



**WORLD SLEDDOG ASSOCIATION**  
[www.wsa-sleddog.com](http://www.wsa-sleddog.com)



## **INTERNATIONAL WSA - RACE RULES**

*SPRINT and DISTANCE*

**Version: 2.15 Date: 22.09.2014**

### **PROLOGUE:**

These racing rules are valid for all WSA and WSA sanctioned racing events.

The rules will supersede any national race rules as long as it comes to international WSA races. In case of discrepancy between general rules and special rules, the special rule shall prevail. Any aspect of national and international animal rights must be observed and the WSA Executive Board has any and all rights to disqualify a team from an event in case said animal rights are not observed.

Inspection of the trail must be permitted for the mushers. However such inspection is only possible on cross country skis and in the time period advised by the race marshal. No dogs are allowed on the trail during such inspection.

Unless otherwise announced, private motor sleds are not permitted on the trail at all times.

Race marshal and all other officials shall act against any and all teams in the same sporting and fair manner.

A musher may start for the country of which he/she holds a valid passport or in which he/she has his/her prime place of residence for at least 12 months.

The musher may not change the country for which he/she starts within the racing season.

Start sequence of the classes and other race organizational matters are under control of the race-giving organization and the race marshal. There is no mandatory requirement to alter the race time schedule or sequence to meet any particular musher's need.

All membership and starting fees have to be paid in full prior to a Championship event to make a starter from any given member organization eligible to start in the event.

WSA titles are awarded in the respective classes when at least five competitors participate in the first heat of a championships. (Exceptions are possible in junior classes)

Dogs may only be used in one class.

National Championships of our member clubs must not clash with the dates set for WSA Championships.

Helmets are mandatory in all junior classes and categories.

**In case of differences in interpretation the German original version of the WSA Race Rules shall apply.**

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**Note:**

**It is recommended that each national organization translate these race rules into the respective national language to assure the full understanding by all mushers.**



## **CHAPTER ONE:General Rules**

### **1.1 GENERAL.**

1.1.1 Only sled dogs according to F.C.I. are permitted to race.

Such breeds are: Alaskan Malamutes, Greenland Dogs, Samoyeds and Siberian Husky.

1.1.2 It will be raced in two categories:

Category 1: All sled dog breeds

Category 2: Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed and Greenland Dog only

1.1.3 The dog which enters the sprint race should reach the minimum age of 15 months in the same month of the first day of the World Championship/European Championship and 18 months for Distance races. When the dog is by age allowed to race at the Word championship/European Championship it is also allowed to start in competition as of the first of January of that year. Before starting the young dog must be checked by the veterinarian of the race.

### **1.2 ELEGIBILITY**

1.2.1 The driver starting a team in the first heat of a race shall drive that team throughout the race.

1.2.2. All dogs shall be hitched within the team at the start of each heat.

1.2.3. Any team, driver or dog disqualified in any heat of, or at any point in the race is not eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.

1.2.4. Any driver, team or dog coming to the starting line which, in the opinion of the race marshal, is unfit or incapable of safely completing the trail, shall not be allowed to start.

1.2.5. Any team or dog not starting a heat of a race shall not be eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.

1.2.6. A team shall not be eligible to compete in subsequent heats if its total elapsed time exceeds the time disqualification factor established for the event.

### **1.3 SIZE OF TEAMS.**

1.3.1 After the start of the first heat, no dogs may be added to the team.

1.3.2 After the first heat and each ensuing heat, a driver may voluntarily reduce the size of the team, subject to class minimums.

1.3.3 It is the responsibility of the competitor to adjust the size of his team to his capabilities.

1.3.4 The race marshal may reduce the size of any team that he determines is too large for the designated driver.

1.3.5 The race marshal may limit the maximum number of dogs in any given class.

### **1.4 DOPING CONTROL**

In all competitions held under these rules, the WSA Anti-Doping rules, WSA List of forbidden substances and methods, and WSA Procedural guidelines for doping control shall apply.

### **1.5 EQUIPMENT.**

1.5.1 Drivers, teams and equipment shall be available for inspection in the vehicle holding area, in sprint races at least ten (10) minutes and in distance races at least one (1) hour, before their scheduled time of departure.

1.5.2 A team in harness shall not be required to stand for inspection longer than six (6) minutes before the scheduled time of departure.

1.5.3 A team shall be available for inspection after each heat at the request of the race marshal.

1.5.4 All equipment is subject to the approval of the race marshal.

1.5.5 A muzzle or a collar that can be hooked as a full choke shall be prohibited.

1.5.6 Whips are forbidden.

1.5.7 The driver shall display his starting number on his person throughout the race.

### **1.6 START.**

1.6.1 Assistance in the starting chute shall be allowed.

- 1.6.2 The brush bow (front end) of the sled shall determine the starting point of the team, and shall not exceed the starting line until the start signal has been given.
- 1.6.3 The sled shall come to a complete stop at the starting line before a team shall be allowed to start.
- 1.6.4 A team that fails to be in the starting position at its scheduled starting time, or within half of the starting interval after the scheduled starting time shall be declared a late-starting team and will receive a time penalty (see 7.9.4.)
- 1.6.5 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. A late-starting team shall not interfere with any other team.
- 1.6.6 If more than one team is declared late, those teams shall start in their originally scheduled starting order with the prescribed starting intervals.
- 1.6.7 If a team is late to the starting line for its second scheduled time of departure for any one heat, that team shall be disqualified.
- 1.6.8 A team not clearing the starting chute prior to the scheduled start of the next team may be disqualified.

### 1.7 FINISH.

- 1.7.1 A team shall have finished the heat when the first dog on the team crosses the finish line. Teams must stop for inspection behind finish line.
- 1.7.2 If a loose team crosses the finish line ahead of its driver, that team shall have finished when the driver reaches the finish line.
- 1.7.3 In cases of chip timing the position of the transponder will be defined prior to the race.

