

Rule Notification FY2526-5 Handicap format at Nationals

At its meeting on 2 March 2026 the AFA committee resolved to amend the Australian National Flyball Championships Policy to allow for the possible use of handicap format other than in Division 1 of regular class racing.

The changes to give effect to this decision will be effective from 1 July 2026.

Background

The Australian National Flyball Championships Policy currently allows the race meeting organiser to request approval for a division to be in handicap format where the best available division split results in a division of three or more teams with a division spread of more than two seconds.

This provision was introduced for the 2024 Nationals to address concerns about the perceived unfairness of the very large division spreads at previous Nationals, particularly in the slowest divisions.

Following the 2025 Nationals the AFA committee received further submissions from clubs suggesting that the provisions in the rules that apply to determine racing format in normal race meetings should apply equally to the Nationals.

The committee noted that the Nationals are the prestige event in the flyball calendar and their status could be diminished if they were to be treated as a normal race meeting. In particular, the committee considered that Division 1 of regular class racing, being the “blue riband” event, should always be in scratch format.

The committee agreed that there was merit in allowing for handicap format in other divisions but on a different basis from normal race meetings and decided to amend the policy to allow for the possibility of handicap format being used according to the table below:

Where fastest seed time in the division is:	Handicap format may be used if the division spread is more than:
20 seconds or less	1.2 seconds
More than 20 seconds but not more than 25 seconds	1.5 seconds
More than 25 seconds	2 seconds