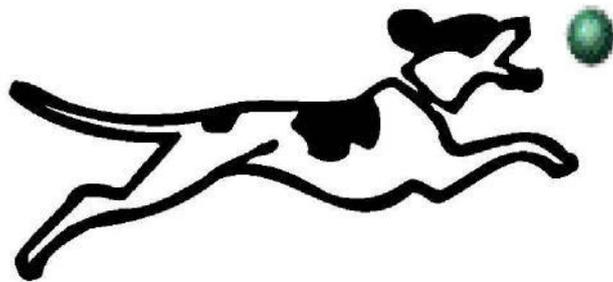




STEWARDS' GUIDELINES



FLYBALL INFORMATION

PACK

INTRODUCTION

The AFA Committee congratulates you and thanks you for deciding to become a Ticketed Flyball Steward. Stewards fill a very important and responsible position at any race meeting and this Pack is intended to assist you in gaining your Steward's Ticket and in performing your role as a Steward.

There are 2 types of stewards required at a race meeting:

- 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, but not sitting so as to interfere with or distract the dogs racing. Line Stewards are responsible for watching for and signaling rule violations in their assigned racing lane and also those occurring behind the Judge in the runback area.
- Box Stewards –Box Stewards are positioned level with the last jump before the box with a good view of the box and box loader but not sitting so as to interfere with or distract the dogs racing. Box Stewards are responsible for watching for and signaling rule violations occurring in their assigned racing lane and at the box.

Although many of the responsibilities of a Steward apply equally to Line Stewards and Box Stewards there are some particular responsibilities for each type of Steward. As you may be called on to act as a Line Steward or a Box Steward, or both, at any race meeting it is necessary that you know the responsibilities of both Line Stewards and Box Stewards.

What is expected of all Stewards?

A Steward's principal responsibility is to assist the Judge in ensuring safe racing by watching for, and signaling to the Judge, rule violations from the start of the warm up period for a race until the Judge declares the last heat of the race.

A Steward must bring any rule violation to the Judge's attention by raising a flag and keeping the flag raised until satisfied that the flag has been seen and acknowledged by the Judge.

Stewards must:

- be friendly and courteous, even sympathetic;
- be honest, fair and impartial – where possible a Steward should not sit in a lane in which a team from the Steward's club is racing;
- be firm yet polite;
- be alert and ready for each heat – before starting each race the Judge will seek acknowledgment from Stewards that they are ready;
- help where appropriate to keep racing moving;
- remain stationary during each heat - dogs may go around Stewards and a ball bouncing off a Steward is still in play.

Stewards must not:

- engage in conversation with a disgruntled competitor - the Steward must direct the competitor to the Judge;
- assist teams during warm up or racing;
- eat in or bring food into the ring;
- offer verbal encouragement to teams.

If a Steward is in doubt as to whether a violation has occurred the Steward should raise a flag. If necessary, the Judge will confer with the Steward and decide what action should be taken.

When should Box Stewards and Line Stewards raise their flags for violations?

When a dog shows aggression:

Background: Dog aggression is any behaviour meant to intimidate or harm a person (including a handler, Judge or other official) or other animal.

Action: The Judge will determine if the degree of aggression warrants the dog being excused.

Example: Behaviours which may be considered demonstrations of aggression include:

- Dog lunging, snapping or nipping at another dog or person with intent;
- Dog engaging in heavy growling or intimidating another dog by eyeballing with intent;
- Dog chasing and frightening another dog with intent;
- Dog chasing and biting another dog or person with or without a resultant sign of injury;
- Dog attacking another dog or person.

When a dog misses a jump on its run to the box:

Background: Dogs are required to jump all four jumps on the way to the box but may do so in any order and in any direction and may take any jump more than once. If a jump is knocked down and a dog clears the jump as if it was standing the dog does not commit a violation.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: A dog having taken some jumps on its way to the box loses focus and starts to return to its handler. Before the dog crosses the start/finish line the handler sends the dog back to the box and the dog retakes all jumps. This is not a violation.

When a dog does not carry the ball over all jumps on its return from the box:

Background: Dogs must carry the ball over all jumps on their return from the box. However, the dog may carry the ball over the jumps in any order and in any direction and may take the ball over any jump more than once.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: A dog returning from the box drops the ball before the second jump. The dog turns and runs back either over or around the jump, collects the ball and then completes the run over the last three jumps. The dog has carried the ball over all four jumps and has not committed a violation.

When a dog defecates or urinates in the ring:

Background: This applies at any time from the start of the warm period for a race until the Judge declares the last heat of the race.

Action: If this occurs before the first heat or between heats, the dog's team forfeits the next heat. If this occurs during a heat, the dog's team forfeits that heat.