### 1.8 TRAIL RULES.

- 1.8.1 A team and driver shall run the full course as established by the race-giving organization.
- 1.8.2 A team not completing the entire course of a heat shall not be eligible to compete in the remainder of the race.
- 1.8.3 If a team leaves the trail, the driver shall return the team to the point at which they left the trail.
- 1.8.4 Any driver accepting a ride on any vehicle other than his own sled shall be disqualified unless in case of an emergency, loose team or dog.
- 1.8.5 A driver shall not interfere with a competing team.
- 1.8.6 Carrying a passenger at any time during the race shall be prohibited unless:
- 1.8.6.1 Called for in the conditions of the race.
- 1.8.6.2 Giving a ride to a driver in an emergency situation.
- 1.8.7 All teams may receive similar assistance of any type from officials stationed at designated points along the trail as authorized by the race marshal.
- 1.8.8 Drivers running in the same heat may assist each other in any manner authorized by the race marshal.
- 1.8.9 Handler or spectator assistance shall be limited to holding the sled, except in the case of a loose team, or a team so unmanageable as to create a clear and present danger to themselves, other teams or persons.
- 1.8.10 No one shall assist a team by willfully pacing it other than the team driver.
- 1.8.11 Loose teams and dog(s).
- 1.8.11.1 All drivers must assume that a loose team or dog is an endangered team or dog.
- 1.8.11.2 A loose team or dog shall not delay or interfere with another team.
- 1.8.11.3 The driver of the loose team must overtake the loose team by the quickest means available to ensure the safety of the loose team.
- 1.8.11.3.1 In the event that the driver cannot quickly and safely recover his/her team, the driver must accept assistance, including a ride when available to recover his team. Failure to accept available assistance may result in disqualification of the driver of the loose team. The race marshal shall determine if a driver is to be disqualified.
- 1.8.11.3.2 Any Person (s) is (are) encouraged to stop and hold a loose team.

1.8.12 A loose team may resume the trail without penalty provided the team has completed the entire trail and the driver only has received outside assistance limited to stopping and holding the loose team or dog.

1.8.13 In a dual start, and whenever two trails join together, the team with the lead dog farthest ahead shall have the right of way.

1.8.14 When teams are passing in opposite directions on a single trail, the team traveling downhill shall have the right of way. On level terrain, the race marshal shall determine and announce, prior to the start of the race, whether the incoming or outgoing team shall have the right of way.

1.8.15 When one team intends to pass another, the passing team driver may request the right of way when the lead dog(s) come(s) within 15 meters of the sled of the overtaken team.

1.8.16 On the command "TRAIL", the overtaken team shall make way for the passing team by moving his team to one side of the trail and slow down.

1.8.17 On the command "STOP", the overtaken team shall make way for the passing team by moving his team to one side of the trail and then stop.

1.8.18 Once a team has been passed, that team shall not re-pass until:

1.8.18.1 In classes involving more than six dogs after no less than four (4) minutes or 1600 meters.

1.8.18.2 In classes involving six (6) dogs or less, and in Pulka or Skijoring style, after no less than two (2) minutes or 800 meters.

1.8.18.3 At any lesser intervals whenever both drivers are in agreement.

1.8.19 If the passing team becomes tangled as a result of the pass, that team's driver may require the overtaken team driver to stop for no longer than one (1) minute in unlimited and limited 8 dog class, one-half (1/2) minute in all other classes.

1.8.20 A stopped team shall make every effort to clear the trail for moving teams.

The time limit for re-passing does not apply when the overtaking team has stopped for other reasons than tangling as a result of the pass.

1.8.21 Teams following each other shall maintain an interval of not less than 1 team length, except when passing or in the finish chute.

1.8.22 In the finish chute, no team shall have the right of way over a finishing team in the same class.

## 1.9 CONDUCT

1.9.1 All drivers shall be responsible for the conduct of their dogs, their designated handlers, and themselves whenever in the race area or on trail. Common sense and good, fair sportsmanship shall prevail.

1.9.2 If the race marshal determines that driver, handler or team conduct at any time in the race area or on trail is detrimental to the sport/race, that team shall be disqualified.

1.9.3 Abuse of dogs, with or without an implement, shall be prohibited. If a driver, in the opinion of the race marshal, abuses a dog, that driver shall be disqualified.

## 1.10 RULES VIOLATIONS.

1.10.1 Race officials shall report over rules violations to the race marshal immediately or directly following the heat in which the violation occurred.

1.10.2 Drivers wishing to report an alleged violation of the rules by another contestant shall notify the race marshal immediately following the heat of his category in which the incident occurred.

1.10.3 Verbal reports by drivers shall be followed with a written report, given to the race marshal within one (1) hour of the completion of the participant's heat in which the alleged violation occurred.

1.10.4 Any driver or race official implicated in a report of an alleged violation of the rules may make a protest and request a hearing before the race marshal.



### 1.11 DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

1.11.1 For violation of any WSA regulation, the race marshal shall either issue a reprimand, a warning, or disqualify the driver and team from the race. No other disciplinary action shall be imposed, unless specifically defined in the Race rule or in the Implementing rules.

1.11.2 Decisions shall be announced as promptly as practical but no later than two hours prior to the start of any ensuing heat(s).

1.11.3 Any disciplinary action following the final heat of any race shall be acted upon prior to the awards ceremony.

1.11.4 The decision of the race marshal is final.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Special Rules for Nome Style

#### 2.1 CLASSES.

2.1.1 An unlimited team (UL-class) shall consist of not less than 8 dogs, with a minimum of 9 dogs in the first run. The musher must be at least 18 years of age.

2.1.2 A limited 8 dog class team (8-dog-class) shall consist of 6 to 8 dogs, with a minimum of 7 dogs in the first heat. The musher must be at least 18 years of age.

2.1.3 A limited 6 dog class team (6-dog-class) shall consist of 4 to 6 dogs, with a minimum of 5 dogs in the first heat. The musher must be at least 16 years of age.

2.1.4 A limited 4 dog class team (4-dog-class) shall consist of 3 to 4 dogs. The musher must be at least 16 years of age.

2.1.5 A limited 2 dog class team (2-dog-class) shall consist of the same 2 dogs at all heats. The musher must be at least 16 years of age.

