



AUSTRALIAN  
FLYBALL  
ASSOCIATION

# AFA Policy on Novelty Events

1 January 2024

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## NOVELTY EVENTS POLICY

### Purpose

**Host clubs** may seek approval from the **AFA committee** to conduct **novelty events** at a **race meeting** or **demonstration**. Although **host clubs** generally have wide discretion as to how **novelty events** are conducted the **AFA committee** has a number of overriding requirements which must be complied with. This policy has been developed to provide clarity and guidance for **host clubs** wishing to conduct **novelty events**.

### Definitions and Interpretation

In this policy:

- **beginner singles racing** means racing between two **singles teams** where entry is limited to dogs with less than five **title points** at the **close of entry date**;
- **normal team racing** means any class of racing recognised by the **AFA** in the **rules**;
- **novelty events** means any events other than **normal team racing** and includes **beginner singles racing, pairs racing, singles racing** and **0.000 start competitions**;
- **pairs racing** means racing between two **pairs teams**;
- a **pairs team** consists of:
  - two dogs and two **handlers**;
  - a **box loader**;
  - optionally other persons in the **ring** for assistance;
- **singles racing** means racing between two **singles teams**;
- a **singles team** consists of:
  - one dog and one **handler**;
  - a **box loader**;
  - optionally other persons in the **ring** for assistance;
- **0.000 start competition** means an event where **handlers** attempt to achieve a 0.000 start with their dogs;
- words and expressions which are defined in the **rules** have the same meaning when used in this policy;
- the principles of interpretation contained in the **rules** apply.

The **rules** relating to **open class** racing apply so far as they reasonably can to the conduct of **novelty events** and except to the extent that they are varied by, or are inconsistent with, this policy.

### Sanction of novelty events

A **host club** wishing to include **novelty events** at a **race meeting** or **demonstration** must seek approval as part of the **sanction application**.

The **AFA committee** will only sanction inclusion of **novelty events** at a **race meeting** if it is satisfied that the conduct of the **novelty events** will not interfere with the running or timing of normal racing.

### Eligibility to participate in novelty events

Only **AFA members** in **good standing** may be in the **ring during novelty events**.

A dog may only participate in **novelty events** if the dog:

- has a valid **CRN**;
- is not less than 18 months old;
- is healthy, fit and well;
- is able to hurdle four jumps, safely retrieve a ball from a **box**, and return back over four jumps to its **handler**.

A **judge** or **AFA representative** may exclude a dog that does not meet any of the above criteria.

A **host club** may specify additional eligibility criteria. For example, a **host club** may specify that only dogs that have earned a minimum number of **title points** may participate in particular **novelty events**.

Dogs may be entered in more than one **novelty event** but must not run more than the maximum permitted number of **heats** in a day. Each attempt by a dog in a **0.000 start competition** will be treated as a **heat**.

### **Jumps**

The height at which jumps are set for participants in **novelty events** is a matter for the **host club** but a dog must not run over jumps set higher than the dog's **jump height**.

### **Barriers and props**

The **host club** may at its discretion:

- place barriers between the **racing lanes**;
- allow the use of props.

### **Novelty events at race meetings**

A dog entered in **open class** or **regular class** at a **race meeting** may participate in a **0.000 start competition** but not in any other **novelty event**.

Each attempt by a dog in a **0.000 start competition** will be treated as a **heat** for the purpose of determining whether the dog has run more than the maximum permitted number of **heats** in a day.

Normal racing has priority over **novelty events** at all times. A **judge** or **AFA representative** may limit or cancel **novelty events** for any reasonable cause including, for example, the need to continue or resume normal racing to make up for time lost, or anticipated to be lost, due to delays in racing or weather interruptions.

### **Officials**

A **judge** is not required to officiate at **novelty events** except for **novelty events** conducted at the Australian National Flyball Championships.

If a **judge** is not officiating:

- the **host club** must ensure that an appropriately experienced **AFA member** is appointed as starter and referee;
- the appointee has no authority to issue signal cards;
- the **AFA representative** is authorised to exclude any dog or **handler** from participating if the **AFA representative** considers it necessary to do so for reasons of safety, including as a result of **aggression**.

**Title points**

Dogs cannot earn ***title points*** when competing in ***novelty events***.