

RULES & POLICIES OF THE TAHQUAMENON COUNTRY SLED DOG RACE

(Approved 11/18/2024)

I. GENERAL RULES

A. Entries, fees and refunds shall be in accordance with rules set forth in this paragraph.

1. The Tahquamenon Country Sled Dog Race reserves the right to reject an entry for any reason.
2. Entries will be accepted through the website only (www.tcsdr.org) and must be submitted prior to close of entries at 6:00PM EST on Wednesday immediately preceding the race. No other entries or substitutions will be accepted after the close of entries, no exceptions.
3. Full refunds (minus credit card processing fees) will be allowed for cancellations received prior to close of entries. Class changes and entry fee adjustments allowed prior to close of entries. Cancellations after close of entries will not be refunded without prior Board of Directors approval and only for extenuating circumstances.

B. MUSHERS

1. Mushers under the age of eighteen may participate with a waiver of liability signed by a parent or legal guardian.
2. Mushers under the age of thirteen need special permission from the Chief Race Judge or the Race Director to participate in any class except for the youth two/three dog class.
3. Only one musher per team is permitted and no substitution will be allowed during the race. The Chief Race Judge may grant an exception for emergent and/or unusual circumstances.
4. Substitution of a musher with another qualified musher will be allowed up to the beginning of the mandatory drivers meeting.
5. All mushers must attend the mandatory drivers meeting. Any musher who misses the mandatory drivers meeting will be assessed a 5-minute time penalty. The Chief Race Judge may grant an exception for unusual circumstances.
6. All mushers are responsible for obtaining their race bib at the mandatory drivers meeting or, if excused from the meeting, must make arrangements with the Chief Race Judge for obtaining their bib prior to their mandatory equipment inspection.
7. Mushers are responsible for the conduct of their dogs, handlers and representatives during and after the race.
8. The musher is required to report all violations of race rules and regulations to the Chief Race Judge or an Assistant Race Judge.
9. Any musher who knowingly fails to comply with all race rules and regulations will face a time penalty, censure or disqualification depending on the nature of the violation as determined by the Chief Race Judge.
10. No alcoholic beverage shall be permitted at the race site, which includes the race trails and the starting area parking lot.
11. (10 & 6 dog pro class only) It is the musher's responsibility to check for traffic at snowmobile trail crossings on the race course. TCSDR Inc will attempt to secure the crossings, but the final safety is the musher's responsibility.

C. DOGS

1. Dog Team Size

- a. Each ten dog professional class team must start the race with a minimum of seven dogs and must finish the race with a minimum of seven dogs crossing the finish line.
 - b. Each six dog professional class team must start and finish the race with a minimum of five dogs.
 - c. Each four-six dog sportsman class team must start and finish with not more than six and not less than four dogs.
 - d. Each youth two/three dog team must start and finish with not more than three dogs and not less than one dog.
2. For classes with more than one heat, after the first heat and each ensuing heat, a driver may voluntarily reduce the size of the team, subject to minimums.
 3. Any team or dog not starting the first heat of the race shall not be eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.
 4. Any team or dog disqualified in any heat of the race shall not be eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.
 5. In classes with more than one heat, each dog shall be marked for identification prior to the start of the first heat of the race.
 6. Dogs dropped from teams after the first heat of the race shall be marked a second time to indicate their disqualification from a team.
 7. In the instance that any team finishes with less dogs within the team gang line than it started the heat with, it is the musher's responsibility to report the condition of the dog(s) to either a Race Official or a Race Veterinarian as soon as possible

D. VETERINARY GUIDELINES

1. DOGS AND RECORDS

- A. All dogs entered in the race must be current with vaccinations for parvovirus, distemper and rabies. Mushers should be prepared to provide the receipt or other means of proof of purchase of vaccines.
- B. Proof of valid rabies vaccination from the mushers state of residence signed by a licensed veterinarian at least two weeks prior to the race.
- C. Only dogs found to be in good health and fit to compete will be permitted to run this race.
- D. After the vet check prior to the start of the race no switching of dogs will be permitted.

