**Wilderness Sled Dog Racing Association**

**Greenville, Maine**

**General Race Rules**

**February 4, 2023**

***The mission of the Wilderness Sled Dog Racing Association is to foster international sports competition and to preserve the heritage of the sled dog by providing the opportunity for sled dog racing enthusiasts to engage in annual competition emphasizing the safety, animal welfare and good sportsmanship of all participants.***

**A. Conditions of Entry:**

**1. Drivers:**

a. Each driver agrees to hold the Race Giving Organization (RGO), race sponsor(s), landowners and other contributors harmless from any claim or demand based on any alleged action or inaction by the driver, his dogs, agents, or others acting in his/her behalf. The driver also agrees to release the RGO, landowners, sponsors, contributors and volunteers from any claim or demand resulting from injury to the driver, his/her dogs, or his/her property.

b. Further, the RGO has the unqualified and unrestricted authority to authorize the race sponsor(s) and or any RGO affiliated individual(s) or organization(s) to photograph and otherwise collect information about the race and all participants therein and to use such photographs and information for advertising, public relations or other publicity purposes. Drivers shall display sponsorship banners and/or bibs at the race start and finish as requested by the RGO. Before participating in the race, each driver must agree to the foregoing by signing all documents required by the RGO. Documents may be signed at the time of registration.

c. A musher must be at least 18 years old unless a waiver is obtained by applying to the RGO. Application must include years of experience and written consent from parent or guardian. Receipt of the entry fee and completed entry/profile form will confirm that the musher intends to enter the race and agrees to comply with all race rules. **Drivers in this race will leave the start line in the order in which their entries are received.**

d. The RGO will provide each driver with an official bib, which displays his/her start number.

**A 20-dollar** **deposit will be required.** 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. Drivers must be prepared to start as scheduled to avoid lost time. Upon approval by the Race Marshal, substitution of qualified drivers may be made until one hour before the start of the race. The driver starting the race shall drive the team throughout the race. All winners must attend the awards ceremony to receive their prize money.

**2. Dogs:**

a. All dogs must be available for physical examinations before the start of the race.

No drugs or other artificial means may be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability. A Veterinarian may randomly collect and test blood and urine samples at any time during the race to determine the presence of prohibited drugs. It will be the driver’s responsibility to assist the Veterinarian in collection of these samples. Before the start of the race, the Chief Veterinarian must be notified of any dog receiving any prescribed medications. Any dog that has previously received prohibited medication(s) will be evaluated by the Chief Veterinarian to determine if the dog is eligible to compete, based on drug half-life and withdrawal times. Any dog receiving a prohibited medication or any injection will be removed from the race and the team will be disqualified. The following drugs are permitted (**All other drugs are prohibited**):

Topical medications **(except DMSO)**

De-wormers

Antibiotics **(except procaine penicillin)**

Anti-diarrheals **(accept those with salicylates, e.g., Pepto-Bismol)**

Estrus suppressants, such as Ovaban or Cheque Drops without analgesic or stimulative properties

Oral food supplements such as Glycoflex, Cosequin etc. with solely nutritive properties

b. All dogs entered in the races shall have had DHLPP vaccinations within the 12 months previous to the race and **at least 21 days before the race day.** Owners who vaccinate their own dogs shall submit purchase invoices. **The RGO will accept proof of 3 year vaccinations.**

Validated Rabies certificates must be presented to prove that Rabies vaccinations are current. Both Rabies certificates and proof of DHLPP vaccinations will be presented at the pre-race Veterinary check. Bordetella and Coronavirus immunizations are recommended.

Owners should consult with a Veterinarian for proper timing of these vaccinations. At the pre-race veterinary examination, any dog, which, in the opinion of the Chief Veterinarian, should not run the race, shall not run the race. If the Chief Veterinarian believes that a dog has a contagious illness, then the dog must be removed from the area, and the Race Marshal may also reject the entire team for the safety of the other teams. In addition, if the Chief Veterinarian believes that a dog is too vicious to be examined safely, then that dog shall be rejected. Only the Chief Veterinarian, acting in agreement with the Race Marshal, can force the dropping of a dog during the race. All dogs will be marked before leaving the starting line as to their fitness for racing. Drivers are expected to pay extraordinary Veterinary expenses they might incur during the race. The RGO may, at its discretion, charge a driver for any medical supplies administered to a team. Prize moneys will be awarded minus any unpaid Veterinary expenses charged to the driver.

Drivers with unpaid Veterinary bills will not be allowed to register for future races.

**B. Race Marshal and Officials:**

The Race Marshal shall resolve disputes among drivers and interpret the race rules in regard to infractions and penalties. He/She shall also have the authority to establish rules to cover special or unforeseen situations. Dogs shall be withdrawn at any time during the race that both the Race Marshal and the Chief Veterinarian determine is necessary after consulting with the musher and the examining Veterinarian. The Race Marshal will have ultimate authority in all other disputes from the start of the race to the finish. Race judges may act as deputies of the Race Marshal.

