

WHITE OAK DOG SLED RACE RULES

DRIVERS

Thank you for your interest in the sport of dog sledding and your support of this race at the White Oak Society Learning Center in Deer River, Minnesota. In addition to race classes for competitive, professional mushing, this event also includes race classes designed to encourage younger or newer mushers and those with “Big Dogs” to enter the race.

Each driver agrees to hold the White Oak Society (WOS), race sponsor(s), and other contributors (sponsors and contributors of the Society as distinguished from sponsors of the individual driver) harmless from any claim or demand based on any alleged action or inaction by the driver, dogs, agents, or others acting in his/her behalf. The driver also agrees to release WOS, sponsors and agents or employees from any claim or demand resulting from injury to the driver, his/her dogs, or his/her property.

Drivers shall wear numbered bibs at the race start and throughout the event as requested by the WOS. Before participating in a WOS race, a driver must be qualified for the event he/she wishes to enter. A musher must be at least 18 years old unless a waiver is obtained from and approved by the WOS prior to the event. Mushers age 10 and under may be accompanied by a companion riding in the sled basket, prepared to assist only in urgent situations, but the companion will not drive the sled. The Race Marshall has the right to reject or accept any application for waiver. The WOS reserves the right to reject any entrant the race committee feels would be a detriment to the race.

Receipt of the entry fee and completed entry form will confirm that the musher intends to enter the event and agrees to comply with all event rules. Upon receipt and acceptance of the fee and entry form, WOS will confirm the entry. Bib numbers will be distributed at the pre-race Musher Meeting. The WOS will provide each driver with an official number to wear or display on his/her sled.

Each event will start as scheduled unless a majority of the WOS Race Marshall, WOS Board members, and Musher Representatives agree that conditions warrant a delay. If a WOS Dog Sled Race event is canceled, then the entry fees for that event will be refunded in full.

Drivers must be prepared to start as scheduled. Any driver who cannot leave as scheduled will be rotated to the end of the starting lineup, but the driver's recorded start time shall remain unchanged.

Upon approval by the Race Marshall, substitution of qualified drivers may be made at the Musher Meeting before the event starts. The driver starting the event shall drive the team through the entirety of the event.

All winners must attend the awards ceremony to receive their prize(s)/money. The awards ceremony will be held after the last musher has completed the race course.

NUMBER OF DOGS

All teams will start with a maximum of 6 dogs, and must finish with a minimum of 4 dogs in harness. For the “Big Dog” teams (generally Alaskan Malamutes, Siberian Huskies, Samoyeds and similar purebred canines), these 6-dog teams may include up to 2 non-purebred Alaskan Huskies. A “Big Dog” team must be clearly indicated on the musher's registration form. Race Judges will have the final determination as to whether a team meets the “Big Dog” designation, thus allowing the driver and team to compete in that class. All race dogs may be marked immediately preceding the race.

DOG HEALTH

Any Veterinarian has the authority to remove any dog from the race if he/she feels this is in the best interest of the dog. This can be done at any time before or during the event. Any dogs that are not in the event but are present at any race location will be marked out before or during the race.

All dogs must be available for a Vet check before the start of the event. There will be no appointments for vet checks. Vet checks are provided on a first come, first served basis. The date(s)/time(s) when vet checks will be available will be posted on the race web site, but will generally be on the day before the race.

No drugs or other artificial means may be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability. Before the start of the event, the Chief Veterinarian must be notified of any dog receiving any prescribed medications. Such medications must be entered into the musher's veterinary diary. The following drugs are permitted:

- Topical medications (except DMSO)
- De-wormers
- Antibiotics (except procaine penicillin)
- Anti-diarrheals (except those with salicylates, e.g. Pepto-Bismol)
- Estrus suppressants (such as Ova Ban or Cheque Drops) without analgesic or stimulative properties
- Oral food supplements (such as Glycoflex, Cosequin, etc.) with solely nutritive properties

ALL other drugs are prohibited.