2. DRUG USE

- A. No injectable, oral or topical drug which may suppress the signs of illness or injury may be used on a dog. A musher may not inject any substance into their dogs. No other drugs or artificial means may be used to drive a dog or cause a dog to perform or attempt to perform beyond its natural ability.
- B. The musher may administer the following compounds to their dogs orally without veterinary consent: vitamins, minerals, electrolytes, enzymes, probiotics and any dietary supplements marked as such, provided that these compounds are maintained in their original containers with labels indicating the contents.
- C. The administration of any substance to a dog orally by syringe or similar device (basting) by a musher is prohibited. The administration of any substance to a dog by syringe and needle by a musher is prohibited.
- D. The following drugs are prohibited.
 - a. Anabolic steroids
 - b. Analgesics (pain relievers) both prescriptive and non-prescriptive
 - c. Anti-inflammatory drugs, including but not limited to: cortico-steroids (the exception is the use on the feet), Antiprostaglandins, Non-steroidal (NSAIDS), Salicylates, DMSO
 - d. Anesthetics
 - e. Central nervous system stimulants
 - f. Antihistamines
 - g. Bronchodilators
 - h. Cough suppressants
 - i. Diuretics
 - j. Inject able anticholinergics
 - k. Muscle relaxants
 - l. Tranquilizers and opiates
- E. Algyval use: a. Lameness: The use of Algyval on any lameness is prohibited unless the following criteria are met: 1) Consultation with, and examination of lame dog by a race vet; 2) deemed appropriate for treating the lameness by a race veterinarian; b. The use of Algyval as a part of the mushers normal dog care shall be permitted unless it violates part 5 a. This includes use under the wrist wraps, shoulders, etc.
- F. The Tahquamenon Country Sled Dog Race reserves the right to collect blood and/or urine samples, at the direction of the Chief Veterinarian, at random at any time up to the beginning of the awards ceremony.
- G. The use of topical cortico-steroids is limited to use on the paw/pad. The only cortico-steroids containing topical products permitted for this race will be those dispensed by the Race Veterinarian.
- H. The use of megestrol acetate (ovaban) and mibolerone (cheque drops) is permitted in intact females that have not had an ovariectomy.
- I. The practice of blood doping, i.e. injection of whole blood, packed blood cells or substitutes is prohibited.

3. International Sled Dog Veterinary Medical Association Statement

- A. Criteria for Evaluating Dogs at a Sled Dog Race Position Statement: The ISDVMA is composed of veterinarians with extensive experience in sled dog care. ISDVMA veterinarians also are activists on behalf of the welfare of racing sled dogs. All decisions relating to the fitness of dogs and dog teams to continue to compete will be based on our education, experience, and commitment to the best interests of the sled dogs and the sport. Any errors made in determining the fitness of a dog or dog team to continue will be based on the side of the dog or dog team.
 - i. Monitoring Criteria Using ISDVMA guidelines, the following vital signs are indicators of health problems, which would require the withdrawal of a dog from the race:
 - 1. 7% - 8% dehydration.
 - 2. Heart rate 120 beats per minute or higher after 30 – 60 minutes of rest with or without a prolonged capillary refill time.
 - 3. Body temperature greater than 103 °F (39.4 °C) after one hour of rest.
 - 4. Lung sounds with evidence of edema, rales, or cough.
 - 5. Hypothermia: a body temperature less than 99 °F (37.2 °C).
 - 6. Non-responsive diarrhea with blood, associated with weight loss or dehydration.
 - 7. Severe lameness, especially of the shoulder.
 - 8. Seizures.
 - 9. Brown or red urine.

- 4. Chiropractic manipulation, Acupuncture, and Therapeutic Laser are recognized veterinary treatment modalities and, as such, their use during the race is under the jurisdiction of the Chief Race Veterinarian. Because it is impractical for the race veterinary team to ensure these treatment modalities would be uniformly available to all competitors, their use will be prohibited from the pre-race veterinary exam to the end of the race. If, after consulting with the Chief Race Veterinarian, a competitor feels their dog needs to be treated with one of these modalities, a decision may be made to allow the use on that dog, but that dog must be disqualified from the remaining heats of the race.

E. EQUIPMENT

1. All harnesses must be padded around the neck and chest areas.
 2. All gang lines must be arranged for single or double file disposition. Cable gang lines are optional but recommended for the ten-twelve dog class.
 3. A sled must be equipped with a working brake bolted to the sled, brush bow and snow hook. A snub line capable of holding the sled stationary and of length sufficient to be fastened and released by the musher while standing on the runners must be affixed to the sled. **Snub line start loop can be incorporated into this line, or sled must be equipped with a separate snub line for start chute.**
 4. A sled/dog bag capable of restraining safely a struggling or injured dog is required. (Note: Not required for 2/3 dog youth.)
 5. All double leaders shall be connected together by a neck line.
 6. Cable neck lines are not recommended but acceptable.
- A. MANDATORY GEAR (Note: Items 3 – 9 are not required for the four-six dog sportsman. Items 2 – 9 are not required for the youth class)
1. The assigned race bib (See also: Rule III D7)
 2. First aid kit (for musher and dogs) including Ace bandages and pressure dressings sufficient to stop bleeding
 3. One complete working headlamp
 4. Sleeping bag rated at 20 degrees Fahrenheit or below.
 5. One set (4) booties per dog
 6. Knife
 7. Axe, hatchet or bow saw
 8. A cable cutter (required only if using cable gang lines)
 9. Working compass and map of race trail
 10. Cable or chain drop lines (optional)

II. OFFICIATING

A. RACE OFFICIALS

1. The Chief Race Judge is in charge of all aspects of the race, including but not limited to the following: Interpretation of all rules, decision on time penalties, censures and disqualifications, final determinations of winners and placing.
2. Two Assistant Race Judges will act as deputies of the Chief Race Judge. The Chief Race Judge will rely on the consultation of the Assistant Race Judges.
3. The Chief Race Veterinarian will have final authority over the disposition of all dogs being disallowed for medical reasons.
4. The Chief Race Judge shall consult with the Race Veterinarian regarding any cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs.
5. Discontinuing the race prior to all mushers completing the course that desire to shall require a unanimous decision of all Race Judges and the Race Director.