2.1.6 A musher at the age of at least 12 years and not older than 15 years shall be considered as "JUNIOR". It is assumed that the junior has the explicit permission to from either the parents or the custodian to participate in the event and that an adequate personal insurance coverage is available. Junior mushers will be marked (J) in the final results. Junior classes are 2-dog-class and Skijoring. Junior classes must run over the 2-dog-trail

2.1.7 The classification is based on the actual age of the musher on the first day of the championship.

#### 2.2 EQUIPMENT.

2.2.1 All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file.

2.2.2 All dogs shall be fastened to the tug line by a neck line and a tail line. Lead dogs may run with a neck line.

2.2.3 A safety line must be attached to the sled but shall not be used in any manner than to tie down and hold the sled.

2.2.4 A sled shall be capable of adequately carrying the driver, standing on the runners and have a basket of minimum surface of 40x50 cm, with a solid bottom capable of safely carrying a dog. All sleds in all classes shall be equipped with an adequate brake, brake pad, brushbow, one(1) snowhook for 2-dog and 4-dog-classes is mandatory, two (2) snowhooks are allowed. Two (2) snowhooks for 6-, 8- and UL-class are mandatory. All sleds shall be equipped with a dog bag. The dog bag must be of adequate size to carry the largest dog in the team and should be ventilated with holes or a net of a minimum surface of 600 cm<sup>2</sup>.

So called Swedish- or Firefighter shackles with sharp edges/locking teeth are not permitted at any point in the harness or equipment as well as the stake out equipment. This is for animal welfare reasons.

2.2.5. A driver racing 7 or more dogs must carry a cutting device, capable of cutting the tow line of the team

## 2.3 TRAIL RULES.

2.3.1 A driver may ride the sled, pedal or run as wished. Under no circumstances is it permitted for the driver or the handlers to run in front of the team.

2.3.2 All dogs starting the heat shall complete the entire course, either hitched in the team or carried on the sled.

2.3.3 On the trail, dogs shall be carried in the dog bag when taken out of the team.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Special Rules for Pulka Style (SW/SM)

#### 3.1 CLASSES.

3.1.1 The competition will be held in one class with one (1) to four (4) dogs.

3.1.2 The class will race in two categories:

Category 1: all four sled dog breeds

Category 2: Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed, and Greenland dogs only

3.1.3 The class will be divided by men and women whenever there are at least 5 starters in each group. Men and women may run in one category if there are fewer than 5 starters in any individual class.

3.1.4 The minimum age of the musher is 16 years.

#### 3.2 EQUIPMENT.

3.2.1 All entrants shall be responsible for seeing to it that their equipment meets the requirements of these rules.

3.2.2 Dogs shall preferably be harnessed in single file. Harnessing in double file with a central shaft may be allowed if the trail profile presents no risk to the dogs under such harnessing. Double file harnessing requires a brake on the pulka.

3.2.3 The pulka shall be:

3.2.3.1 Connected with two solid shafts to the harness(es) when driving in single file and connected with one solid shaft in the middle to the harness(es) when driving in double files. It is enough if the shafts go to the wheel dog(s) so it is not possible for the sled to overrun a harnessed dog.

3.2.3.2 So constructed that the front of ski runners are between the shafts;

3.2.3.3 Equipped with the possibility of fastening the required load securely;

3.2.3.4 Equipped with a line, which in general shall be attached to the driver by a hip belt (at least 7cm wide over the spine). The belt shall be equipped with a hook in order to make it easy to release the line, or a quick release connection (panic snap). It is prohibited to have any form of metal hook or ring on the free end of the line. [In general this means: Pulka dog(s) may run loose only in case of down hill slopes or any situation actually endangering the dog(s)].

3.2.4 Pulkas of teams with more than two (2) dogs shall be equipped with a brake.

3.2.5 The total load to be carried shall be:

- 10 Kg for one (1) dog;
- 20 Kg for two (2) dogs
- 30 Kg for three (3) dogs
- and 40Kg for 4 dogs.

3.2.6 The total weight shall be reduced by 3Kg for each female in the team.

3.2.7 The load consists of: pulka, shafts, harness(es), lines and the additional weight.

3.2.8 The additional weight shall be furnished by the participant himself.

3.2.9 Extra ski pole(s) may be carried. Extra pole(s) will become part of the total weight.

#### 3.3 TRAIL and START RULES.

3.3.1 The driver shall follow his team on skis. Standing, sitting or otherwise riding on the pulka is not permitted.

3.3.2 If a dog becomes unfit, the driver is not permitted to finish the heat and must abandon the race.

3.3.3 The driver shall not pace the dog(s) by running ahead of them. Assisting the dog or team by pushing or pulling the pulka is permitted.

3.3.4 Assistance in watering or feeding the dogs is permitted. Forced watering or feeding shall not be allowed. The race marshal may designate specific spots on the trail where such help may be given.

3.3.5 The pulka's front or the tip of pulka skis must be behind the starting line, until the starting signal is given.

3.3.6 Pulka class shall compete on the 6-dog-class trail.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Special Rules for Skijoring (SJW/SJM)

#### 4.1 CLASSES.

4.1.1 The competition shall only be held in a one (1) dog class (SJ1), and the class will race in two categories:

Category 1: all four sled dog breeds

Category 2: Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed, and Greenland dogs only

4.1.2 The class will be divided up into men and women, whenever there are at least 5 starters in each group.

4.1.3 In case there are not at least 5 starters in either Men or Women category the race marshal may decide to have the Skijoring Men starting in the same class with the Pulka Men. The same applies for the Women classes. If there are still fewer than 5 starters in either Men or Women class, both, Men and Women will be combined to race in the same class.

4.1.4 The minimum age of the musher 16 years.

4.1.5 Separate classes for drivers aged 12-15 years may be offered on the 2 dog-trail. A musher at the age of at least 12 years and not older than 15 years shall be considered as "JUNIOR". It is assumed that the Junior has the explicit permission to from either the parents or the custodian to participate in the event and that an adequate personal insurance coverage is available. Junior mushers will be marked (J) in the final results.

