

# RAIL TRAIL DOG SLED RACE

## 2012 OFFICIAL RULES

It should be noted that in all situations, the race officials would attempt to follow the spirit of the rule, rather than the "letter of the law", it being understood that the race will be awarded on merit and not on technicality.

**RACE START IN GRAND FORKS JANUARY 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 9:00 am.**

### **Section I - Entry**

#### **A. ENTRY FEES**

1. The entry fees for the 2012 Rail Trail Dog Sled Race are set at:
  - Entries received by December 1st 2011 - \$200.00
  - Entries received by December 31st 2011 - \$225.00
  - Entries received after December 31<sup>st</sup> 2011 - \$275.00
  - \*\* All entries after December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 must be in cash, money order or certified check.
2. No entries will be accepted after 9:00 AM on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The musher must be named before 1:00 PM on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
3. Receipt of the entry fee will constitute the musher's intent to enter the race and further acknowledge that the musher agrees to comply with each and every rule as stated.
4. Only 25 entries will be accepted. (A waiting list will be taken to replace cancelled entries)

#### **B. QUALIFICATIONS**

1. All entrants in the Rail Trail must submit a picture, the biography sheet (completely filled out), along with the registration and entry fee.
2. Rail Trail Race Committee reserves the right to reject any entry.

#### **C. MUSHERS**

1. The musher starting at the beginning of the race shall drive the team throughout the race.
2. A musher under the age of 18 must submit a written letter outlining qualifications to race and a signed consent form from a parent or legal guardian.
3. It is mandatory for all mushers to attend all race functions listed.
4. All mushers must register in person at the Race Headquarters in Grand Forks. Mushers can register between 2 PM January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and 9:00 AM January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
5. The race committee up until the start of the race may allow substitution of a musher.

#### **D. MUSHER'S MEETINGS**

1. It is mandatory for all entering mushers and their handlers to attend the rules meeting, at 6:00 PM on Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (Location to be announced later). This is also where the mushers pick their positions. A sign will be given to you at this time to indicate the name of the musher, handler and bib number. This sign must be visible on the dash of your truck at all times and at all checkpoints.

Failure to meet first roll call will result in a fine of \$100.00, missing the second roll call will result in disqualification.

2. Only mushers and handlers will participate in the public rules discussion.

#### **E. DOGS**

Each team must start with a maximum of 12 dogs (minimum of 8) and finish with a minimum of 6 dogs. This minimum number of dogs must be standing in the team at all times.

1. All dogs must undergo a veterinary check as scheduled by the race committee when you register. All dogs are expected to meet general standards of good health and the race committee may publish any other specific criteria in advance. All dogs qualifying for the race will be marked. Any other dogs on your truck must be marked out. It is the musher's responsibility to see that the mark on the qualified dogs and the mark on the marked out dogs remains intact. If for some reason the mark disappears, the musher or handler must report it to the Race Marshal immediately.
2. All dogs entered in the race will have current vaccinations for parvovirus, distemper and rabies; the musher will be required to present these certificates at the health check.
  - a) Proof of valid rabies vaccination signed and dated at least two weeks prior to the race. Certificates with Imrab 3/Rabvac 3 vaccinated dogs will be accepted for up to 3 years from date of vaccination.
  - b) Proof of purchase of parvovirus and distemper vaccines must be submitted for inspection at the health check; the vaccines must be administered at least two weeks prior to the race.
3. Any dogs not qualifying for a certificate of good health may not run in the race.
4. Any dog dropped before or during the race will be marked out and cannot be re-entered or substituted.
5. Administration of any drugs other than those mentioned in section I, heading G shall be done only with prior knowledge and consent of the Race Veterinarian and Race Marshal.
6. Sweats will be allowed without prohibited substances.