VACCINATIONS

Drivers must provide proof of vaccination at the pre-event examination.

All entered dogs must have current Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Para influenza and Rabies vaccinations. Proof of Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Para influenza vaccinations must come from a Veterinarian OR, if administered by the driver, records must include type of vaccine, proof of purchase (i.e., receipt), and date of vaccination in writing. The vaccines must have been given at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Pre-Race Vet Check or be current through the end of the race. Proof of Rabies vaccination must come from a licensed Veterinarian only. Rabies vaccines must be given at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the Pre-Race Vet Check or must be current through the end of the race.

Dogs coming from Alaska having valid certificates signed by Lay Vaccinators will be accepted. The manufacturer and vaccine serial number of the Rabies vaccine administered to such dogs must be available to race Veterinarian(s) and the White Oak Society. Rabies certificates, signed by a licensed Veterinarian or Alaska Lay Vaccinator, must be presented to prove that rabies vaccinations are current. Rabies vaccinations must be given at least 30 days prior to the event.

Bordetella immunization is strongly recommended.

Most event-related veterinary expenses are paid by the WOS. However, drivers are expected to pay extraordinary veterinary expenses that they might incur during the event. The WOS may, at its discretion, charge a driver for any medical supplies administered to a team before or during the event. Prize monies will be awarded minus any unpaid veterinary expenses charged to the driver.

RACE MARSHALL AND OFFICIALS

The Race Marshall shall resolve disputes among drivers and interpret the event rules in regard to infractions and penalties. It is the spirit of the event that will determine any action needed to resolve any disputes. The Race Marshall also has the authority to establish rules to cover special or unforeseen situations. The Race Marshall has the ultimate authority in all disputes from the start of the race to the finish. Judges that are appointed by the Race Marshall also have the authority to administer any decisions needed to make sure that the rules are followed.

The Race Marshall, Judges, or Veterinarians can pull any dog from the event after consulting with the musher.

MANDATORY GEAR

Drivers shall display their identifying bibs throughout the race. At all other times the bibs may either be worn or be displayed prominently on the sled.

All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file. All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest area. Reflective tape is required on harnesses if racing between sunset and sunrise.*

Gang lines may be cable, cable core, or any synthetic or natural material. Chains are not allowed.

A light must be worn by a lead dog from sunset to sunrise.* The light must be visible to oncoming traffic.

Each driver must have in possession at all times during the race:

- A sled capable of accommodating injured or fatigued dogs as well as the required promotional materials and equipment.
- The sled shall be equipped with an adequate brake, brush bow, and snow hook.
- A bag capable of safely restraining a struggling dog, and, if necessary, covering a severely injured or expired dog. **ANY EXPIRED DOG SHALL BE COMPLETELY COVERED.**
- Proper cold weather sleeping bag.
- Knife (kept easily accessible)
- Headlamp (must be on from sunset to sunrise). If you do not have a headlamp on, you do not travel on the trail.*
- Veterinary diary and time card (provided by WOS).

* It is expected that the entire race course will be completed by all mushers between sunrise and sunset on the day of the race, but due to unforeseen circumstances and weather, mushers should be prepared to travel the race trail after dark.

Mandatory gear will be checked at the start and at the finish. Missing equipment will result in a time penalty.

TRAIL PROCEDURES

Event Course – Trails will be broken and marked before the event. However, due to weather, there is no guarantee of broken trails during the event.

The White Oak Dog Sled Race uses Grant-in-Aid snowmobile trails. Road crossings will be kept to a minimum. The course may be re-routed by the WOS event organization as conditions require.

The race course is a scenic route that traverses varied terrain including forests, streams, lakes, fields and populated areas. Due to distance, terrain, and variable weather conditions, drivers must exercise good judgment in pacing themselves and their teams. The course is run mainly on snowmobile trails, and the course markings for the event include the markings associated with the snowmobile trails. The trails in use will be presented at the Musher Meeting. All teams must follow the trail as marked or as redirected by trail officials. This recreational race will start at the White Oak Educational Center just north of Deer River, Minnesota.