4.1.6 The classification is based on the actual age of the musher on the first day of the championship.

#### 4.2 EQUIPMENT.

4.2.1 The dogs harness shall not allow the dog to escape.

4.2.2 The dog shall be attached to the driver by a snub line with shock absorber at all times.

4.2.2.1 It is prohibited to have any form of metal hook or ring at the end of the line.

4.2.3 The skis shall not be dangerous for the dog, e.g. sharp tips are not allowed.

#### 4.3 STARTING RULES.

4.3.1 The front end of the skis shall determine the starting point of the team.

#### 4.4 TRAIL RULES.

4.4.1 The driver shall follow the dog on skis.

4.4.2 If the dog becomes unfit, the driver is not permitted to finish the heat and has to abandon the race.

4.4.3 The driver shall not pace the dog by running ahead.

4.4.4 Skijoring class shall compete on the 6-dog-class trail.

## CHAPTER 5

### Special Rules for Distance Races

Participants shall attend the participants' meeting held prior to the start of the race in order to qualify to compete in the race.



## **5.1 CLASSES.**

5.1.1 The distance race will be done in the following classes:

DS: Pulka class, one (1) to four (4) dogs or/and Skijöring 1-2 dogs

Minimum age of driver 16 years.

The class will be divided by men and women whenever there are at least five (5) starters in each group.

D limited (DL): Three (3) to six (6) dogs, minimum age of the driver 16 years

D unlimited (DU): Seven (7) dogs and more, minimum age of the driver 18 years

5.1.2 The class DS will race in one categorie/ the classes DL/DU will race in two categories

Category 1: All four sled dog breeds

Category 2: Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed and Greenland Dog only

## **5.2 EQUIPMENT.**

5.2.1 All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest area.

5.2.2 The type of sled used is at the option of the participant but subject to the approval of the race marshal.

5.2.3 Pulka weights are identical to the sprint class.

5.2.4 The emergency equipment is mandatory and consists of:

- First aid kit for dog and human
- Knife or other cutting tool,
- One (1) set of booties for each dog in the team,
- Spare equipment, minimum 2 each: harnesses, leaches, collars, neck lines, ski poles\*, extra ski\*, \*(DS only)

5.2.6 The race marshal may extend the list of emergency equipment. Such extension must be announced early prior the first heat, to allow every driver to complete his equipment. If the trail requires extra equipment, such as braking chain, compass, headlamp, water, dog food, stake-out or else, it has to be listed in the official announcement of the event

5.2.7 The racing number shall be displayed as decided by the race marshal.

5.2.8 Exclusive sprintsledges are not allowed in MD and D<sup>1</sup>)

## **5.3 TRAIL RULES.**

5.3.1 If a team leaves the trail, the participant shall return the team to the point at which he left the trail or, if that is not practical and without shortening the course or eliminating any checkpoints, the participant may proceed to the next checkpoint.

5.3.2 A participant may accept outside hospitality along the trail, as offered to all participants, but shall be solely responsible for the care of his team dogs.

5.3.3 No participant shall accept outside help in the process of caring for his dogs' daily maintenance needs unless authorized by the race marshal and available to all participants in the race.

5.3.4 A disqualified or withdrawn participant shall give the right of way to all teams on the trail remaining in competition.

5.3.5 Disqualified participants, and participants voluntarily withdrawing from the race, shall proceed to the next or nearest trail official and report to the official in charge.

5.3.6 In the case of a participant being incapacitated on the trail and unable to proceed, rules related to emergency situations shall apply.

5.3.7 No litter shall be left on or near the trail.

5.3.8 Team and equipment inspections may be conducted at checkpoints on the trail.

## **5.4 INSPECTION**

5.4.1 A team shall be available for inspection(s) at the request of all authorized officials.

5.4.2 A team in harness shall not be required to stand for inspection longer than six (6) minutes.

5.4.3 Trail checkpoint inspections shall not unnecessarily delay the progress of a team.

5.4.4 Unfit dogs shall be dropped at designated dog drop checkpoints only or transported on the sled to the finish.

5.4.4.1 The team stays in the race if the minimum team size is still assured.

- 5.4.5 Dropped dogs shall, at the option of the race-giving organization, be tagged with:
- 5.4.5.1 Participant's name and racing number.
  - 5.4.5.2 Destination of where the dog is to be transported.
  - 5.4.5.3 Reason for dropping the dog.
- 5.4.6 A dropped dog shall be fastened by a chain or cable to hold it in place until it is picked up by an authorized person.
- 5.4.7 Dropped dogs shall be disqualified to compete in the remainder of the race.
- 5.4.8 The race marshal or race veterinarian may detain a participant for the purpose of repairing or replacing equipment which is deemed detrimental to the safety and well-being of team and/or participant.
- 5.4.8.1 The race marshal or race veterinarian may detain a team which is deemed in need of rest.
- 5.4.9 The race marshal or race veterinarian may remove a team or dog(s) from the race which is deemed unfit to continue the race.
- 5.4.10 If the race marshal feels that there may be grounds for disqualification, he shall notify the participant and the next trail official. The participant may proceed on the trail and shall be subject to a hearing following the completion of his race. In the event of a participant arriving at a trail official 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.

## **5.5 FINISH RULES.**

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.

## **5.6 ADDITIONAL AND OPTIONAL RULES.**

- 5.6.1 A race giving organization may decide to start the slower teams on the second and/or following heat(s) before the faster teams, e.g. reverse to the results of the previous heat.
- 5.6.2 A race-giving organization may impose additional rules to meet requirements unique to local conditions. Those rules shall be part of the race announcement. Additional rules shall be announced in advance.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Special rules for stage-races**

#### **6.1 GENERAL**

- 6.1.1 All mushers have to take part in all musher meetings scheduled by the race Marshall. These meetings may be held before the start of the race itself and before the beginning of each stage. In case of a musher not taking part in one (1) of the scheduled meetings, the musher may be disqualified.
- 6.1.2 All mushers must be 18 years of age by 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the year of the beginning of the race
- 6.1.3 All dogs must be identified by microchip.

#### **6.2 CLASSES**

6.2.1 Stage races are separated in the following classes.

- L-Pulka 1-3 dogs
- L1 Pool of 5 dogs, minimum team size is 3, maximum team size is 4 dogs
- L2 Pool of 7 dogs, minimum team size is 5, maximum team size is 6 dogs
- LO Pool of 14 dogs, minimum team size is 8, maximum team size is 12 dogs

The number of dogs in class LO at the beginning of each stage can be reduced by the race marshal.

6.2.2 There is no division into Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed and Greenland Dog. All sled dogs according to F.C.I. (Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed and Greenland Dog) run in the same class.