#### **F. EQUIPMENT**

1. All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest areas.
2. All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double formation.
3. Some type of sled shall be drawn, that is equipped with a working brake bolted to the sled, brush bow and a snow hook. No part of the braking system or any ropes, etc. shall extend beyond the end of the runners, except for the traditional northern toboggan, which can have a brake at the back.
4. Mushers may exchange sleds at any of the official checkpoints.

5. A sled bag capable of safely restraining a struggling dog, and if necessary covering a severely injured or expired dog is required.
6. Each musher shall provide a chain or cable tether and food for 24 hours for any dogs left at a checkpoint and not in the care of his or her handler.
7. All gang lines must be made of cable or have a cable core in the center line, unless using double trace hook-up.
8. We strongly recommend that the mushers have adequate blankets or jackets for the dogs in case of extreme cold.

## **G. DRUGS**

1. No injectable substances of any kind and no oral or topical drugs, which suppress the signs of illness or injury to the dogs, may be in the possession of the musher or used during the race.
2. The Race Veterinarian or Health Checker shall have the authority to collect blood or urine samples at random at any point during the race, commencing with the Health Check, at any time after the official start of the race and up to 1 hour after the finish of each team at the end of the race.
3. It will be the musher's responsibility to assist the official in collection of these samples at the Health Check, during the race, or immediately following the team's finish.
4. The use or possession of the following drugs is prohibited:
  - Analgesics (pain relievers), prescription or non-prescription
  - Anti-inflammatory drugs including corticosteroids, anti-prostaglandins, and salicylates. (The exception to this rule will be the use of topical corticosteroids for use only in topical foot ointments approved by the veterinarian.
  - Nervous system stimulants
  - Cough suppressants
  - Diuretics
  - Muscle relaxants
  - Antihistamines
  - Diet pills
  - Aspirin
5. It is the intent of this rule that no drugs or other artificial means be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability. A musher must have his/her team free of any of these prohibited drugs at the time of the Health Check and during the race. If, in the view of the Race Marshal or Official Race Veterinarian it is necessary to use one of these drugs for the dog's well being, that dog will be pulled from the race.

## **H. MANDATORY GEAR REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES**

- Headlamp (working) we recommend carrying two for insurance
- Knife
- Sleeping bag (winter or arctic weight)
- Axe (minimum of 2 1/4 lb. head and 22 inches in length)
- Cable cutter which is readily accessible and capable of cutting your gangline if necessary
- Waterproof matches or a lighter
- Promotional material:
  - Musher's bib
  - All must be turned in at the end of the race or when musher scratches from the race.

One day's emergency ration for the musher

First aid kit (to consist at least of triangle bandage, pressure dressing and tape, to be used in case of major bleeding).

If musher arrives at any checkpoint or finish missing any of the above items, one hour will be added to their total time for each missing item.

## **I. EXPENDABLE ITEMS**

Must be on sled when leaving start and any other checkpoint.

- One pound of dog food for each dog on the team
- 2 sets of booties (8) for each dog (one set can be on the dogs)

## **Section II-Race Officials, Race Jury, Protests & Hearings**

### **A. RACE OFFICIALS**

The Rail Trail ("Race Committee") shall appoint Race Officials to oversee the race. Race Officials shall include a Race Marshal, Assistant Race Marshal, Head Veterinarian, Veterinarian Assistants, Start Chief, Timing Chief, Trail Chief and Checkpoint Chief.

Race Officials shall have authority to make decisions respecting their specific areas of responsibility and, in the absence of a more qualified official, authority to make decisions intended to advance the fairness and safety of the race.

Where reasonably possible, Race Officials shall consult with the Race Marshal before making any decision that might affect the finish order of the race. Where the Race Marshal is consulted, he/she shall, subject to the outcome of any official protest, have the final word regarding the decision being made.

