

# NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF SLED DOG SPORTS

## SANCTIONED RACE PROCEDURES

AMENDED JUNE 2023

Based on the April 1993 version of the "Sanctioned Race Procedures" of the International Sled Dog Racing Association, Inc.

### DEFINITIONS

ORGANIZATION:	the organisation in charge of running the event.
EVENT:	a meeting of contestants for the purpose of competing in one event, which may involve several, race classes.
DRIVER:	a person who drives a dog team entered in the race.
RACE:	a competition in a specified class and may be comprised of one or more heats.
HEAT:	a completion of the trail once.
SHALL:	shall be construed as being imperative.
MAY:	shall be construed as being permissive.
SHOULD:	shall be construed as being advisory.
NO-RIGHT-OF-WAY ZONE:	that part of the trail where no team has the right-of-way over another team.
RACE AREA:	all designated parking areas, spectator access areas, team holding areas, start/finish chutes, officiating areas and the trail area.
RACE MARSHAL:	the person who shall have supreme authority at an event.

### RACE PERSONNEL

1. The organisation shall staff the race area with a sufficient number of qualified officials to assure a quality contest and safe conditions for both teams and drivers.
2. Key officials shall be knowledgeable about their roles in the race and be thoroughly familiar with the NZFSS Race Rules and the NZFSS Sanctioned Race Procedures.
  - a. The Race Marshall of a NZFSS sanctioned event must have passed the NZFSS Race Marshal's examination and shall be a member of **a NZFSS member organisation**.
    - i. The Race Marshal's license is valid for three (3) years from the date of passing the examination
    - ii. However a Race Marshal that has officiated at an NZFSS sanctioned event in the final year of their current license period, their license will be automatically renewed to the end of the following year.
    - iii. Race Marshal's currently licensed under the provisions of 2.a.ii above may be required, at the discretion of the NZFSS Executive Officers, to re-sit the Race Marshal examination.
  - b. The NZFSS will supply all individuals who pass the NZFSS Race Marshal Examination with a card as proof of passing.
3. The race-giving organisation shall have a veterinarian on site or call at all sanctioned races/weight pulls.
4. If necessary to use inexperienced trail help, such persons should be assigned to work with an experienced person.
5. Race personnel at the start/finish chutes and on the trail shall:
  - a. Keep the start and finish areas clear of non-authorized persons.
  - b. Keep spectators well back from the trail.
  - c. Discourage pets in all of the race areas.
    - i. Organisations should discourage spectators from bringing pets to the race through the local news media several times prior to the race.

## PRE-RACE PROCEDURES

### A. ELIGIBILITY - DRIVERS AND DOGS

1. Entries
  - a. An entry for the race shall be submitted to the organisation before the event.
  - b. The deadlines for entries shall be determined by the organisation.
    - i. The pre-race deadline shall not be less than 14 days prior to the event and should not be more than 1 calendar month prior to the event.
  - c. The race-giving organisation shall determine the amount of the entry fees.
2. Drivers
  - a. An entry may be rejected by the organisation for cause, which includes but is not confined to:
    - i. Past conduct by the driver considered by the organisation to be detrimental to the sport.
    - ii. **Age restrictions**
      - (a) **Children under 16 years**
        - i. **Where the RGO (race giving organisation) has offered a junior class, a junior may alternatively enter the senior ("adult") class with a maximum number of dogs as aloud under the junior age restriction rules.**
        - ii. **The RGO must have just cause for not accepting a junior entry into an "adult "event. Where an entry is accepted in an "adult "event for a person under 16years, an acknowledgement must be made by the parent or guardian of the entrant, that the entrant is capable of handling the dog/dog team entered, and will not cause any hazard to the other entrants. The acknowledgement shall also contain a disclaimer of liability to the organising body.**
      - (b) NZFSS does not recognise races with **gender** restrictions under the sanctioning procedures.