6.2.3 Dogs can rest outside the team during stages and can be brought into the team to anytime. The minimum size of the team has to be reached. The minimum size of the team depends on the class the team starts in. The musher has to inform the race marshal in an active way

about any exchange of dogs or any change of the size of the team or drop of any dog of his pool. The chip list has to be given to the race judge together with the announcement of start. The race judge is allowed to accept changes in the chip list in case of special case.

### **6.3 LOADS AND EQUIPMENT**

6.3.1 In L-Pulka the minimum loads of the pulka will be:

- 10 kg with one dog
- 20 kg with two dogs
- 30 kg with three dogs.

The minimum load of the pulka is reduced by 3 kg per each female in the team.

6.3.2 The minimum load of the sled classes will be:

- L1 -7 kg per each dog in the team
- L2 -6 kg per each dog in the team
- LO -5 kg per each dog in the team

The maximum weight per sled is 50kg. The weight of the sled is calculated by the number of dogs at the beginning of the stage in question.

6.3.3 The race judge is allowed to adjust the load of pulka and the load of the sleds for each stage to the weather and snow conditions in place and time.

6.3.4 The load consists of:

6.3.4.1 L-Pulka: the pulka itself, shaft, lines, harnesses, extra ski, extra ski poles, emergency equipment for man and dog, additional weight

6.3.4.2 L1, L2 and LO: Sled, lines, safety equipment for man and dog, additional weight.

6.3.5 The load contains any equipment for bivouac. If the maximum weight is reached, equipment for bivouac can be transported to the bivouac by the organiser of the competition. In this case the equipment can be reduced to the minimum and be controlled by the race judgement.

6.3.6 On the trail it is obligatory for the musher to have the complete safety equipment for man and dog with him. The list of the emergency equipment is shown in chapter §5.2.5 of the Distance race rules. It is completed by an insulation blanket for humans, a minimum of 0.5 litres of water per each dog, and one bowl for feeding. Chapter §5.2.5 will be in use, also.

6.3.7 The number must be shown clearly on the body. In other cases the musher can be sanctioned by the race judgement.

6.3.8 Chapters §5.3, §5.4, § 5.5 und § 5.6 of the distance race rules will be in use, also. In addition to § 5.6 of the distance race rules the race judge is allowed to disqualify any teams which are extremely slow. Extremely slow means in this case, that the team needs more then 150% of the average time of the fastest 3 teams per heat and class.

#### **6.3.9 Additional Rules**

Beside the abovementioned special rules, the general race rules of the WSA shall apply.

## **Implementing Rules**

### **GENERAL**

#### **7.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

7.1.1 These rules shall apply in all races governed by WSA Race regulations, in order to foster the use of uniform rules and race procedures and facilitate races of superior conditions and uniform quality. Only options and amendments approved of by the WSA shall be allowed.

7.1.2 The definitions and descriptions in these rules shall also apply for other WSA regulations, when appropriate.

7.1.3 Likewise, in these regulations and other WSA regulations, where appropriate, the word "Participant", "Participant", "Participant", etc. shall include "The participant and/or his dog(s)", the masculine shall include the feminine and the singular shall include the plural.

7.1.4 A national member, for the purpose of these rules, is any regular national member association as well as any associated national member association.

7.1.5 An individual member, for the purpose of these rules, is any regular or associated individual member of the WSA.

## 7.2 DEFINITIONS.

7.2.1 **Organization:** The race-giving organization in charge of running the event.

7.2.2 **Technical Organizer:** A body which, upon an agreement with the race-giving organization, has assumed responsibility for the implementation for the technical aspects, or parts of same, of an event.

7.2.3 **Event:** A meeting of participants for the purpose of competing in one event which may involve several classes.

7.2.4 **Race:** A competition in a specified class and may be comprised of one or more heats.

7.2.5 **Heat:** A completion of the trail once.

7.2.6 **Race Area:** All designated parking areas, spectator areas, team holding areas, start/finish chutes, officiating areas and the trail areas.

7.2.7 **Vehicle Holding Area:** A specially defined area, pre-start and/or after finish, where the participants' vehicles shall be parked.

7.2.8 **Stake Out Area:** A specially defined area where dogs of participating teams shall be kept when not competing.

7.2.9 **Official:** A person appointed by the organizer or the rules enforcing officer, authorized to perform, within prescribed limits, to act on their behalf.

7.2.10 **Starting Chute:** A specified stretch of the trail from the starting line, minimum 30 meters, where assistance is allowed.

7.2.11 **Finish Chute:** A specified stretch of the trail toward the finish line, minimum 800 meters, where special rules for passing apply.

7.2.12 **Sled:** Also includes a pulka for the purpose of all race regulations, when appropriate.

7.2.13 **Contestant:** A person who drives a dog team entered in the race may also be called participant, competitor, driver or musher.

7.2.14 **Handler:** A person appointed by the organizer or the participant himself, assisting teams at start, after finish and at checkpoints.

7.2.15 **Shall:** Shall be construed as being imperative.

7.2.16 **Should:** Shall be construed as being principally imperative, but special circumstances may speak for departing from it.

7.2.17 **May:** Shall be construed as being permissive.

7.2.18 **Emergency:** All situations, which actually endanger private property, or overall safety/health of dogs and/or humans. It includes run-a-way teams and dogs; physical collapse of human or animal, any accident requiring consultation of doctor or veterinarian.

## 7.3 ADMINISTRATION

7.3.1 The appointment of a technical organizer does not give the race-giving organization the right to disclaim responsibility for any parts of the event.

7.3.2 The race-giving organization shall be responsible for an adequate number of officials in order to run the event properly.

7.3.3 Officials shall be appointed and exercise their assignments according to the WSA regulations.

7.3.4 Organizations shall see to it that their appointed officials are made familiar with their assignments and the regulations pertaining to the event.

7.3.5 If the organizer is not the national WSA member of the country in which the race is held, the organizer shall apply for approval from the said member federation.

## 7.4 RULES ENFORCEMENT.

7.4.1 Rules enforcing officers shall be appointed and exercise their assignments according to the WSA regulations.

7.4.2 The race marshal (Chief Judge) and the race judges shall be WSA / WSA certified.

7.4.3 The race marshal shall have supreme authority at an event. He is the only official who can decide upon a disqualification. The race marshal may not be a participant.