B. PENALTIES AND PROTEST PROCEDURES

1. Penalties: Rule infractions may result in an issuance of warning, time penalties, censure, or disqualification. Any race judge may issue warnings. The Chief Race Judge will decide on all time penalties, censures and disqualifications. The Chief Race Vet shall be consulted in all cases involving cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs. Mushers shall be disqualified for any infractions including, but not limited to, physical abuse of a dog, cheating or deliberate rule infractions that give a musher an unfair advantage over another musher. A musher will be allowed to continue racing while a decision is being made except in cases involving cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs. Disqualification will result in the forfeiture of all race placements and monetary prizes.
2. Protests: Any musher wishing to lodge a protest must do so verbally at the first opportunity following the occurrence of the act or situation to be considered. All protests shall be lodged with a race judge only and shall not be discussed with other persons, including spectators or media. Following the verbal notification, a written protest must be submitted to the Chief Race Judge. Protests will be decided by a board comprised of the Chief Race Judge and the two Assistant Race Judges.

III. THE RACE

A. START/FINISH

1. At the race start, all mushers, handlers and team trucks must be in the official parking area at the specific time and location to be announced at the mushers meeting. At that time each dog team, sled and mandatory gear must be available for inspection.
2. The first day's starting positions shall be determined by a random draw held prior to the start of the event with Number 1 starting first, Number 2 starting second, etc.
3. In classes with more than one heat, the second day's starting positions shall be determined by the first day's times, with the fastest team starting first, the second fastest team starting second, etc.
4. A team finish time is measured when the lead dog crosses the finish line. Should any of the mandatory gear be missing, a 2 minute time penalty will be added to the finish time for each missing item. Expendable or consumable gear (e.g. booties) need not be present at the finish line.
5. A team missing its designated start time may leave the start chute at the first interval after the last team in the class has left the chute. If the team is not capable of leaving the chute at that time, they will not be allowed to race. The designated start time will apply for timing purposes.

B. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

1. No outside assistance is permitted during the race except under emergency conditions.
2. Musher may aid each other in appropriate ways under emergency conditions.
3. Outside assistance to repair broken or destroyed equipment is allowed.
4. Musher may receive assistance in cases of uncontrolled or lost dog teams.
5. Dog trucks and/or handlers are allowed only at the official parking area unless the team has officially scratched from the race.

C. HANDLING AND TREATMENT OF DOGS

1. The cruel and/or inhumane treatment of dogs by any musher or handler is strictly prohibited.
2. In the event a team gets away from the musher, it will not be disqualified if they have not left the race course. If the team and the musher have left the race course, they must re-enter the course at the point they left it.
3. All dogs on a team must be in harness and attached to the sled. A. No loose leaders will be permitted. B. A musher must make every effort to secure a dog which becomes loose accidentally. A musher is disqualified if they are unable to regain control of his or her loose dog. Any dogs left at any point on the race trail shall be cause for disqualification.
4. EXPIRED DOGS: Any dog expired on the trail must be covered and transported to the finish line, at which time the driver shall report it first to the Chief Race Judge. The musher must then complete a report and present it to the Chief Race Vet. All expired dogs may be necropsied by the Chief Race Vet. Financial charges occurred due to the necropsy may be the responsibility of the musher. The death of a dog may result in the disqualification of a musher.

D. THE RACE COURSE

1. When overtaking another team, the musher must call "TRAIL". A. The slower team must relinquish the trail and assist the passing team if necessary. B. When neither team is able to pull away from the other, the mushers shall agree which is the appropriate team to lead out.
2. Sticks and other poling aids cannot be used within 100 feet (either behind or in front) of another team and must be stowed when a musher calls for trail.
3. Musher shall not be tethered to their sleds at any point during the race.
4. When passing is taking place, mushers are responsible to ensure that their dogs do not aggressively go into the other team(s) involved in the pass. If necessary, a musher must stop their team and physically restrain a dog showing aggression toward another team.
5. No-Man's-Land starts approximately one mile from the finish line and will be well marked. Musher no longer have the option to call trail nor will mushers be required to relinquish the trail.
6. Musher shall not place or leave litter on the race trail.
7. The assigned race bib shall be worn with the number visible at all times during the race.