

## **Rule Notification FY2425-6 Approving Racing Schedules**

At its meeting on 6 January 2025 the AFA committee resolved to amend the rules relating to approval of racing schedules including by:

- refining the circumstances for use of scratch and handicap format respectively,
- clarifying the role of the authorised approver in reviewing division splits and running orders including providing for resolution of differences of opinion between a race meeting organiser and an authorised approver,
- prescribing a process and timetable for approving racing schedules,
- specifying that a team must not be scheduled to run more than eight races on any day, and
- deleting the run off method for breaking ties in round robin format.

Changes to the rules are set out below. They will be effective from 1 July 2025 and will be included in the next published version of the rules. However, race meeting organisers and authorised approvers are strongly encouraged to observe the amended rules, particularly the approval process in Appendix 16, immediately.

### **Background**

The rules sub-committee had received feedback from various sources concerning racing schedules highlighting various matters including:

- the need for greater clarity on the respective roles of the race meeting organiser and an authorised approver,
- the authority of an authorised approver to refuse a division split or running order which complies with the rules,
- the absence of any procedure to resolve differences between a race meeting organiser and an authorised approver,
- the fairness or otherwise of the current rules about choosing scratch or handicap format when applied to divisions regardless of seed times,
- the possibility that use of the run off method to break ties in round robin format could result dogs exceeding the maximum permitted number of heats.

After due consideration the sub-committee concluded that there would be considerable benefit in addressing various issues. The sub-committee recommended a number of changes to the rules which are summarised below.

Division split – including a definition of this currently undefined term, drawing on elements in rule 2.10.

Two team divisions – permitting two team divisions only when the best alternative division split results in a spread of more than ten seconds (which is the maximum handicap allowed in the EJS console) rather than four seconds.

Choice of scratch or handicap – replacing the current criteria for deciding whether to use scratch or handicap format with a scale based on the fastest seed time in each

division to promote competitive divisions and reduce the potential for unfair divisions of teams.

Approval of racing schedule – formalising the staged process for approval of the racing schedule which is followed in practice including by:

- specifying material to be submitted for approval along with time frames for submissions and responses,
- allowing for alternatives to be pursued when time frames cannot be met,
- allowing for differences to be referred to a third party for resolution

Role of authorised approver – clearly defining the role and authority of an authorised approver with a view to having less differences and delays in the approval process.

Breaking ties in round robin format – making the count back method the only way to break ties by deleting reference to run offs.

## Rule Changes

### New definition of division split

Insert the following definition of **division split** in rule 1.4 immediately after the definition of **division**.

**division split** means the splitting of **teams** into **divisions** based on their **seed times** and determining whether each **division** will be run in **scratch format** or **handicap format** by applying the following criteria:

- **divisions** of single **teams** are not permitted,
- **divisions** of two **teams** are only permitted if the **authorised approver** agrees that the best alternative split results in a **division** of three **teams** with a **division spread** of more than ten seconds,
- combined **divisions** are not permitted,
- whether each **division** will be run in **scratch format** or **handicap format** is to be determined in accordance with Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Use of **scratch format** or **handicap format**

Where fastest <b>seed time</b> in the <b>division</b> is:	<b>Scratch format</b> must be used if the <b>division spread</b> is:	<b>Race meeting organiser</b> may choose either <b>scratch format</b> or <b>handicap format</b> if the <b>division spread</b> is:	<b>Handicap format</b> must be used if the <b>division spread</b> is more than:
20 seconds or less	0.8 seconds or less	More than 0.8 seconds but not more than 1.2 seconds	1.2 seconds

More than 20 seconds but not more than 25 seconds	1 second or less	More than 1 second but not more than 1.5 seconds	1.5 seconds
More than 25 seconds	1.25 seconds or less	More than 1.25 seconds but not more than 2 seconds	2 seconds

*Note: Principles for assisting in determining **division splits** are contained in Appendix 8.*

### Definition of racing schedule

Replace the definition of **racing schedule** with the following.

**racing schedule** includes:

- the **division split**,
- **seed times** and **breakout times** for each **team**,
- whether racing will be in **round robin format**, **elimination format** or a combination of both,
- the number of rounds for each **division** in **round robin format**,
- the number of **races** for each **team** which must be not more than eight on any day,
- the number of **heats** in each **race** which must be three **heats**, five **heats** or best three of five **heats**,
- the **running order**.

### Rule 2.9

Amend the note to rule 2.9 rule as shown by tracking below.

*Note: If a **team** elects to use a **declared seed time** slower than its **web seed time** it must include on its **entry form** a detailed justification for doing so. If either the **race meeting organiser** or the **authorised approver** is not satisfied with the justification they may require the **team** to use its **web seed time**.*

### Rule 2.10

Replace rule 2.10 with the following.