7.4.4 A race judge shall have full rules enforcement authority, except for a disqualification, but shall have no authority for a class in which he himself is a participant, and shall not take part in the jury's deliberations on reports or incidents concerning same.



References to the race marshal in WSA Regulations also apply for the race judge(s), when appropriate.

7.4.5 A race judge may delegate parts of his authority to designated officials, except for the authority to impose penal measures.

## **7.5 ELIGIBILITY**

### **7.5.1 ENTRIES**

7.5.1.1 The race shall be open to entries as per race announcement and in reference to annex 1 starter schedule (as per WSA GA decision) of this race rule, except those refused by the racegiving organization for just cause. The participant needs to be informed on the reason for nonacceptance.

7.5.1.2 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 organization.

### **7.5.2 DOGS.**

7.5.2.1 Dogs may be required to undergo a physical examination prior to the start of the race by a race veterinarian, in order to be allowed to start.

7.5.2.2 The race marshal may disallow entry of any participant, team or dog for just cause; the participant needs to be informed on the reason for non-acceptance or disqualification.

### **7.5.3 DISEASE.**

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

7.5.3.2 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.

7.5.3.3 All dogs brought to the race area shall be vaccinated against Rabies, Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parvovirus and Kennel cough. Certificates must be presented upon request.

## **7.6 START AND FINISH RULES**

### **7.6.1 IDENTIFICATION.**

In a race of more than one heat, each dog shall be identified prior to the start of the first heat of the race. Microchips are mandatory, only if not readable or otherwise identifiable will another method of dog identification or marking be permitted.

### **7.6.2 STARTING INTERVALS.**

The starting intervals should be

7.6.2.1 One (1) or two (2) minutes in limited classes involving eight dogs or less as well as Pulka and Skijoring class. At the World Championship / European Championship the starting intervals must be at least one (1) minute for **Pulka, Skijoring, 2-dog- and 4-dog-class and two (2) minutes for 6-,8- and UL-classes.**

7.6.2.2 Two (2) or three (3) minutes in classes involving ten dogs or more.

Trail time for all teams shall begin at the originally scheduled time of departure, except for a late starting team for which trail time begins at the same time of actual departure; however, the team will be penalized with 15 minutes extra racing for late starting.

### **7.6.3 STARTING ORDER.**

7.6.3.1 The starting positions for the first heat of a race shall be determined by drawing held prior to the race at a time and place designated by the race-giving organization.

7.6.3.2 The order of the drawing shall not be changed, either by addition or substitution. Late entries, if accepted by the race giving organization, shall be added in order of receipt.

7.6.3.3 Every participating organization is permitted to identify one (1) or a maximum of 20% of their starters in that class as seeded. Those mushers of all national teams identified as seeded will be drawn for the first starting positions in the particular class. All other mushers and guests of the WSA are drawn thereafter. This procedure will hold true for all classes.



7.6.3.4 In distance events, the order of the drawing shall be based on the date of receipt of each participant's entry fee and completed entry form and shall not be changed, either by addition or substitution.

7.6.3.5 Entries received on the same date shall be treated alphabetically.

7.6.3.6 In single start races, the first day's starting positions shall be determined by the draw with number 1 starting first, number 2 starting second, etc.

7.6.3.7 After the first heat, the starting positions shall be determined by the total elapsed time of the previous heat(s), with the fastest teams starting first, the second fastest team starting second, etc. Any alteration in this sequence will not be permitted; except for late start procedures see 1.6.5 and 7.9.4.

7.6.3.8 An option of the race giving organization is, to start in the opposite sequence, with the slowest teams of the previous heat(s) first and the fastest team last. It is not allowed to implement this rule during a World Championship / European Championship.

7.6.3.9 At the option of the race-giving organization, the starting intervals of the last day of a race may be identical to the differences of the total elapsed times of the participants, so that the order in which the participants are crossing the finish line also will reflect their finishing positions. The maximum time interval shall be 2 minutes and all lower intervals shall be in rounded seconds. It is not allowed to implement this rule during a World Championship / European Championship.

7.6.3.10 In dual start races, the first day's starting positions shall be determined by the draw with numbers 1 and 2 starting together first, numbers 3 and 4 starting together second, etc. It is not allowed to implement this rule during a World Championship / European Championship.

7.6.3.11 If the total elapsed time of two teams is identical, the order of start for those teams shall be the reverse order in which they started in the preceding heat.

## **7.7 RANKING**

A class is rated for WSA Championships separately only if there are at least five (5) teams starting in the first heat of that class. Exception: Where Junior participation is allowed, the rating will be as provided for in the Special Rules.

In individual cases and depending on circumstances the Race Marshal is permitted to start and judge a category if there are less than 5 starters. Such exceptions require the prior approval of a WSA board member.

## **7.8 TIME DISQUALIFICATION.**

The time disqualification shall be effective if a team's performance is more than 150 % for sprint and 200% for distance of the fastest three (3) running time per heat and class. This also goes for Juniors. Every team will be compared with their own original class. At a World Championship / European Championship no exceptions are allowed. <sup>2) 3)</sup>

## **7.9 FINAL POSITIONS.**

7.9.1 The team with the fastest total time of its class shall be declared the winner of that class.

7.9.2 Teams with equal times for the entire race shall be awarded the higher finishing position. (The next finishing position remains vacant)

7.9.3 In the result list all participants entered should be listed with their final position and time. This includes also NF/DS/LS marked teams.

7.9.3.1 Participants not starting a heat for other reason than disqualification should be listed with: not at start (NAS or NS).

7.9.3.2 Participants not finishing a heat for other reasons than disqualification should be listed with: not in finish (NIF or NF).

7.9.3.3 Participants who are disqualified (separate from the reasons above) should be listed with: disqualified (DIS or DS).

7.9.3.4 Participants declared to be a late starting team with the applicable time penalty, should be listed with: late starting team (LST or LS).

## **7.10 TEAM REGULATIONS.**

7.10.1 In international championship events, each participant shall normally be entered in the race as a member of a national team. A team leader appointed by the national federation shall be in charge of the team. Individual starters not belonging to a national team will represent themselves individually.