1. The Race Marshal shall have control of the race from the commencement of the pre-race mushers' meeting until the race is over. He/she has the authority to interpret rules at the pre-race mushers' meeting and during the race; make decisions respecting race matters not covered by the rules; suspend the running of the race for a period of time to deal with extreme weather or other unforeseen circumstances; reroute the race to avoid poor trail conditions or other hazards; re-locate or close checkpoints; order drug testing of dogs;

assess fines or other penalties for rule infractions; order the withdrawal or disqualification of individual dogs from the race for just cause; and determine the final finish order of teams; has the final word over all safety considerations for both dogs and mushers. Prior to closing or changing a checkpoint, the Race Marshal will advise the Trail Committee of any problem at hand and allow them one hour to correct it.

2. The Official Race Veterinarian or The Race Marshal is the consulting specialist to the race. In addition to the pre-race Health Check one of the above officials will be available throughout the race for consultation, first aid, and major medical situations. The Official's decision to disallow an entry or remove a dog or team from the race can go to the Race Marshal for appeal. The decision stands until such time as the Race Marshal overrules it.
3. The Race Officials, Timers, Checkpoint Judges and Official Race Veterinarian each have immediate authority in their specific areas of responsibility and will act as consultants to the Race Marshal who has the ultimate responsibility to make the final decision.
4. Any race official can be replaced during the race for gross incompetence with a majority vote by the Race Committee.

## **B. RACE JURY**

The Race Committee shall also appoint a Race Jury of three (3) persons to decide matters referred to it by the Race Marshal and to decide official protests.

If the Race Marshal is of the view that the length of the race route or the time allowed to run the race route should be altered for any or all of the teams entered, he/she shall refer the matter to the Race Jury with his/her recommendation. The Race Jury shall, after considering any evidence it chooses, decide the matter by majority vote on such terms as it deems appropriate and have its decision communicated to mushers as soon as practicable.

If the Race Marshal is of the view that a musher and his/her team should be withdrawn or disqualified from the race, he/she shall refer the matter to the Race Jury with his/her recommendation. The Race Jury shall, after giving the musher an opportunity to be heard, then decide the matter by majority vote and have its decision communicated to the team's musher as soon as practicable. The Race Jury's decision regarding the withdrawal or disqualification of a musher is final and not subject to protest or appeal.

The Race Marshal may, in his/her discretion, refer any matter to the Race Jury for decision. The Race Jury may, after giving any musher having a significant interest in the matter an opportunity to be heard, decide any such matter by a majority vote. The decision of the Race Jury in such case shall be final.

## **C. PROTESTS AND HEARINGS**

1. Any musher wishing to register verbal protest must do so at the next closest checkpoint. A \$25.00 cash deposit must accompany any verbal protest. A musher wishing to protest the decision or action of a Race Official or the failure of a Race Official to make a decision or take action regarding an event likely to affect the outcome of the race may do so by filing his or her protest in writing along with a cash deposit of \$25 with a Race Official.
2. Protest must be made directly to a race official who will then inform the Race Marshal. The protest shall in no manner be discussed with the spectators, media representatives, or the general public prior to a decision being handed down.

3. All protests must be put into writing and filed as soon as is practicable to a race official in all of the circumstances and, in any event, no later than one hour after the musher's finish.
4. The Race Jury shall return the \$25 cash deposit accompanying a protest if the protest was successful. It may also, in its sole discretion, return the deposit where a protest was unsuccessful or only partly successful. Protest fee refunds may be obtained at the race headquarters in Grand Forks upon presentation of receipt, providing the written protest has been upheld.
5. A protest shall be dealt with at a hearing convened by the Race Jury at a time deemed appropriate by the jury. Before making a decision, the Race Jury shall hear from the musher filing the protest, the Race Marshal and/or Assistant Race Marshal, any Race Official involved in the matter being protested, any musher likely to have his or her final placing affected should the protest succeed, and any other person the Race Jury chooses to hear from. The Race Jury will decide a protest by majority vote. The Race Jury's decision respecting a protest is final and shall be respected by all parties affected by it. The Race Marshal following a hearing, attended by all parties involved, will make an official decision.
6. Any complaints about the overall organization of the race must be written and given to the Race Committee. The Race Committee will endeavor to address the complaint in a timely fashion.
7. Any conduct not beneficial to the event can result in disqualification from future races.