### Approval of racing schedule

*Note: The **AFA committee** acknowledges that special provisions should apply to approving the **racing schedule** for the Australian National Flyball Championships and has specified those special provisions in the Australian National Flyball Championships Policy.*

The ***racing schedule*** for each ***race meeting*** must be approved by an ***authorised approver***.

*Note: The ***authorised approver*** must not be a member of the ***host club***.*

The process for having a ***racing schedule*** approved is set out in Appendix 16.

The ***race meeting organiser*** and the ***authorised approver*** must each use their best endeavours to comply with the time frames in Appendix 16. If an ***authorised approver*** fails to respond to the ***race meeting organiser*** by a designated due date or indicates to the ***race meeting organiser*** that they will not be able to respond by a designated due date the ***race meeting organiser*** may seek approval from another ***authorised approver***.

The role of an ***authorised approver*** is to:

- ensure that the ***racing schedule*** complies with all mandatory requirements in the ***rules***
- ensure that principles or guidelines in the ***rules*** are applied fairly and without unreasonably disadvantaging any ***team*** or ***club***
- provide advice and comments to the ***race meeting organiser*** based on their experience but not so as to impose personal preferences.

An ***authorised approver*** may not refuse to approve a ***racing schedule*** which complies with the ***rules***.

If the ***race meeting organiser*** and the ***authorised approver*** cannot agree on any matter relating to the ***racing schedule*** the ***race meeting organiser*** may request the ***AFA secretary*** to appoint another ***authorised approver*** to resolve the disagreement.

Promptly after the ***racing schedule*** is approved the ***host club*** must make it available on the ***AFA*** website.

After a ***racing schedule*** has been approved by an ***authorised approver*** it must not be changed unless the changes are approved by the ***authorised approver***. If a ***team*** withdraws from the ***race meeting*** after the ***racing schedule*** has been approved the ***race meeting organiser*** may elect to submit a revised ***racing schedule*** for approval unless the ***authorised approver*** advises the ***race meeting organiser*** that there is insufficient time for the ***authorised approver*** to review a revised ***racing schedule***.

*Note: If both ***regular class*** and ***open class*** are offered at a ***race meeting*** and after the ***close of entry date*** the ***race meeting organiser*** and the ***authorised approver*** agree that it is difficult to achieve an acceptable ***division split*** and ***running order*** based on the number of entries received for each ***class*** the ***race meeting organiser*** may elect to run the whole ***race meeting*** as ***open class***.*

## Appendix 2

Amend Appendix 2 as below.

In third paragraph under General heading change last sentence to read:

When two or more **teams** are tied with the same number of **race meeting points** the tie will be broken using the count back method described below.

Delete section headed **Run off method**

## **New Appendix 16**

Insert the following as Appendix 16.

### **Appendix 16. Process for Approving Racing Schedule**

The process for obtaining approval to a **racing schedule** is set out below. It is important that due dates be adhered to so that the **racing schedule** can be approved and published in a timely manner. The **race meeting organiser** and the **authorised approver** should engage in open and honest dialogue to ensure that any issues which might delay approval are identified and resolved promptly.

<b>Action</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Day number</b>
Review <b>team</b> entries to identify issues including with any <b>declared seed times</b>	<b>race meeting organiser</b>	Day after <b>close of entry date</b>	1
Resolve any issues with <b>team captain</b>	<b>race meeting organiser</b>	Within two days after <b>close of entry date</b>	2
Submit to <b>authorised approver</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>list of <b>teams</b> entered with <b>seed times</b> and <b>breakout times</b> but no identification</li><li>justifications provided for any <b>declared seed times</b> and <b>race meeting organiser's</b> response</li></ul>	<b>race meeting organiser</b>	Within two days after <b>close of entry date</b>	2

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>proposed <b>division split</b></li> <li>proposed racing format including number of rounds for each <b>division</b> in <b>round robin format</b></li> <li>number of <b>heats</b> in each <b>race</b> and calculation of the maximum possible number of <b>heats</b> each <b>team</b> could run</li> </ul>			
Approve submission from <b>race meeting organiser</b> or propose changes giving reasons	<b>authorised approver</b>	Within two days after receiving submission from <b>race meeting organiser</b>	4
Resolve any disagreement over <b>authorised approver's</b> response	<b>race meeting organiser</b> and <b>authorised approver</b>	Within two days after response from <b>authorised approver</b>	6
Submit proposed <b>running order</b> to <b>authorised approver</b>	<b>race meeting organiser</b>	Within three days after approval of <b>division split</b> and related matters	9
Approve <b>running order</b> or propose changes giving reasons	<b>authorised approver</b>	Within three days after receiving submission from <b>race meeting organiser</b>	12
Resolve any disagreement over <b>authorised approver's</b> response	<b>race meeting organiser</b> and <b>authorised approver</b>	Within two days after response from <b>authorised approver</b>	14
Submit approved <b>racing schedule</b> to web team for publishing on <b>AFA</b> website	<b>race meeting organiser</b>	Not later than Wednesday before <b>race meeting</b>	18