### B. DOGS (Marking & Inspections)

1. Identification
  - a. The organisation shall require dogs to be marked for identification in races of more than one heat.
    - i. Marking shall be done before the first heat of the race in the holding area and/or a designated marking site.
    - ii. Marking shall not be done in the starting chute.
    - iii. All dogs scheduled to race shall be marked in a distinctive manner in order that they be readily identified.
      - (a) At the option of the organisation, dogs not scheduled to race but being carried in the dog box, may be marked in such a manner which would preclude them from being introduced to the team.
      - (b) Dogs dropped from the team marked to race shall be re-marked in such a manner that they cannot be reintroduced to the team in an ensuing heat.
    - iv. Marking materials may be determined by the organisation.
      - (a) Material should be waterproof, non-toxic and non-irritating.
      - (b) A colour that can be mistaken for blood should be avoided.
      - (c) Marking should be visible but discreet.
      - (d) Marking should be on parts of the dog's body where it cannot be licked.
    - v. A driver or handler may do the actual marking in the presence and under the direction of the marking official.
2. Inspections
  - a. Dogs shall be checked for legitimate markings before being allowed to leave the starting line in each heat of the race.
  - b. Dogs may be required to stand for a brief inspection at the end of the heat.
    - i. Post-heat inspections shall take place at a reasonable distance beyond the finish line to leave a clear chute for the following finishing team.

## THE RACE TRAIL

### A. COURSE

#### 1. Layout

- a. The trail shall be safe for dogs and drivers as deemed by the Race Marshall and the weather conditions on the day.
- b. The incoming trail should not cross the outgoing trail.
- c. When the incoming trail joins the outgoing trail, the two trails shall be as one and not separate until the finish line is reached.
  - i. Where the outgoing trail is not safe as an incoming trail, the two trails may be separate, provided a movable barrier is used at the point of departure from the outgoing trail.
- d. A trail layout which requires teams to pass head-on should be avoided.
  - i. Where it is impossible to avoid head-on passing completely, such section of the trail should be kept as short as possible.
  - ii. Where a single out and back trail is unavoidable, the trail shall have a large enough loop at the turn-around point so a team can keep moving and does not have to stop to reverse its direction.
- e. No trail should, at any time, pass a designated vehicle parking area.
- f. The trail should not go twice around itself in the same direction either in whole or in part.
- g. All trail sections shall be wide enough to easily accommodate two (2) teams running abreast.
- h. A "No-Right-Of-Way Zone" shall commence within one kilometre (1/2 mile) from the finish line. The trail in this zone shall be no less than 3 meters (10 feet) wide.

#### 2. Markers

- a. The trail shall be indicated with clearly visible official markers in sufficient numbers and in positions to enable a driver to proceed with confidence.
- b. An official marker should measure at least 23cm (9 inches) diagonally and may be round, square, rectangular, triangular.
- c. An official marker may indicate the race class.
- d. A marker should be placed no less than 12 meters (40 feet) and no more than 21 meters (70 feet) before each major intersection.
  - i. **Marker should be positioned at least 1 meter (3 feet) above the surface of the trail itself, and on the edge of the trail.**
  - ii. A RED marker indicates a TURN at an approaching intersection. A RIGHT turn shall be indicated by a red marker on the RIGHT side of the trail. A LEFT turn shall be indicated by a red marker on the left side of the trail.
  - iii. A BLUE marker means STRAIGHT AHEAD. Blue markers should be placed on both sides of the outgoing trail at an intersection.
- e. Blue markers should be placed at reasonable intervals along a long stretch of otherwise unmarked trail.
- f. **A YELLOW marker indicates "CAUTION" is advisable and that passing is inadvisable.**
  - i. **yellow marker shall be placed either before or at the spot require caution.**
  - ii. **prior to the start of the race, drivers shall be informed of the location of any caution area on the trail.**
  - iii. **the need for caution markers should be avoided and used only if no alternative route is available.**
  - iv. **if the caution area covers a length of the trail, two yellow markers shall be placed on the same stake at the beginning of the caution area. The end of the caution area shall be indicated with one yellow marker with a diagonal black stripe across the marker.**
  - v. **the length of caution trail shall not exceed 10% of the total length.**
- g. The commencement of the "No-Right-Of-Way Zone" shall be indicated by a green marker.
- h. Distance markers may be placed along the trail. They shall be white (black on snow).
- i. Stakes of any type may be used in quantity to delineate the trail in a windblown area but they are not to be used as a substitute for official trail markers.
- j. Dye on the trail may be used as additional marking but not as a substitute for official trail markers.