## **Section III-Conduct & Penalties**

### **A. CONDUCT**

A musher shall be responsible for the good conduct of himself/herself and his/her handler throughout the race.

A musher shall also be responsible for the good behaviour of his or her team throughout the race.

**MUSHERS AND HANDLERS SHALL SHOW RESPECT, POLITENESS AND GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IN ALL THEIR DEALINGS WITH OTHER MUSHERS, HANDLERS, RACE PERSONNEL AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.**

**COMMON SENSE AND GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP SHALL PREVAIL. IF THE RACE MARSHAL DETERMINES THAT A MUSHER, HANDLER OR TEAM AT ANY TIME IN THE RACE AREA OR ON THE TRAIL IS DETRIMENTAL TO THE SPORT OR RACE, THAT TEAM WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.**

### **B. PENALTIES**

Failure to adhere to the published rules may result in a warning or a penalty to be determined by the Race Marshal or disqualification imposed by the Race Jury. A disqualified musher will forfeit all entry fees, placements, or monetary values.

Furthermore, the Race Committee or the Race Marshal may assess penalties other than disqualification. These penalties will take the form of time penalties or fines and can affect the

final place of a team. A time penalty imposed by the Race Marshal may, at the discretion of the Race Marshal, be imposed by adding time to a musher's mandatory layover time or by adding time to a musher's final finish time.

In the event fines are imposed, they must be paid before purse payout or will be deducted from musher's winnings. Any future entries will not be accepted until the Boundary Dog Sled Association receives full payment

If the Race Marshal determines that the behaviour of a musher, his/her handler or his/her team is detrimental to the race or the sport of dog mushing, whether or not that behaviour is in breach of the published rules, he or she may recommend to the Race Jury that the musher be disqualified. The Race Jury shall then deal with the matter as set out in Rule II-B3

## **Section IV - The Race**

### **A. START/FINISH**

#### **1. START POSITIONS**

The starting positions for the race shall be picked by the mushers in order of the receipt of their entries. First entry received will have first choice, second gets second choice, etc. The musher of each team shall pick his/her own starting position prior to the race at the Mushers' Meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

#### **2. START**

Race starts 9:00 AM January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. All mushers, handlers and team trucks must be in the official parking area and available to the public before 8:00 am; there will be a penalty for being late.

All teams must be ready to move up to starting line when notified of their turn. If your team is not ready to move up to the starting line in order drawn, you will start after the musher who drew last place has left and a one-hour penalty will be added to your time. Any team that cannot leave the starting line within 10 minutes of the last team's departure may be disqualified.

#### **3. FINISH**

All race money-winners must finish the entire race. The nose of the lead dog crossing the finish line will constitute a team's official finish. In the event that the musher is not with the team when it finishes, the finish time will be officially recorded when the musher crosses the line after the team.

### **B. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE**

1. Mushers and teams will not receive any outside assistance with the following exceptions:

- Mushers may assist each other in appropriate ways in an emergency
- Replacement of broken or lost equipment between checkpoints must be arranged through and directed by the Race Marshal. (The musher must send word to the Race Marshal, who will then direct an official to contact a handler to transport a replacement to the stranded musher.)
- The designated handler and only the designated handler (wearing the handler bib) may assist musher at the start, at all the assisted checkpoints and at the finish, but only after the

musher has officially signed in and until he has signed out. Only one handler is allowed for each team. NO assistance from the truck driver (if traveling with a handler and truck driver) will be allowed.

