**Rule Notification FY2324-10 – Underage Dogs**

At its meeting on 8th April the AFA Committee considered the issue of underage dogs warming up in the ring during a race meeting and whether this practice was in line with the intent of the original resolution passed by the members at a previous AGM to protect underage dogs from potential injury.

The AFA Committee requested the Rules Sub-Committee review and recommend what rule changes were required to ensure an underage dog did not enter the ring during a race meeting.

The Rule Sub-Committee met and recommended that the rules related to dogs on official timesheets be amended to exclude underage dogs and state underage dogs could not participate in warm ups prior to the running of a heat in a race.

As a result the AFA Committee resolved to disallow underage dogs to be listed on the official timesheets and that underage dogs cannot be in the ring during a race (i.e. cannot participate in warm ups prior to the running a heat in a race).

This rule clarification is effective for race meetings held on or after Monday 15th April 2024.

The rules published on the AFA website will be updated shortly.

**Rule Changes**

**4.3 Minimum age for dogs**

Dogs less than 18 months old must not warm up or run in a ***heat***at a ***race meeting***.

Dogs less than one year old must not run over jumps or train on a ***box*** at any ***flyball event.***

*Note: A violation of this****rule****constitutes****inhumane treatment****of a dog and relevant****AFA******members****will be subject to discipline regardless of when the violation is discovered.*

When it is discovered during a ***race meeting*** that a dog less than 18 months old has warmed up or run in a ***heat***:

·       the dog and the dog’s ***owner*** and ***handler***must be excluded from the ***race meeting***;

·       the dog’s ***team***forfeits all ***heats***in which the dog ran and all ***heats***in any***race***in which the dog warmed up.

***5.5 Timesheets***

*The****race meeting******organiser****must prepare an****official timesheet****for each****team****using information on the****entry form****for the****team****and in the****AFA’s****database.*

A dog less than 18 months old must not be listed on the **official timesheet**for any **team**.