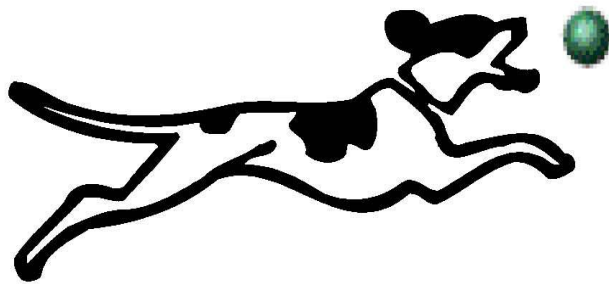




# STEWARDS GUIDELINES



# FLYBALL INFORMATION PACK

# INTRODUCTION

The AFA Committee would like to congratulate and thank you on your decision to become a Flyball steward. This is a very important and responsible position at any competition and the AFA have put this Stewards Pack together to assist you in answering your questions to be a ticketed Steward

There are 3 different kinds of stewards required at a Flyball competition:

- Line Steward
- Box Steward
- Inbound Steward

On the day you may only perform one role, but the AFA feel it is still necessary that you know how to perform all three roles in case you are needed to move to another steward position at a competition.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STEWARDS**

### **GENERAL**

All Stewards shall be friendly and courteous, even sympathetic, but above all impartial and firm.

A steward is not to engage in conversation with a disgruntled competitor. You should direct them to the Judge immediately to protest before the start of the next heat and let the judge know this has happened.

A steward must not assist teams during warm up or racing.

A steward must not eat or smoke in the ring you may distract a dog.

A steward shall remain stationary during each heat, dogs may go around stewards and balls bouncing off a judge or steward shall be deemed in play.

Stewards must not offer verbal encouragement to teams.

You are not obligated to let a team know that you raised your flag it is up to them to see it and to rerun their dog.

### **Jumps.**

When setting Jump heights all teams are now required to ensure that the top slat is a one inch board – this is a dog safety requirement.

A dog that simply knocks down a jump(s) during its run has NOT committed a foul and shall not be penalised, provided it and the other dogs in the team clear the jump as if it were standing.

A "runner" or handler may set up knocked down jump(s) providing doing so does not interfere with the heat or guide the dog in any way. The Judge will stop the heat if they are of the opinion that the knocked down jump is a safety hazard. In such a case the heat will be rerun.

The heat shall not be stopped for broken boards, unless, in the opinion of the Judge, the dog(s) may be subject to injury. If the heat is stopped by the Judge to prevent a possible injury the heat is to be restarted.

As assistance to the Judge, Stewards should check to confirm that the jumps are all set at the same height and that the top slat is 1 inch. The steward may not be aware of what height the team should be jumping however stewards can confirm that all jumps are set at the same height. If the team get one jump wrong they will forfeit each heat run with the incorrect height in a round robin racing format, and they will be excused from racing in an elimination racing format. It is the team captain's responsibility to ensure that the jumps are set at the correct height.

**All Stewards and Officials should be watching for any incident involving Aggressive Dog Behaviour.**

*If a dog shows aggression toward another dog or handler, at any time during the competition, the Judge may excuse the dog from competing and a standby dog is to be used. The degree of aggression that warrants substitution is to be determined by the Judge. The Judge must report any dog excused from competition to the AFA within 48 hours for their adjudication, which could result in suspension*

## **DUTIES OF LINE STEWARDS**

Line stewards are positioned at the start/finish line on each side of the ring facing each other and sitting so they have a clear view across the ring on the start/finish line and have the following duties.

### **1. Manual Timing**

Should the electronic timing system fail, the line steward may be asked to manually time racing using a stop watch.

When Manual Timing is required, you start the stopwatch when the Judge signals the heat start by blowing a whistle and NOT when the first dog crosses the line.

You stop the stopwatch when the last dog in your lane has run a clean run

During any period of manual timing the line stewards will be required to watch for and raise their flags if they observe a false start or an early pass at the start line. For the first false start the heat is restarted. A second false start is a foul and the dog must rerun.