- **IF YOU ELECT TO USE THE RAIL TRAIL DOG SLED RACE AS A QUALIFYING RACE FOR THE IDITAROD OR YUKON QUEST YOU CANNOT RECEIVED ANY OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING FROM YOUR HANDLER OR DRIVER.**
  - Race officials may give or allow assistance where required at the Race Official's discretion.
2. Mushers may not arrange for any person or persons to instruct them between checkpoints. Request for direction along the way is acceptable.
  3. Pacing of any kind is strictly prohibited.
  4. Two-way radios, cell and SAT phones will not be permitted.
  5. Participant's dog trucks must travel from one checkpoint to the next at reasonable highway speed. Any contact between musher and handler between checkpoints unless directed by the Race Marshal will result in disqualification.

### **C. MANAGEMENT AND HANDLING OF DOGS**

1. Cruel and inhumane treatment of dogs by anyone is strictly prohibited and will be penalized by disqualification.
2. No whips will be allowed.
3. Boxing of dogs
  - You will be allowed to box your dogs at all official checkpoints.
  - Dropped dogs will not be boxed until they are checked and marked by a race official.
  - **IF YOU ELECT TO USE THE RAIL TRAIL DOG SLED RACE AS A QUALIFIER FOR THE IDITAROD OR YUKON QUEST, YOU CANNOT BOX YOUR DOGS AT ANY CHECKPOINT.**
4. Expired dogs
  - Any dog that expires on the trail for any reason must be taken to the next checkpoint or the checkpoint you just left if the musher deems it to his/her advantage time wise.
  - Expired dogs must be completely covered when being carried on the sled.
  - A post mortem will be performed on all expired dogs by a licensed Veterinarian appointed by the Race Committee prior to the race.
  - The incident will not be discussed with the public or media until the Race Marshal gives an official release to the media.
5. Hauling Dogs
  - A musher may not allow any of his/her dogs or team to be hauled by another team.
  - A musher's dogs must be hauled in a humane manner in his own sled. All dogs including team, dropped and extra dogs on truck must be in complete control of the handler and musher at all times and it is their responsibility to catch any loose dogs.

## **D. CHECKPOINTS AND MANDATORY LAYOVER**

1. There will be a mandatory four (4) hours of rest at Beaverdell. The starting times will be adjusted at the 4 hour mandatory checkpoint. There will be an additional mandatory four (4) hours rest at any checkpoint along the trail. It is the musher's responsibility to make sure that the required mandatory rest is taken. If on arrival at the finish, the officials find that you are short on your mandatory rest, you will be penalized half an hour plus the time missed.
2. Checking in
  - a) Each musher must personally sign in and out of each checkpoint. It is the musher's responsibility to see that this is carried out. If no time is to be spent at the checkpoint, both can be done upon checking in, but no handler assistance will be allowed after signing out.
  - b) All mushers must sign in and have his/her gear and equipment checked at each checkpoint.
  - c) A musher may return to a checkpoint with his/her team to return a dog or dogs without penalty.
  - d) At the six hour mandatory layover there will be a mandatory Health check. It is the musher's responsibility to make sure this is done.
  - e) Each musher will be responsible for reporting of any dogs in the bag to the checker
3. Checkpoint accommodations
  - a) Space for bedding down dogs and parking space are on a first come, first served basis. Checkpoint officials will show you the designated space for parking teams.
  - b) Boisterous behavior on the part of any musher or handler around other resting teams or any other interference is strictly prohibited.
4. Layover at checkpoints

Musher or handler must remain at checkpoints with their dogs. The period of time is counted from the sign in (arrival time) at the checkpoint until you sign out, whether or not you leave.
5. Food and Water

The musher is responsible for supplying all his/her own food for himself/herself and his/her dogs for the entire race. There will be water available at all checkpoints. Some checkpoints may have food available for the musher.
6. The handler must clean up his parking area at all checkpoints. After it is clean he/she will get an official to approve the site before leaving. A thirty (30) minute penalty will be assessed against any team leaving a checkpoint without official approval for the handler to leave.