7.10.2 At the option of the race organizer, the same may apply for other events, also on a club level, as appropriate.

7.10.3 The team leader shall act as a liaison between the race organizer and the team members.

7.10.4 A team leader shall, immediately upon arrival at the race site, report to the race organizer and inform of his presence and where he is accommodated during the race.

7.10.5 Any communications from the race organizer to any participant shall be construed as being received by the addressee when given to the team leader.

## **7.11 THE TRAIL**

### **7.11.1 TRAIL REQUIREMENTS.**

7.11.1.1 The trail shall be safe for dogs and participants. When making the trail, special attention shall be shown on turns and downhill stretches. The entire trail shall be constructed with consideration to the fastest and biggest teams expected to participate.

7.11.1.2 The trail should not be crossing itself. Neither should it be constructed so that the teams will have to follow the same trail, wholly or even partly - regardless of direction, and, if unavoidable, shall be limited to one time and one time only in any given heat. The turning point shall be outside of the start-finish area.

7.11.1.3 Trails shall, to the optional extent possible, be broadly constructed to facilitate passing.

7.11.1.4 There should be sufficient space between the lanes so that teams are unable to distract each other.

7.11.1.5 Trails should be shielded from parking-lots and parked cars.

7.11.1.6 Trails should not cross a traffic-laden road on the same level. However, if this can not be avoided, there shall be a prior permission to block off the road during the competition. Dependable control shall be on hand.

7.11.1.7 The starting chute shall be at least 30 meters long and be so arranged that a team can be entirely removed from the trail.

7.11.1.8 The finish chute shall be at least 800 meters long, wide enough for passing and with no sharp turns.

7.11.1.9 The starting and finish lines shall be clearly defined.

7.11.1.10 Trails for Pulka style may, whenever possible, be different from that of Nome style.

7.11.1.11 Pulka trails should be laid out with special attention so that the trail also shall be a test of the participant's skiing skills.

### **7.11.2 TRAIL DISTANCES.**

#### **7.11.2.1 Sprint Races.**

7.11.2.1.1 Heat distances need not be identical each day of an event, but the shortest trails shall be run first, unless a trail is shortened to accommodate weather conditions. Subsequent days' heat distances shall not exceed one hundred and fifty (150) % of the first day's trail length.

7.11.2.1.2 Trail Distances per heat:

- \_ Unlimited class: more than 18 km
- \_ Eight dog class: 16 km to 19 km
- \_ Six dog classes: 10 km to 15 km
- \_ Four dog classes: 7km to 10km
- \_ Two dog classes: 5 km to 6 km
- \_ Pulka & Skijoring: **to the trail distance of the 6-dog-class.**

7.11.2.1.3 The Race Marshal must offer a trail comprising of the requested length. If special circumstances dictate that the length of the trail be decreased, the decrease shall never be more than 25 % in any class, to be judged for a Championship race.

#### 7.11.2.2 **Distance Races.**

7.11.2.2.1 Distances are for all classes identical.

7.11.2.2.2 The distance shall be at least 40 km (**MD**).

7.16.2.2.3 The distance must be advertised with the race announcement. The variation of the actual trail length shall not exceed +/- 10 %.

7.16.2.2.4 In case variation (special circumstances) greater than 25 %, the class may not qualify as a Championship event.

## 7.12 TRAIL MARKING

### 7.12.1 GENERAL

7.12.1.1 The trail shall be marked with a sufficient number of clearly visible markers, so placed that there will be no doubt for the participant where to go.

7.12.1.2 Trail markers should be of round, square or triangular shape; at least 33cm in diameter or length per side.

7.12.1.3 Only one side of the sign shall be coloured to indicate the proper direction of travel.

7.12.1.4 Trail markers shall be placed about one (1) meter beyond the edge of the trail, and from 60 to 120 cm above the surface of the trail.

7.12.1.5 All markers shall be visible as far ahead as possible and at least 50 m.

7.12.1.6 Markers applicable for a certain class or certain classes only, shall be marked with the class(es)' identification (**UL, 8,6 (=SM/SW/SJM/SJW),4,2 and MD (Middle Distance)**) by numbers in the centre of the marker.

7.12.1.7 Information on elapsed distance shall be indicated by a black number on a white sign directly above a blue marker on the same stake. This is optional.

7.12.1.8 Information on remaining distance shall be indicated by a black negative number on a white sign directly below a blue marker on the same stake. This is optional.

7.12.1.9 Markers shall not be so placed, or made of such a material, that they might constitute a danger for dogs or participants.

### 7.12.2 RED MARKERS preferably **ROUND** (Turn markers).

7.12.2.1 Red Markers shall be used at all intersections and crossings involving turns. The markers shall be placed about 20 meters ahead of the point in question at the same side of the trail as to which the teams shall turn.

7.12.2.2 The same procedure shall also be applied for all blind turns on the trail.

### 7.12.3 BLUE MARKERS preferably **SQUARE** (Straight on or correct trail).

7.12.3.1 Blue markers may be placed on either side of the trail.

7.12.3.2 Blue markers used to indicate the correct trail after a crossing or turn, see below, shall be placed about 20 m beyond, and should be visible when approaching, the point in question.

7.12.3.3 Blue markers **shall** be used

7.12.3.3.1 At intersections or crossings when the trail is going straight through. The sign shall be placed about 20 meters ahead of the intersection.

7.12.3.3.2 Beyond turns, which apply only to a certain class, or certain classes.

Such blue markers shall have the same class identification as the red turn marker.

7.12.3.4 Blue markers **should** be used beyond all intersections, turns or blind corners, which are marked with a red marker.

### 7.12.4 YELLOW MARKERS preferably **TRIANGULAR** (Caution).

7.12.4.1 Yellow markers may be placed on either side of the trail. Yellow markers indicate portions of the trail, where slow, cautious passage is recommended, e.g. steep downhill, really sharp turns, icy spots. Yellow markers are placed about 20 meters

ahead of the caution area.

7.12.4.2 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 red or black cross.

7.12.4.3 All yellow markers shall be presented and explained at the participants' meeting and they shall be indicated on the trail map.