Also, keep your eye on the start line at the end of the heat. The judge may need your advice in determining who won the heat if there is a very close finish (this should also be done under normal racing conditions in case there is a failure of the electronic timing system). Stop watches do not decide who wins a race in manual timing, the stewards and judges do.

Once the heat has been decided, tell the heat time to the Timekeeper.

Keep your time on your stopwatch until the judge asks you if you are ready for the next heat.

### **2. Signal fouls by raising a flag when any dog in your assigned lane commits a foul.**

**Fouls include:**

#### **1) A dog missing a jump**

If a dog misses a jump, either on the run down the course or on the way back, the line steward must signal this by raising their flag. That dog shall be required to run again.

#### **2) A dog not carrying the ball across the start/finish line in its mouth.**

- i) A dog must carry the ball from the box across the start/finish line in its mouth to complete the course
- ii) If the dog fails to carry the ball back in its mouth across the start/finish line or drops the ball and leaves it then the line steward shall signal this as a foul by raising their flag. That dog shall run again.
- iii) If however the dog retrieves the dropped ball before crossing the finish line the dog has not committed a foul. If a dog runs down the course with a ball in its mouth and drops that ball to swap for the ball in the box the dog shall not be penalised because it has brought the right ball home.
- iv) If however it runs back with the same ball it went down with in its mouth then it will be flagged and it will have to run again. If the dog runs back with both balls in its mouth then it shall not be penalised.

3) ***A Dog not triggering the box.***

If you see a dog not trigger the box but just take the ball from the hole you are required to indicate a foul by raising your flag.

4) ***A dog fouling in the ring.***

Fouling in the ring is when a dog toilets in the ring anytime from the start of the warm up period to when the Judge signals the end of the race. You are required to flag that dog and inform the judge if necessary. The team will automatically forfeit the heat if it is progress or the following heat if this has happened in the warm up or between heats.

5) ***A handler crossing or breaking the start/finish line during a heat (other than to set up a knocked down jump or to retrieve a loose ball.).***

If a handler crosses the start finish line during the heat (other than to set up a knocked down jump or to retrieve a loose ball), the line steward will signal by raising their flag and that handlers dog will be required to run again. If the handler crosses the line to run down the lane with the dog or retrieve the dog this is classed as training in the ring and the team will forfeit that heat. Again the line steward should flag this.

6) ***A dog crossing the Centre Line – whether interference occurs or not.***

If a dog in your lane clearly crosses the centre line you should signal by raising your flag.

7) ***Inappropriately assisted by the boxloader, spectator or a handler.***

Examples of this would be if the boxloader attempts to lure the dog to the box by showing it a ball or set the box off for the dog or physically signalling the dog to get the ball (unless provided for under the rule of intervention).

Spectators kicking the ball back into the ring is also inappropriate advantage

8) ***False Starts and Early Passes.***

Double false starts and early passes are also fouls requiring the dog to run again. These are however normally picked up by the Judge via signal from the Lights – if in doubt as to whether the Judge has seen the foul you should raise your flag. Conversely, if you think the lights have incorrectly signalled a double false start or an early pass, you should signal to the Judge.

### **3. Look out for distractions.**

Under the Rules team members shall not distract the opposing team by bouncing balls, using a flyball box at the end of the run, or by any other means including by throwing any object for their dogs (i.e. balls, toys, Frisbees, dummies, gloves or treats).

Team members are also required to pick up loose balls.

The first offence of any of these infractions shall involve a warning. A second offence or any offence thereafter during the race will result in the loss of the heat.

### **4. Deciding the outcome of a Heat**

Line stewards should confer with the Judge following each heat to determine the winning team.

At the end of each heat the judge will ask each line steward to confirm the number of dogs that ran and whether they have anything to report. This will give you a chance to report on any incidents that may have happened during the heat and have not already been dealt with.

Make your own assessment of which team wins each heat in case there is a failure of the electronic timing system or if a team captain challenges the result.

## **DUTIES OF BOX STEWARDS**

### **1. Box Positioning**

- 1) Box stewards should check the box has been positioned in the correct position. If there is a painted line the ground this will mean checking to see that the front of the box is on or just behind the line.
- 2) Box stewards shall sit level with the last jump before the box with a good view of the box loader but not sitting so as to interfere with or distract the dog racing. The Box Steward also signals any foul observed by raising their flag.