## **E. RUNNING THE COURSE**

1. The Rail Trail is being run on provincially and privately owned land. Please conduct yourselves in an appropriate manner and do not demand "rights" to the trail.
2. Please do not dispose of booties or other refuse along or on the trail. Carry them to the checkpoint and properly dispose of them there. Littering will result in a 30-minute penalty.

### 3. Cut-off Times

In order to insure the safe conduct of the race and to limit the responsibility of checkers and other volunteers, a cut-off time has been set. The race officially ends at 6:00 pm (18:00 hrs), January 22nd, 2012. Any team still on the trail as of that time will be disqualified. The Race Marshal may at his discretion extend the cut-off time for just cause or disqualify a team that will not make this finish time.

### 4. Passing

- a) When overtaking another team the musher shall call "trail"; the over-taken team must relinquish the trail and assist the passing team when necessary. The overtaken team shall not attempt to pass for 15 minutes, unless the other team is stopped.
- b) When neither of two or more teams is able to pull away from the other, the mushers shall mutually decide on the appropriate team to lead out. In no way is the passing rule designed to assist a team in "manipulating" its way into a desirable trail position.
- c) If the passing team has a tangle during the pass, the team being passed must wait for the passing team to get straight and moving again.
- d) If ski poles are being used, they must be put away within 100 yards of another team in front or behind you.

### 5. Lost Team

- a) In the case of a lost team, the team will not be disqualified if the musher regains control of the team, provided that the team and musher complete the entire race trail and comply with the rules, including checkpoint requirements.
- b) Mushers may receive assistance from another contestant in recovering their team. It is the intent of this rule that all teams follow the trail as marked.
- c) Teams inadvertently leaving the course must regain the course at the point at which it was left, and then continue on.
- d) If a musher accepts a ride from a motorized vehicle to recover a lost team, he or she shall report the matter to the Race Marshal at their earliest opportunity. Failure to report may result in disqualification. Upon receiving a report concerning a musher accepting a ride from a motorized vehicle, the Race Marshal shall decide if any penalty should be imposed.

### 6. Safety

It is the musher's responsibility to check for traffic at road crossings. An attempt will be made to secure these crossings. However, towards the end of the race, when teams may be spread over a several hour stretch it will be likely that some crossings are unattended. Always use your headlamp to signal snow machines during night travel.

## **F. WEATHER AND TRAIL CONDITIONS**

1. The race will continue under all but the most severe trail and weather conditions. Mushers must come prepared to run in cold, wind, storm, and over sections of bare ground, if necessary.
2. In the event of questionable trail conditions, the Race Committee will make the decision:
  - a) To reroute parts of the trail.
  - b) To postpone no less than 10 days prior to the race.

## **Section V - Awards Presentation**

All mushers finishing the race must be present at the Awards Presentation ceremony. The ceremony will take place during the Finish Supper Banquet 7:00 pm on January 22nd, 2012.

(Penalty - Forfeiture of winnings)

### **Section VI Refunds**

Full refunds of entry fees may be granted until January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. No refunds after January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012 unless for a medical or personal emergency, and then only with approval of the Race Committee.

### **Section VII - Bibs**

Each musher and handler is required to wear his/her assigned bib at the start, finish and when entering, while in the checkpoints and when leaving all checkpoints. Bibs must be **VISIBLE** outside of all clothing. The designated handler must wear the bib in all checkpoints as well. All race bibs must be returned to the race official at the finish line. A bib deposit of \$40.00 will be paid at Registration, to be returned at the Awards Banquet. Both bibs must be returned in order to claim the refund of the deposit.

### **Section VIII - Claims**

Each musher agrees not to hold the Rail Trail Race Organization, its members, race sponsors, landowners (both private and government) or the race committee, employees, volunteers, individually or jointly, for injury or damage to himself/herself, his/her handler, dogs or equipment.

Each musher agrees to give the race organizers and sponsors permission to photograph himself/herself and his/her team and to use as they see fit any photographs taken before, during or after the race.

**GOOD LUCK TO ALL**