#### 3. Packing

- a. The trail should be packed in a manner that the dogs' feet do not punch through the trail surface.

4. Trail Check
  - a. The trail shall be checked by the Trail Boss, or trail crew members under his supervision, to make sure that all the markers are in place, cross trails made by overland snow vehicle drivers not associated with the race are blocked or obliterated, that all trail officials are at their stations, etc, prior to each heat of each class.
  
5. Start and Finish Line Chutes
  - a. Holding chutes may be used.
  - b. The start and finish lines shall be clearly indicated by:
    - i. Coloured line.
    - ii. Flag on both sides of the line, opposite each other.
    - iii. Banner over the line.
  - c. The finish line may be different than and separate from the start line.
  - d. The start chute.
    - i. Shall be wide enough to provide ample room for the team(s) and its handlers, minimum 3 meters (10 feet) per chute.
    - ii. Should be delineated along both sides with a barrier that will keep it clear of all persons not associated with the outgoing team.
  - e. The far end of the chute shall be clearly indicated with a flag or marker different from those used to indicate trail direction or caution.
  - f. The finish chute should be clearly delineated with a barrier along both sides so that a lead dog can tell from a distance where it must go and so that unauthorised persons can be kept well clear of the finish area.
  - g. The passageway between the finish line and the vehicle parking area should be delineated with barriers to keep unauthorised persons out and back from the route for as long a distance as is necessary and to give the teams a clear passage beyond the finish line.
  - h. Where the organisation elects to use a dual start:
    - i. The chute for each team shall be at least 10 feet (3 meters) wide.  
A barrier shall be erected to separate the teams and shall extend for a distance of no less than 100 yards (90 meters) from the start line. This barrier shall not be a hazard to outgoing or incoming teams.
  - i. If the chute is longer than 40 metres there will be a marker at the 40 metre mark.

## RACE DAY PROCEDURES

### A. GENERAL

1. The Race Marshall shall declare to all competing mushers whether the race is sanctioned or unsanctioned before the race commences.

### B. STARTING INTERVALS

1. Starting intervals shall be:
  - 15 seconds (Single Dog Class only)
  - 30 or 60 seconds** (Single Dog Class and Two Dog Scooter Class only)
  - 1 or 2 minutes (Rig/Sled Classes only)
  - a. Duel start intervals shall be as above.

### C. FINISH TIMES

1. A team's time should be announced as soon after its finish as its time is computed.
  - a. Such announcements shall be considered unofficial until such time that they have been posted following the race.
2. All provisional times should be prominently posted as soon as they are available, by the Official Timers, and within two hours after the race heat has concluded.
  - a. Positions may be subject to change due to disqualification.

### D. DOG COUNT IN THE CHUTES

1. The number of dogs in each team shall be recorded by an official at the start of each heat.
2. The number of dogs returning in each team shall be recorded by an official at the end of each heat.
  - a. Teams leaving the starting line must return to the finish line with the same number of dogs, either in the team or in the basket on the sled/rig.

- b. The Race Marshal shall obtain the name of any dog bagged during the race, and note that name on the official records of the race.
- 3. Drivers may voluntarily drop dogs between heats, subject to the minimum allowed in the concerned class.
  - a. Dogs dropped from the team shall be marked by the marking official to preclude its reintroduction to the team.

E. CHECK FOR MANDATORY EQUIPMENT

- 1. The Race Marshal or his representative shall inspect teams' sleds/rigs for the following mandatory equipment:
  - a. a basket/platform capable of carrying any dog on your team (not applicable for Speed Style).
  - b. an adequate brake and, for sleds only, brushbow, snowhook and drag mat.
  - c. a dog bag capable of holding securely or covering a dog in place on the sled/rig (not applicable for Speed Style).
  - d. A snub line must be carried that is of sufficient length to secure the rig in the event of injury to dog or musher and/or equipment failure
- 2. Any person with a disability may apply to the NZFSS for dispensation on equipment to allow them to compete in any sanctioned event. Dispensation is at the discretion of the NZFSS Officers.

