

AFA Notification to Members No. 58 –February 2016.

This Notification deals with the following matters:

1. Lane spacing when using a minimum or restricted size Flyball ring.
2. Guidelines for competition organisers running handicap racing where a gap of 10 seconds or more exists between Teams. (Document also on AFA Web under “hosting a competition” head)
3. Guidelines for use by Regional Representatives when asked to approve a running order. (Whilst this document is meant for use by Regional reps the content will be of interest to any Competition Organiser and hence is circulated to all Judges and Club Co-ordinators. (Document also on AFA Web under “hosting a competition”)

1.Lane spacing when using a minimum or restricted size Flyball ring.

The minimum regulation ring size is 30ft by 90 feet – this size ring should only be used where space restrictions apply – the preferred ring size is at least 40 feet by 110 feet. Where it is necessary to use the minimum ring size it is recommended that the racing lanes NOT be set at the maximum 20 feet distance apart as this results in the lanes being close to the sides of the ring. An initial distance of 14 feet apart will still allow the racing lanes to be moved to the Minimum 10 feet spacing if necessary due to damage to the running surface.

2.Guidelines for competition organisers running handicap racing where a gap of 10 seconds or more exists between Teams.

While the Farmtek EJS timing system allows a gap of more than 10 seconds to be inputted to the system, the system is hard programmed to a maximum 10 second gap. As such, even where a gap of 10 or more seconds is entered, the handicap will commence countdown at 10 seconds. This clearly presents a problem where a handicap gap in excess of 10 seconds exists either in normal handicap racing or in Championship racing formats.

The following guidance is offered to competition organisers to consider managing this issue where it arises.

As a first preference, where a handicap gap between teams exceeds 10 seconds, competition organisers should look to separate the teams into more than one division consisting of teams that are within the 10 second racing gap. This would allow all racing to be operable using the EJS timing system. It is recommended that this option should be used even where a division of two teams may be created.

Where the above is not possible, competition organisers are encouraged to consider whether it is possible to separate teams into more than one division. That is, those teams entered with an entry time creating a handicap gap of less than 10 seconds should be grouped together to run as a single division. This will ensure the majority of teams entered are able to compete using the EJS timing system to determine/run the handicap system. The racing for the remaining teams will need to operate using a manual handicap start as outline below.

Where a manual handicap start is required, that is entered teams have an entry gap of 10 seconds or more competition organisers will need to revert to the use of manual starting to support the operation of the EJS timing system. Where this approach is required, a stopwatch will be used to determine/announce the start for the faster team where the gap is in excess of 10 seconds. This will be done through the use of a designated official whose role, for these races, is solely to count the seconds allocated to the handicap start. That is, where the gap is 15 seconds, the designated official will commence a countdown from 5 seconds, counting down out loud each second from 10 to 0 seconds. False start detection will be manual but breakout still applies.

3.Guidelines for use by Regional Representatives when asked to approve a running order.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist regional representatives when asked to approve a running order. The questions are intended to act as prompts when reviewing a

proposed running order and to assist new regional representatives in undertaking this responsibility. This checklist is used after the division splits and proposed format have been approved. It is during that first step that a review of web times will also have been undertaken. It is recognised that depending on matters such as small number of Teams entered and other local factors that the Guideline for gaps and breaks in running may not be achievable in all cases. All Guidelines must be applied with benefit of local knowledge and common sense.

1. Has each team been allocated the appropriate number of races for the approved format?
2. Does each team have an equal (or balanced) number of races in both the left and the right lane?
NB: where a team has an uneven number of races there will not be an equal balance of races.
3. What are the minimum and maximum number of races between each teams races?

Example below:

Division	Team	Lane	Race Number				Biggest gap	smallest gap
1	C	Left	17	26	31	35	14	4
		Right	5	9	13	39		
	D	Left	3	7	12	39	10	4
		Right	17	22	27	33		
	E	Left	1	5	15	33	7	3
		Right	12	21	26	37		
2	F	Left	24	40			10	8
		Right	6	16	32			
3	G	Left	2	19	7		11	5
		Right	14	40				
	H	Left	11	32			14	6
		Right	2	25	38			
	I	Left	8	14	38		10	4
		Right	24	28				

4. Do all teams within the one division (or combined divisions) have roughly the same minimum and maximum gaps between races?

5. Does any team have a gap of 3 heats or less? If yes, is a break in the running order required?
6. Ensure that clubs do not have back to back races, this will speed up the number of races completed per hour. Where it is unavoidable to avoid club clashes, try to keep the club with the clash in the same lane. This will also speed up racing and clubs will be appreciative of fewer box movements. An effective way to do this is to colour code clubs on a spreadsheet.
7. This is not essential but if there is a chance of rain it is a good idea to identify where each division completes a round robin so that racing can be rearranged if necessary to achieve a result in the competition.