When a dog or handler causes interference to the other team:

Background: Interference occurs when a dog or team member from one team causes the other team to be unable to complete its run cleanly. A dog cannot interfere with its own team.

Action: The team causing the interference forfeits the heat.

Example: A dog from one team crosses towards the other team's lane and a dog in the other team deviates from its run and goes around a jump. This is interference.

Example: After completing its run a dog turns and follows the next dog in its team down the racing lane. This is not interference.

When a ball is out of play or out of bounds and a dog is inappropriately assisted by the box loader, a spectator or a handler:

Background: Where a ball bounces out of the ring or becomes lodged or trapped in any part of the ring the dog must not be aided by a spectator, handler, box loader or other person to retrieve the ball.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: The ball bounces out of the ring. The dog leaves the ring, collects the ball and returns the ring to complete its run. This is not a violation.

Example: The ball becomes wedged under the ring fence. A spectator kicks the ball into the ring, the dog collects the ball and completes its run. This is a violation.

When a dog which is required to rerun does so in the incorrect order:

Background: If a dog is required to rerun it must only do so after all the other dogs in its team have run. If more than one dog is required to rerun, they must rerun in the order in which they originally ran.

Action: The dog must run again in correct order.

Example: The second dog in a team crosses the start/finish line but then returns to its handler. The handler sends the dog again before the third dog runs. This is a violation and the dog must run again after all other dogs have run.

Example: The second and third dogs in a team do not complete their runs cleanly. The second dog must run again after the fourth dog and before the third dog runs again.

When a team member distracts the opposing team:

Background: Team members must not distract the opposing team by bouncing balls, using a flyball box at the end of the run, or by any other means nor by throwing any object for their dogs (for example, balls, toys, Frisbees, dummies, gloves or treats). Team members are also required to pick up loose balls.

Action: For the first instance of distraction during a race, the team receives a warning. For second and subsequent instances the team forfeits the heat.

When a dog runs back from the box with the wrong ball:

Background: The dog must retrieve the ball from the box and carry that ball over the start/finish line. The dog may carry two or more balls over the start/finish line provided one of those balls is the ball taken from the box.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: A dog retrieves the ball from the box. On the return run the dog drops that ball and picks up a ball dropped by a previous dog and carries the new ball to the start/finish line. This is a violation.

Example: A dog approaches the box with a ball in its mouth. The dog drops that ball, takes the ball from the box and returns with the new ball. This is not a violation.

Example: A dog approaches the box with a ball in its mouth. The dog triggers the box, collects the ball which was in the box and runs back with both balls in its mouth. This is not a violation.

When a team jumps the incorrect height:

Background: In regular class racing, the jumps must be set at the jump height of the dog in the team with the lowest jump height. In open class racing the jump heights may be set at any height from seven inches up to the jump height of the dog in the team with the lowest jump height. Although a Steward may not know the correct jump height for a team the Steward should notify the judge if all jumps are not set at the same height. Stewards should also check that the top slat of each jump is a one-inch slat – this is a dog safety requirement.

Action: A team in round robin racing format will forfeit all heats run at an incorrect jump height. A team in elimination racing format will be excused from racing if it runs at the incorrect jump height.

When else should a Line Steward raise a flag for a violation?

When a dog returning from the box does not carry the ball across the start/finish line in its mouth:

Background: A dog must carry the ball from the box across the start/finish line in its mouth to complete a clean run. It is not sufficient for the ball to cross the start/finish line.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: *The ball leaves the dog's mouth before the start/finish line but crosses the line in the air. This is a violation.*

Example: *The dog drops the ball and does not retrieve it before the start/finish line. This is a violation.*

Example: *The dog drops the ball before the start/finish line but retrieves the dropped ball before crossing the start/finish line with the ball in its mouth. This is not a violation.*

When a handler crosses the start/finish line during their dog's run:

Background: A handler may cross the start/finish line during their dog's run to pick up a knocked down jump or retrieve a loose ball. Subject to that exception a handler, or any object of a handler (for example, a motivator or item of clothing) may not cross the start/finish line during their dog's run. Although a violation of this nature will normally be detected by the electronic judging system the Line Steward should still confirm with a raised flag.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: *After a dog is sent down the lane its handler approaches the start/finish line. When calling the dog from the box the handler swings a tug the end of which crosses the start/finish line. This is a violation.*

When a dog does not cross the start/finish lane between the start gates:

Background: Both on its run to the box and on its return from the box a dog must cross the start/finish line between the start gates.

Action: The dog must run again.