### **2. Observe Box loader and spectators.**

#### **1) Conduct of the box loader:**

Except during the warm up, to retrieve a loose ball or get a fresh supply of balls to load, the box loader must remain in the upright position behind the box, and may offer verbal encouragement only, as long as such encouragement does not distract the opposing team.

The box loader is to remain in position until the outcome of the heat is determined by the Judge. If, in the Judge's opinion, a box loader has violated any of these rules, his/her team MAY forfeit the heat. If, in the opinion of the Judge, a box loader assists a dog, except where provided for in the rules, the dog shall run again. Do not assist the dog racing

#### **2) Signal to the judge for a box malfunction.**

The box loader shall indicate to the Judge and box steward if there is a box malfunction by standing in front of the box and raising an arm.

#### **Inappropriate assistance by the boxloader or spectator**

The box steward should watch for inappropriate assistance by the boxloader or spectator and signal the Judge if you think inappropriate assistance has been given. Examples of this would be if the boxloader attempts to lure the dog to the box by showing it a ball or set the box off for the dog or physically signalling the dog to get the ball (unless provided for under the rule of intervention).

Spectators kicking the ball back into the ring or enticing the dog by using food or methods other than verbal encouragement are also inappropriate advantage

### **3. Signal fouls by raising a flag when any dog in your assigned lane commits a foul.**

#### **Fouls include:**

#### **1) Fouling in the Ring**

If a dog fouls (relieves itself in the racing ring) at any time from start of warm up to when the Judge signals the end of the race the dogs team forfeits the heat in progress or the next heat if the foul occurs between heats,

#### **2) Out of Bounds / Out of play.**

The host club shall specify the race area (Ring) boundaries. If a ball bounces out of bounds and the dog retrieves the ball unaided, there shall be no penalty. If the dog is aided by a spectator, handler, box loader or other, the dog has committed a foul and is to run again.

Out of play shall be treated the same as if the ball were out of bounds. For example; if the ball becomes lodged or trapped inside the box.

### 3) **Crossing or interference**

The box steward shall watch for crossing or interference. Crossing is where a dog crosses the centre line in a heat. The steward should signal crossing by raising their flag.

Interference is where a dog or any team member interferes with the opposing team during a heat. The team causing the interference will forfeit the heat. This includes interference in the racing lane, in all in bound areas, and in the area where dogs are waiting to run. Interference is described as crossing the imaginary centre line and becoming a safety hazard to the dogs racing in the other lane and obstructing the other team's dog from running its race.

Another common example of interference is when a ball from "Team B" rolls across to the edge of "Team A's lane next to a jump. Two dogs from "Team A" ran by the ball without incident. The third dog in team A however, stops and picks up the ball. This is interference on "Team B" because the ball was from their lane. Even though the first two dogs ran past the ball, the ball was not supposed to be there and by its presence it prevented "Team A" from completing its run.

### 4) **A dog missing a jump**

If a dog misses a jump, either on the run down the course or on the way back, the box steward will signal this by raising their flag. That dog will run again.

### 5) **Dog does not trigger the box**

Where a dog does not trigger the box but just takes the ball from the hole you are required to flag that dog.

## **DUTIES OF THE INBOUND STEWARD**

*The specific details of the various fouls have been described in the earlier sections of this document. Refer to these for additional detail.*

*In particular, Inbound Stewards are required to watch for:*

- 1) **Throwing of motivators or ball**
- 2) **Other distraction incidents**
- 3) **Aggressive incidents involving dogs and/or handlers**
- 4) **Incidents of Crossing or Interference**
- 5) **Fouling in the ring**
- 6) **Handler indiscretions such as failure to pick up balls**
- 7) **Use of inappropriate language or other actions by team members that may bring the Sport and / or the AFA into disrepute**

If any of these occurs, the Inbound Steward is to ensure the Judge is aware of the indiscretion by signalling by raising their flag and reporting to the Judge when that heat is completed and before the next heat is run.