Teams shall not pass until the trail widens at a point where it begins to run parallel to Highway 2. Thereafter, teams must give trail when asked. The passing team may ask the other team to stop or slow down to assist in the pass. However, assisting a team to pass does not include leaving your team to drag the passing team on by.

Drivers resting, snacking or untangling dogs must clear the trail of their dogs and gear, making passage safe for other teams. Drivers who litter the trail with food or other items shall be subject to a time penalty. When feeding dogs or snacking dogs on the trail, you cannot leave anything behind that may slow down any team passing through.

TREATMENT OF DOGS

Whips of any kind or the use of brush, branches or any object as a whip are expressly prohibited. Cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs will result in the immediate expulsion of the driver. The Race Marshall or Judges in consultation with a Veterinarian will have absolute determination regarding the cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs.

Any dog that expires for any reason during the event shall be **COMPLETELY COVERED** in a sled bag and delivered as soon as possible to a race official. The Chief Veterinarian will examine the body to determine the cause of death. If needed, a full necropsy shall be performed at the driver's expense. Death of a dog may result in a penalty to the driver.

Teams Tied Together – Two or more teams may not be tied together in any way, except to assist a driver in trouble at some immediate location. The drivers of any teams so involved must notify event officials at the next road crossing.

Loose Dogs/Lost Teams – A lost team will not be penalized if the driver regains control, provided that the entire race course is covered by both team and driver. A driver may accept help from another driver in recovering the team, without being assessed any penalty.

Switching Dogs – Dogs shall not be switched between teams after they have officially left the starting line.

There will be no boxing of dogs until the musher's race class is completed, or a dog has been officially dropped from the race. Dogs may be dropped at the race start or at the designated checkpoint(s). If a driver returns to the start to drop a dog, the number of dogs remaining on the team must still equal or exceed the minimum required at the event start.

OTHER

Outside Assistance – No assistance which would result in a competitive advantage may be solicited or accepted.

Drivers may not accept assistance from any type of motorized vehicle, except to recover a lost team. Drivers are encouraged to solicit or accept any available help to recover a lost team. However, if the Race Marshall determines that a musher has thereby gained a competitive advantage, then the Race Marshall may impose an appropriate time penalty.

Pacing with snowmobiles is prohibited. Use of ski poles is prohibited.

If personal handlers appear on the event course or at any location other than at the start and finish lines and the designated checkpoint(s), the team shall be assessed a time penalty.

Sportsmanship – Any driver or handler engaged in any unsportsmanlike conduct will be disqualified. We will not tolerate any vulgar or obscene language toward anyone associated with the event, including spectators. Any musher who is involved in a confrontation out on the trail can file a complaint by filling out the form in the vet book that is provided for this purpose. The form can be handed to any Judge for review.

Withdrawal from an Event – To withdraw from the White Oak Dog Sled Race, a driver must sign an official resignation form (provided in vet book) and present it to a race official.

Rule Violations and Safety Problems – Protests and reports of rule violations **SHALL NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH ANY OTHER PERSONS, INCLUDING SPECTATORS OR MEDIA. ONLY THE RACE MARSHALL MAY ISSUE STATEMENTS TO THE MEDIA REGARDING PROTESTS AND VIOLATIONS.**

Failure of a driver to comply with the event rules and to cooperate with officials may result in a monetary or time penalty as assessed by the Race Marshall.

The Race Marshall will have the authority to stop a team if the Race Marshall feels the safety of the dogs or driver is in jeopardy.

The White Oak Society and Race Officials and Veterinarians desire all participants and spectators to enjoy the fun and competitive spirit of this race. Please follow the above rules so that all may enjoy themselves and leave this event having had a positive experience. Thank you!