When a false start occurs:

Background: No part of a start dog's body (whether in the air or on the ground) or any part of the handler's body or their objects (for example, motivator or clothing) is permitted to break the beam on the start/finish line before the green light shows on the light tree. When the electronic judging system is being used a false start will normally be indicated by the red light on the light tree of the relevant lane and the horn sounding. If in doubt as to whether the Judge has seen the false start the Line Steward should raise a flag.

Action: In regular racing the Judge will restart a heat when a team false starts for the first time. If the team also false starts on the restart the start dog must run again. In handicap racing there are no restarts so that if the start dog false starts it must run again.

When a dog does an early pass:

Background: Only when a dog returning from the box has reached the start/finish line with any part of its body (on the ground or in the air) may the next dog reach the start/finish line with any part of its body (generally this is a nose to nose pass at the start/finish line). When the electronic judging system is being used an early pass will normally be indicated by the red light on the light tree of the relevant lane and the horn sounding. If in doubt as to whether the Judge has seen an early pass the Line Steward should raise a flag.

Action: The dog must run again.

When else should a Box Steward raise a flag for a violation?

When a box loader inappropriately assists a dog:

Background: Except during the warm up, to retrieve a loose ball or to 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, so long as such encouragement does not distract the opposing team. The box loader is to remain in position until the outcome of each heat is determined by the Judge. If a ball bounces back into the cup as the dog tries to catch it the box loader may reset the box so that the dog can trigger it.

Action: The dog's team forfeits the heat.

Example: *A box loader will be acting inappropriately if the box loader does (or attempts to do) any of the following:*

- lures the dog to the box by showing it a ball;
- sets the box off for the dog;
- physically signals the dog to get the ball (unless provided for under the rule of intervention);
- kicks the ball out from behind the box so the dog can retrieve it.

When a box loader attempts to fix a box malfunction before a Judge's inspection:

Background: If a box loader believes that the box has malfunctioned the box loader is required to indicate this to the box steward and the Judge by standing in front of the box and waving their arms. The box loader must not attempt to fix the malfunction until the Judge has seen and tested the box.

Action: If the box is working when inspected by the Judge it will be assumed that the box was working during the heat and the team will forfeit the heat.

When a spectator gives inappropriate assistance to a dog;

Background: Spectators must not inappropriately assist a dog.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: *A spectator kicks a ball back into the ring or entices a dog by using food or methods other than verbal encouragement.*

When a dog does not trigger the box:

Background: All boxes are required to have a mechanical ball release mechanism. Dogs must trigger the mechanism to release the ball.

Action: The dog must run again.

Example: *A dog stops in front of the box and takes the ball from the box without putting any paw on the box or triggering the mechanism. This is a violation.*

What other responsibilities does a Line Steward have?

A Line Steward is required to assist the Judge in deciding the outcome of each heat:

At the end of each heat the Judge will ask each Line Steward to confirm the number of dogs that ran and whether the Line Steward has anything to report. The Line Steward should then report to the Judge any incidents that may have happened during the heat and that have not already been dealt with by the Judge.

A Line Steward should make an assessment of which team wins each heat in case there is a failure of the electronic judging system or if a team captain challenges the result of the heat.

A Line Steward is required to manually time racing where the electronic judging system fails:

If the electronic judging system fails completely, the Line Stewards will be required to manually time racing using a stop watch.

When manual timing is used:

- the Judge will start the heat by counting down 3 seconds and then blowing a whistle;
- the Line Steward must start the stop watch when the Judge blows the whistle and not when the first dog crosses the start/finish line;
- the Line Steward must stop the stop watch when the team in the Line Steward's assigned lane has run all their racing dogs cleanly or when the Judge has called the heat as completed by blowing a whistle;
- the start dog false starts if any part of the dog's body crosses the start/finish line before the Judge blows a whistle to start the heat;
- If a false start occurs and the heat is re-run, the Line Steward must stop the stop watch and re-start the stop watch when the Judge blows the whistle for the re-start of the heat.
- the Line Steward must look for all other violations which apply when the electronic judging system is used;
- the stop watches do not determine the result of a heat – the result is based on a visual view of the start/finish line;
- if there is a close finish the Judge will confer with the Line Stewards. If the Line Stewards do not agree on the winner of the heat the Judge will either declare a winner or declare the heat to be a tie;
- once the Judge declares a heat the Line Stewards must give the heat time to the timekeepers;
- Line Stewards must keep the heat time on their stopwatches until the Judge asks if they are ready for the next heat.

What other responsibilities does a Box Steward have?

A Box Steward must check the positioning of the box and other equipment:

Box Stewards should check that:

- the box has been positioned correctly – the front of the box must be behind the defined box line;
- any container for balls must be out of the line of sight of the racing dogs, preferably behind the backboards;
- all training jumps and other equipment used during the warm up period must be moved to behind the back boards prior to racing starting.