drivers, teams and equipment shall be available for inspection in the vehicle holding area one (1) hour prior to their scheduled time of departure.
 - b. A team in harness shall not be required to stand for inspection longer than six (6) minutes.
 - c. Inspection shall take place in an area that does not interfere with teams in the start or finish chutes.
3. TRAIL CHECKPOINT INSPECTIONS
 - a. Team and equipment inspections may be conducted at checkpoints on the trail.
 - b. A team shall be available for inspection(s) at the request of all authorised officials, including but not limited to the Race Marshal and/or Race Veterinarian.
 - c. A team in harness shall not be required to stand for inspection longer than six (6) minutes.
 - d. Trail checkpoint inspections shall not unnecessarily delay the progress of a team.

PART II - START / FINISH RULES

A. DRAWING

1. The starting positions for the race shall be determined by a drawing held prior to the race at a time and place designated by the race-giving organisation.
2. The owner, driver or designated proxy of each team shall draw their own starting position. In their absence, the starting positions shall be drawn by the Race Marshal or his representative.
3. The order of the drawing shall be based on the date of receipt of each driver's entry fee and completed entry form and shall not be changed either by addition or substitution.
 - a. Entries received on the same date shall be treated alphabetically.
 - b. Late entries, if accepted by the race-giving organisation, shall be added to the starting order in order of receipt.

B. SINGLE START RACE

1. The starting positions shall be determined by the draw with Number 1 starting first, Number 2 starting second, etc.

C. DUAL START RACE

1. The starting positions shall be determined by the draw with Numbers 1 and 2 starting together first, Numbers 3 and 4 starting together second, etc.

D. EQUAL TIMES

1. Teams with equal times for the entire race shall be awarded the higher finishing position.
 - a. The purse for the tied place and the next lower places(s) shall be combined and divided equally among those teams tied for that place.

E. STARTING POINT AND TIME

1. The brush bow of the sled shall determine the starting point of the team.
2. Trail time for all teams shall begin at the originally scheduled time of departure.
3. A team that fails to be in the starting position at its scheduled starting time will be declared a late-starting team.
 - a. A late-starting team shall not be allowed to start until after the last team entered in its class has started and after the prescribed starting interval.
 - b. A late-starting team shall not interfere with any other team.
 - c. If more than one team is declared late, those teams shall start in their originally scheduled starting order.
 - d. If a team is late to the starting line for its second scheduled time of departure, that team shall be disqualified.
4. A team not clearing the Starting Chute (minimum distance 30 meters (100 feet)) shall make way for the next starting team(s) and in no way interfere with their progress.

F. ASSISTANCE IN THE STARTING CHUTE

1. The amount and type of assistance in the starting chute shall be determined and announced by the Race

Marshal prior to the start of the race.

2. Once a team is beyond the starting chute area in a official start, all Trail Rules shall apply.

G. TRAIL TIME AND FINISH

1. Trail time for a team shall end when the first dog on the team crosses the finish line at the end of the trail.
 - a. All time involved on the trail shall constitute Trail Time including but not limited to meal and rest stops, stops mandated by weather conditions, lost time on wrong trails, etc.
2. If a loose team crosses the finish line ahead of its driver, that team shall have finished when the driver crosses the finish line.

PART III - TRAIL RULES

A. FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

1. A team and driver shall run the full course as established by the race-giving organisation.
2. If a team leaves the trail, the driver shall return the team to the point at which they left the trail or, if that is not practical and without shortening the course or eliminating any checkpoints, the driver may proceed to the next checkpoint.
3. The trail shall be followed as marked:
 - a. "Right turn" shall be indicated by a red/pink day-glow marker on the right side of the trail.
 - b. "Left turn" shall be indicated by a red/pink day-glow marker on the left side of the trail.
 - c. "Straight ahead" shall be indicated by blue/green day-glow markers on either side of the trail.
 - d. "Caution" shall be indicated by two (2) vertical arrays, one on each side of the trail, each array consisting of two (2) or three (3) yellow/orange day-glow markers.
 - e. The "End of the Starting Chute" (minimum length, 100 feet) shall be indicated by markers on both sides of the trail.
 - f. A marker shall be placed 800 metre (1/2 mile) from the finish line to indicate the start of the finishing "No-Right-Of-Way Zone".