**C. Trail Procedures:**

**1. Race Course:**

Trails will be broken, groomed and marked before the races, and trails will be broken again on the morning of the races. However, due to weather, there is no guarantee of broken trails during the races. **A portion of the race trail travels on groomed snowmobile trails; it is highly recommended that dog teams travel on the right hand side of the trail.**

The Wilderness race trails are designed to minimize road crossings. The race course may be re-routed by the RGO as conditions require. All teams must follow the trail as marked or as redirected by the trail officials. Except within one mile of the finish line, an overtaken driver and team must relinquish the trail at the request of the overtaking driver. The overtaken team must move to the side of the trail as far as possible and slow down or stop until the overtaking team has completely passed. Except within one mile of the finish line, the passed team must remain behind for at least 5 minutes before demanding the trail, unless both mushers agree. Drivers resting, setting up camp, or untangling dogs must clear the trail of their dogs and gear, making passage safe for other teams. Any wood fires (which are for emergency only) must be built a minimum of 15 feet off the trail. Any cooker fires also will be a minimum of 15 feet off the trail. Drivers who litter the trail with food or other items shall be subject to disqualification and/or censure.

**2. Outside Assistance:**

a. The spirit of this race is for the drivers to be self-sufficient. A driver will not be penalized for helping another driver whose life is endangered or for helping to recover a lost team. 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. Therefore drivers should not help each other except to ensure safety and animal welfare. Drivers are encouraged to solicit or accept any available help recovering a lost team. However, if the Race Marshal determines that a musher has thereby gained a competitive advantage then the Marshal may impose an appropriate time penalty. Pacing with snowmobiles is prohibited.

b. A *handler* is anyone who helps a team. Handlers may only help control and restrain an unmanageable team. A *Personal* handler is one provided by the driver. **If personal handlers appear on the racecourse assisting in any way the team shall be penalized or disqualified at the discretion of the race marshal.**

c. Handlers may help their driver and team before the team starts and after the team finishes. No two-way communication devices including cell phones shall be allowed unless provided by the RGO.

**3. Sportsmanship:**

a. Each competitor should remember to be courteous, helpful and honorable. Rude and/or inappropriate behavior by drivers or handlers may result in a penalty. Disqualification shall result if a driver or his/her handler tampers with another drivers’ dogs, food or gear.

b. Any driver who uses ski poles must stop poling and place the poles in or on the sled whenever his/her team is within 100 feet of another team or whenever an approaching driver calls “Poles” or “Trail”. Failure to do so may result in a time penalty.

**4. Treatment of Dogs:**

Whips of any kind or the use of brush, branches or any object as a whip or to create a frightening noise is expressly prohibited. Cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs will result in the immediate expulsion of the driver. The RGO, Race Marshal 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 race 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 may be performed at the driver’s expense. Death of a dog may result in disqualification of the driver.

**5. 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 race officials as soon as possible.

**6. Loose Dogs and Lost Teams:**

There will be no loose dogs. All dogs will be either on the towline or in the sled. Dogs hauled in the sled must be hauled in a protected, humane manner. A driver must make immediate efforts to secure a dog, which becomes loose. A lost team will not be disqualified if the driver regains control, provided that the entire racecourse is covered by both team and driver. A driver may accept help from another driver in recovering his/her team without penalty.

**7. Switching Dogs:**

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

**8. Dropped Dogs:**

All dogs that are unable to complete the course must finish in the sled.

**9. Withdrawal from a Race:**

To quit a race a driver must sign an official resignation form and present it to a race official. Any driver who quits a race without properly notifying a race official may be barred from future races. Exception may be made if a driver leaves the trail to protect the health or life of a dog or person, **but a race official must** **be notified as soon as possible.**

**10. Driver’s Report and Rule Violations and Safety Problems:**

It is the duty of each driver to report trail safety problems and violations of these race rules. Official report forms may be obtained from the RGO. Reports shall include the time, date, nature of the rule violation or safety problem, approximate location on the trail, name or bib number of the violator (if known), and names of witnesses (if any). Such reports must be presented to the Race Marshal or Race Judge at the nearest location. The Race Judge will gather information and relay it to the Race Marshal for action. Protests and reports of rule violations shall not be discussed with any other persons, including spectators or media. **Only the Race Marshal may issue statements to the media regarding protests and** **violations.** Complaints will be kept on file and reviewed by the RGO. If the evidence indicates a pattern of unsportsmanlike behavior, the RGO may censure a driver.

**Any driver who makes a false complaint may be fined 20 dollars per incident.**