F. USING "RABBITS"

- 1. No "Rabbit" may be used, whether to scent the trail or for any other purpose.

## POST-HEAT PROCEDURES

A. TIME QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. An organisation intending to use the 1.25 or 1.50 time qualifying factors shall announce which factor is to be used and on which classes prior to entry and on the official entry blank.
  - a. Disqualification of team drivers not meeting the time qualification, shall be included in the listing of posted times at the end of the concerned heat with the exception of the final heat.

B. MEDICAL INSPECTIONS (WHEN RACE VETERINARIANS ARE PRESENT)

- 1. Race Veterinarians shall inspect teams and dogs as requested by the Race Marshal and shall inspect all dogs crossing the finish line in the basket of the sled
- 2. Race Veterinarians may conduct inspections of any or all teams and dogs.
- 3. Race veterinarians shall report their medical findings to the Race Marshal.
- 4. A team shall not be left standing waiting for a vet check, immediately after they come over the finish line, this will be done at or within a reasonable time after the race.

C. DRUG TESTING

- 1. An organisation intending to test for illegal use of drugs, shall notify contestants prior to entry and on the official entry blank.
- 2. It is recommended that the organisation use the NZFSS Drug Testing Procedures
- 3. Where an organisation requires dogs to be submitted to autopsy, such autopsy shall be performed by a mutually acceptable, qualified veterinarian and such dogs shall continue to remain the property of the team driver or owner.

D. DISQUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Infraction of any of the NZFSS Rules shall be cause for disqualification or a warning after a hearing.
- 2. In the event of an alleged infraction, the driver may request a hearing and it shall be granted by the Race Marshal within one (1) hour of race finish.
- 3. Decisions shall be announced as promptly as is practical but no later than two (2) hours prior to the start of any ensuing heat.
- 4. In the case of drug testing, the above schedule does not apply.
- 5. Disqualified teams and drivers shall not be allowed to start in any ensuing heat.
- 6. Any disciplinary action following the final heat of the race shall be acted upon prior to the awards ceremony.
- 7. The decisions of the Race Marshal shall be final.

E. POST-HEAT CANCELLATION

1. A heat which has already been run may be declared null and void if, in the judgement of the Race Marshal, competition was significantly affected by unusual circumstances.
2. When a heat has been declared null and void,
  - a. drivers in that heat shall be notified as soon as possible.
  - b. that heat shall not be re-run.
3. If there was a regularly scheduled subsequent heat,
  - a. starting order for the next heat shall remain the same as for the null and void heat.
  - c. the null and void heat shall be considered as not having been run in determining which dogs may run.

### *SANCTIONED RACE INQUIRIES*

#### A. INQUIRIES BY ORGANIZATIONS

1. Prior to making application for the NZFSS sanctioning of a race, a representative of the organisation with any questions should contact the NZFSS Executive Office.
2. If after making application, an organisation wishes a clarification of the rules and procedures governing sanctioned events, a representative should contact the NZFSS Executive Office.
3. Once the event is in progress, the organisation working within the framework of the NZFSS Rules and Sanctioning Procedures shall govern the event.
4. All applications for sanctioned events shall be forwarded to the NZFSS Executive Office no later than the 31st December the previous year.

### *ADDITIONAL RULES*

- #### A. Race-giving organisations may impose additional rules to meet requirements unique to local conditions.
1. In NZFSS Sanctioned events, additional rules shall be within the spirit of NZFSS rules and the intent of them shall not be altered.
  2. Additional rules shall be submitted to the NZFSS Sanctioning Officer at least thirty (30) days prior to the event being publicised.
  3. Additional rules must be approved by the NZFSS Executive and shall be notified with the race entry details.