B. DRIVING A TEAM

1. A driver may ride the sled, pedal or run as wished.
2. Any driver accepting a ride during the race on any vehicle other than his/her own sled shall be disqualified.
3. A team and driver shall proceed as a single unit.
 - a. Two or more teams may not, in any manner, be tied together except to assist another driver in an emergency situation. Any team drivers so involved must notify officials at the next checkpoint.
4. A driver shall not interfere with competing teams.
5. All dogs on the team while on the trail between checkpoints, shall be hitched in the team or carried on the sled.
6. A dog becoming unfit after departure, shall be carried on the sled.
7. Carrying a passenger at any time during the course of the race shall be prohibited unless:
 - a. Called for in the conditions of the race.
 - b. Giving a ride to a driver in an emergency situation.

C. ASSISTANCE ON THE TRAIL

1. ACCEPTABLE ASSISTANCE
 - a. All teams may receive similar assistance of any type from officials stationed at designated points along the trail as authorised by the Race Marshal.
 - b. Only drivers may assist other drivers between checkpoints and in a manner subject to the assistance limitations stated under these rules.
 - c. Outside assistance shall only be allowed only if a team becomes so unmanageable as to create a clear and present danger to the teams dogs, other teams or persons.
 - d. No driver may tamper with another driver's dogs, food or gear without the team driver's permission.
 - e. A driver may accept outside hospitality along the trail but shall be solely responsible for the care of his/her team dogs.
2. PROHIBITED ASSISTANCE
 - a. No one shall assist a team by wilfully pacing it other than the team driver.
 - b. No switching of dogs between mushers shall be permitted after the team has left the starting line.
 - c. No driver shall accept outside help in the process of caring for his/her dog's daily maintenance needs unless authorised by the Race Marshal and available to all contestants in the race.
 - d. No driver shall accept outside help in the process of caring for his/her personal daily needs unless

authorised by the Race Marshal and available to all contestants in the race.
e. Drivers shall not permit any dogs to be carried by any other team or vehicle.

D. LOOSE TEAMS AND DOGS

1. A Loose team or dog(s) shall not delay or interfere with another team.
2. The driver shall overtake a loose team or dog on foot.
3. A loose team or dog may resume the trail without penalty provided the team/dog has completed the entire trail and the driver has received only authorised outside assistance.
 - a. Authorised outside assistance is limited to holding a loose team or dog once it has been stopped until the driver claims the team/dog.
 - i. In the absence of the driver, an official may claim the team/dog.
 - b. Any person(s) may, and is encouraged to, stop and hold a loose team or dog.

E. RIGHT OF WAY

1. In a dual start, the team with the lead dog farthest ahead at the end of the divided chute shall have the right of way.
2. When teams are passing in opposite directions on a single "out-and-back" trail:
 - a. The team travelling downhill shall have the right of way.
 - b. On level terrain, the Race Marshal shall determine and announce, prior to the start of the race, whether the in-coming or out-going team shall have the right of way.
3. A disqualified or withdrawn driver shall give the right of way to all teams on the trail remaining in competition.
4. In the 800 metre (1/2 mile) "No-Right-Of-Way Zone", no team shall have the right of way over another.

F. PASSING

1. When one team intends to pass another, the passing team driver may request the right of way when the lead dog(s) come within 15 meters (50 feet) of the sled of the overtaken team.
2. The overtaken team shall make way for the passing team by moving to one side of the trail and by slowing or stopping if requested by the overtaking team driver.
3. Once a team has been passed, that team shall not re-pass until:
 - a. After four (4) minutes or 1.6 kilometres (one (1) mile).
 - b. At any lesser interval whenever both drivers are in agreement.
4. If the passing team becomes tangled as a result of the pass, that team's driver may require the overtaken team to stop and wait for no longer than (1) minute.
5. A driver coming upon one or more stopped teams may pass all such teams. The stopped team driver(s) shall make every effort to clear the trail for the moving team.
6. Teams following each other shall maintain an interval of not less than one (1) team length except when passing or in the "No-Right-Of-Way Zone".

G. CAMPSITES

1. No litter shall be left on the trail.
 - a. Campsites shall be cleaned prior to the team's departure.
 - b. Trash shall be properly disposed of or carried on the sled to a location designated for that purpose.
 - c. Drivers setting up camp alongside the trail shall leave the trail clear of their dogs and gear.