7.12.4.4 Three (3) Yellow markers on one (1) pole indicate a dangerous section of the trail and a **no passing** zone.

7.12.4.5 End of dangerous section and no passing zone is indicated by a **crossed** yellow sign on each side of the trail.

### **7.13 CHECKPOINT MARKERS.**

Checkpoints shall be indicated with rectangular white signs with black letters.

### **7.14 OTHER MARKERS.**

7.14.1 The end of the "Starting chute" shall be indicated by markers with a white cross on both sides of the trail.

7.14.2 A marker shall be placed at the start of the "Finish chute" showing the distance to finish line, e.g. 800 m.

7.14.3 Portions of the trail, where the correct trail is not clearly visible, may be marked with additional markings. Such additional marking shall never be considered a replacement for ordinary marking according to these rules.

### **7.15 TRAIL BLOCKING.**

7.15.1 At trail crossings considered so difficult, that even good teams may have problems, blocking should be used in addition to marking.

7.15.2 Blocking shall appear as a physical hindrance for the dogs, but shall not constitute any danger for dogs, participants or equipment.

7.15.3 At trail crossings where different classes shall follow different trails, there shall be a trail steward, performing the necessary changes of the blocking after each class, and as necessary directing/assisting teams to the correct trail.

7.15.4 The presence of a blocking or a trail steward does not entail that ordinary marking may be omitted.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **Guide lines for Rule Enforcing Officers**

#### **8.1 GENERAL.**

8.1.1 The penal measure for any violation of the WSA Race rules shall either be a reprimand, a warning or disqualification. No other disciplinary action shall be imposed unless specifically defined in the rules.

8.1.2 No rules enforcing officer may decide not to impose any penal action, if it is found evident that a rules violation has taken place.

8.1.3 The violator shall be given a short written notice. A reprimand may be verbal.

8.1.4 Warnings, disqualifications and possible time penalty (late starting teams) shall be issued in the result list, which shall also mention the abbreviations as per Rule 7.9.3.1-.4 if applicable.

8.1.5 All disciplinary actions shall be mentioned in the race marshal's report, with reference to the violated provision.



## **8.2 WARNING and REPRIMAND.**

8.2.1 A warning should be issued for minor breaches of the regulations, either

8.2.1.1 If it does not give the violator an advantage or his opponents a corresponding disadvantage, or

8.2.1.2 If it is neither harmful nor detrimental to the sport.

8.2.2 For minor offenses without any consequences for any other participants and if it is the competitor's first minor infraction, a (verbal) reprimand may be issued.

## **8.3 DISQUALIFICATION.**

8.3.1 A disqualification **shall** be imposed:

8.3.1.1 If a participant refuses samples to be taken during a doping test, or submits samples from other than himself or the dog(s) chosen for testing, see WSA Anti-Doping Rules.

8.3.1.2 If a team is late for its second scheduled time of departure, Race rules 1.6.7.

8.3.1.3 If a participant accepts a ride during the race on any vehicle other than his own sled, unless in case of an emergency, see also, Race rules 1.8.4.

8.3.1.4 If the race marshal determines that participant, handler or team conduct at any time in the race area or on the trail is detrimental to the sport, Race rules 1.9.2.

8.3.1.5 If a participant abuses a dog, Race rules 1.9.3.

8.3.1.6 When a race veterinarian diagnoses a dog to have a contagious disease, Implementing rules 7.5.3.

In these cases the race marshal has no choice, he shall disqualify.

8.3.2 The race marshal **should** also disqualify

8.3.2.1 If the participant intentionally, or by gross negligence, has violated the Race regulations, and this has given him an advantage, or his participants a disadvantage (see 8.4.1),

8.3.2.2 In case of a recurrence, when the participant has already been given a warning for the same offence,

8.3.2.3 In case of repeated offences, which clearly shows that the participants is not capable of, or willing to, pay heed to the race regulations.

## **8.4 DOPING.**

With the exception of 8.3.1.1 above, no decision upon the question of doping, or disciplinary reactions, shall be taken during the event, but the case reported to the WSA Board.

## **8.5 OTHER MEASURES.**

8.5.1 When a team starts too early according to its scheduled time of departure, and the participant himself has not initiated this, neither by negligence nor intention, that team's starting time shall be adjusted accordingly.

8.5.2 When a participant, team or dog, in the opinion of the race marshal, is unfit to safely complete the trail, that participant, team or dog shall not be allowed to start, Race rules 1.2.4.

8.5.3 If a time disqualification rule applies, and the prescribed limit is exceeded, that team shall not be allowed to compete in subsequent heats, Race rules 1.2.6.

## **9 ANTI-DOPING REGULATIONS**

In 2011, the WSA General Assembly modified the anti-doping regulations to make them more practical and to meet the needs of the pure breed sled dog sport. As part of the revised rules a medication request form was introduced giving athletes the opportunity of veterinary treatment without committing a violation of the anti-doping rules. The revised WSA Anti-Doping Rules 2.0/2011 are in accordance with the WADA rules. (09/03/2011)

These regulations and the List of Prohibited Substances for Dogs will be made available on the WSA website.

The List of Prohibited Substances and the sample taking procedures for human athletes are available from the WADA website: [www.wada-ama.org](http://www.wada-ama.org).

National federations are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the anti-doping rules and procedures provided herein and on the WADA website.



## 10 MODALITIES

10.1 WSA International Championships shall be held in references to the listed modalities.

10.1.1 There shall be a WSA World Championship every 2 Years, whereas a WSA European Championship shall be held in the Years without a World Championship.

10.1.2 Championship races shall be held on three successive days.

10.1.3 If time and location permit the Sprint and Distance event should be held at the same time and

location, at which the following course of events is aimed:

Thursday: Prologue distance (half distance) and opening ceremony

Friday: Sprint and distance all classes

Saturday: Sprint and distance all classes, musher evening

Sunday: Sprint all classes and winners celebration sprint/distance

**Notes: All changes/cancellations shall become effective as of September 22, 2014.**

<sup>1)</sup> 5.2.8 (par example Hornet, Spyder or identical sledges)

<sup>2)</sup> 7.8 (exception musher with recognized handicap - guidelines paralympics)

<sup>3)</sup> 7.8 (The time limit does not apply in cases of approved assistance.)