H. DOG FOOD SUPPLIES

1. Drivers shall have their dog food and other supplies in sealed containers suitable for disposition at dog food drop checkpoints designated by the Race Marshal.
 - a. These containers shall be labeled with the driver's name and the checkpoint where they are to be stored.
 - b. Containers shall be distributed to the driver-designated checkpoints by the race-giving organisation.
 - i. At the option of the race-giving organisation, drivers and handlers shall be responsible for the distribution of their drops at checkpoints and it shall be so stated on the entry form.
2. A two (2) day's supply of dog food shall be left with each dropped dog at a checkpoint unless otherwise authorised by the race Marshal.
3. No driver shall receive outside help in obtaining dog food between checkpoints unless an emergency is declared by the Race Marshal and/or authorised officials

I. CHECKPOINTS

1. DRIVERS

- a. Drivers shall sign in at each checkpoint with the checker before proceeding on the trail.
 - i. In the case of a unmanned station, the driver shall sign in and proceed to the next checkpoint where he/she shall notify the checker of his/her procedure at the previous checkpoint.
 - b. Drivers who voluntarily withdraw from the race or who have been disqualified by an authorised race official, shall proceed to the nearest checkpoint to obtain transportation to leave the trail.
 - c. Drivers who become ill or injured on the trail and who wish to voluntarily withdraw from the race shall proceed to the nearest checkpoint to receive aid and transportation to leave the trail.
 - i. In the case of the driver being incapacitated on the trail and unable to proceed, rules related to emergency situations shall apply.
2. DOGS
 - a. Unfit or expired dogs shall be dropped at designated dog drop checkpoints only.
 - b. Dogs may be dropped at the next or nearest authorised checkpoint.
 - i. Dropped dogs may be tagged with:
 - a) Driver's name and racing number.
 - b) Destination of where the dog is to be shipped.
 - c) Reason for dropping the dog.
 - ii. Expired dogs shall be tagged with:
 - a) Driver's name and racing number.
 - b) Probable cause of death.
 - c. A dropped dog shall be fastened by a chain or cable to hold it in place until it is picked up by an authorised person.
3. OFFICIALS
 - a. The Race Marshal or Race Veterinarian may detain a driver for the purpose of repairing or replacing equipment which is deemed detrimental to the safety and well-being of a team and/or driver.
 - b. The Race Marshal or Race Veterinarian may detain a team which is deemed in need of rest.
 - c. The Race Marshal or Race Veterinarian may remove a team or dog(s) from the race which is deemed unfit to continue the race.
 - d. If the Race Marshall feels that there may be grounds for disqualification, he shall notify the driver and the next checkpoint official.
 - i. Under these conditions, the driver may proceed on the trail and shall be subject to a hearing following the completion of his/her race.
 - e. In the event of a driver arriving at a checkpoint with less than the minimum number of dogs in harness, the Race Marshal or the Race Veterinarian may allow or disallow that team to proceed to the next checkpoint.
4. HANDLERS
 - a. At checkpoints, handler or spectator help shall be limited to holding the sled in a non-emergency situation and if the driver is present.

PART IV - CONDUCT

- A. RESPONSIBILITY AND SPORTSMANSHIP
 1. Drivers shall be responsible for the conduct of their dogs, their designated handler and themselves whenever in the race area or on the trail.
 2. Common sense and good sportsmanship shall prevail.
 - a. If the Race Marshal determines that driver, handler or team conduct at any time in the race area or on the trail is detrimental to the sport/race, that team shall be disqualified.
- B. ABUSE OF DOGS
 1. Abuse of a dog, with or without an implement, shall be prohibited.
 2. No whip, goad or any other implement of chastisement may be used or carried.

PART V - RULES VIOLATIONS

- A. REPORTS BY RACE OFFICIALS
 1. Race Officials shall report overt rule violations to the Race Marshal verbally, in person or by radio, immediately or as soon as possible after the violation was observed.

2. The Race Marshal shall act, at his/her discretion, on any overt violations witnessed and reported by Race Officials.

B. REPORTS BY RACE CONTESTANTS

1. Drivers wishing to report an alleged violation of the rules by another contestant shall do so as soon as possible after the violation occurred to authorised trail officials. The verbal report shall be followed with a written protest which shall be delivered to the Race Marshal and which shall be accompanied by a ten dollar (\$10.00) protest fee.

C. PROTESTS AND HEARINGS

1. Any driver implicated in a report of an alleged violation of the rules may make a protest and request a hearing before the Race Marshal.
 - a. Said hearing shall be granted by the Race Marshal.

D. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. For violation of any NZFSS Race Rule, the Race Marshal shall either issue a verbal warning to the driver or disqualify the driver and team from the race.
 - a. No other disciplinary action shall be imposed.
 - b. Decisions shall be announced to the driver and the concerned checkpoint officials as promptly as practical.
 - i. Any disciplinary action following the finish of a team shall be acted upon prior to the awards ceremony.
 - ii. In the case of drug testing, the time schedule for disciplinary action may be extended to allow for laboratory findings and hearings, should the latter become necessary.
2. The decisions of the Race Marshal shall be final.