

Report of Rules/Bylaws Committee re Pick Up Team Rules

1. Introduction

The delegate vote directed the Board to consider adopting rules permitting pick-up teams at NAFA sanctioned tournaments. It did not address the form those rules should take, or even if rules permitting pick up teams should be adopted. The directive was to consider the issue.

Rather than adopt a final set of rules, the Committee recommends a one year trial period. At the conclusion of the trial, any draft rules can and likely will need to be revised, perhaps with a second delegate vote.

Beyond agreeing on a one year trial period, the Committee is deeply divided. Examples of the issues on which the Committee is split include but are not limited to the following: Host club option – should accepting pick up teams be optional or mandatory? Placements – should pick up team entries run for placements? Points – should pick up team entries be like FEO, for fun and not for points, or for some reduced number of points? Regional champions and Cynosports – if pick up teams are allowed placements, should they affect a club's standing or yield a seed time for Cynosports? Why or why not?

2. Discussion

What follows is divided into four parts, with proposed text of draft rules set out in italics. Part 1 starts at the beginning: With the 90 day (soon to be 87 day) rule. Part 2 sets out some common terms any set of pick up team rules will need to include, regardless of the form the specific rules take. Part 3 sets out the form draft rules might take if this were done on an "open" or pick-up team class basis. Part 4 sets out provisions that might apply if these rules were adopted on a per team, as opposed to class, basis.

The idea in presenting these this way is to allow a "mix and match" approach. Language that's optional or not recommended but nonetheless available for consideration appears in brackets.

Part 1: Section 7.5

Whatever form the pick up team rules take, they will be an exception to section 7.5 of NAFA's Corporate Policies and Procedures, 2006 Rule Book, p. 31. Section 7.5 states that a dog that has earned points in a NAFA sanctioned event establishes a club affiliation that requires it to sit out 90 days before running with a different club. This Rule supports the club structure upon which training, hosting and competition have historically depended.

One way to adopt pick up teams would be simply to repeal section 7.5. None of us on the Rules/Bylaws Committee favored doing so. However, the idea provided a useful starting point, because discussing it forced us to think about and articulate the policies and importance of the 90 day rule to NAFA, to flyball, and to our membership.

If anyone wanted to go this route, possible wording would be:

Section 7.5 of the Corporate Policies and Procedures is repealed in its entirety, effective October 1, 2007, until September 30, 2008.

Part 2: Some Common Provisions

Some issues will arise, regardless of the form the pick up team rules take. The draft sections that follow below in this part 2 address some of them and would probably need to be included – or at least thought about and rejected – no matter what route we take. Here is some proposed language to include in any set of rules:

From October 1, 2007 until September 30, 2008, Section 7.5 of NAFA's Corporate Policies and Procedures is modified to permit clubs to field teams that include dogs that otherwise would be ineligible to compete because the dog earned points on another club's team within the preceding 87 days. This exception to section 7.5(a) is subject to the following terms, conditions and requirements:

1. NAFA Rules and Policies Apply

Clubs, teams, dogs and participants on pick up teams remain subject to and governed by all of the provisions of the NAFA Rules of Racing and Corporate Policies and Procedures, except as specifically set forth in this appendix.

2. Eligibility

- a. No dog shall be listed on the timesheets from more than one club at any given tournament;*
- b. [A dog shall not be eligible to compete [on a pick up team] [in the Open Class] more than [X – some suggest 3] times in any given racing year. A dog that has earned points in more than three tournaments [in the Open Class] [on a pick up team] during the racing year may not be listed on the time sheet for any other [Open Class][pick up team] entry during the same racing year.]*
- c. Any dog(s) listed on a timesheet in violation of subparagraphs (a) and (b) of this Rule will cause the forfeiture of all NAFA points earned during the tournament for all dogs on the team(s) on whose time sheet(s) the ineligible dog(s) appear. Team(s) with dog(s) violating this rule will also forfeit any tournament placements.*

- 3. Minimum Tournament Entry. The requirement stated in Section 8.1 of the Corporate Policies and Procedure [p. 31] that four teams compete in the tournament for NAFA points to be awarded is not affected by [pick up team] entries [from the Open Class]. Absent advance waiver from the Executive Director for good cause shown, the four team minimum must be met from teams [entered in classes other than the Open Class][other than pick up team entries].*

PART 3: Open Class

As far as the specifics – “how it would work” -- one option is to establish an “Open” Class where dogs could run on teams without regard to their club affiliation, similar to the Veteran’s Class. Doing so has the advantage that it allows acceptance of pick up team entries to be optional for the host club. Like any class other than the regular class, the host club would have the choice to offer the Open Class or not. Having a separate class also facilitates scheduling to avoid

conflicts between people running dogs on their regular club and on a pick up team and avoids having to write separate rules for Regional Champions, Cynosports, publishing of record times, and the like, since most of those Rules only apply to the Regular and/or Multi-Breed Classes.

A downside of the Open Class approach is that the Class must be established in the tournament sanctioning materials and the entry might be small. A way to counter-balance those concerns – and to provide more competition in some of the smaller classes such as Veteran’s – is to allow seeding of the Open Class in with other Classes or divisions. If a schedule were written in such a way as to have the Open Class compete with the Veteran’s Class, the Open Class would need to be subject to the Veteran’s Class false start and heat limit rules, and a draft rule has been prepared that would allow this.

Rules that would work, when combined with those set out in Part 2 above, to establish an Open Class are as follows:

From October 1, 2007 until September 30, 2008, NAFA restates section 6.2 of its Corporate Policies and Procedures to recognize as a fifth class of competition the Open Class. The Open Class is subject to all existing NAFA Rules of Racing and Corporate Policies and Procedures except that the 87 day rule stated in Section 7.5(a) of the Corporate Policies and Procedures does not apply to the Open Class. The Open Class is subject to the following additional specific rules:

[here insert rules re Eligibility and Minimum tournament entry from Part 2 above]

4. Seeding.

- a. The preference for divisions comprising at least four teams shall not apply to the Open Class. Smaller divisions shall be permitted in the Open Class, with seeding combined into adjacent divisions if needed, as permitted by section 6.1(i) of the Corporate Policies and Procedures [p. 26].*

b. In consultation with and with the approval of the Regional Director, the host club may utilize a racing schedule that has teams in the Open Class compete with teams in the Veteran's Class. Where this occurs, competition in the Open Class shall be run subject to the false start and heat limit rules stated for the Veteran's Class in section 6.2(e)(i) and (ii) of the Corporate Policies and Procedures [p.28].

5. Record Times and NAFA Seed Times.

- a. The rules governing world records stated in Section 7.2 of the Corporate Policies and Procedures do not apply to the Open Class. A team running in the Open Class is not eligible to set a NAFA world record;*
- b. Times set by a team running in a Open Class shall not be entered into the NAFA Database as club times. [At the discretion of NAFA's statistician, a separate roster may be established to report times for teams competing in the Open Class.]*

6. [Conversion to Open Class Entry. With the permission of the Tournament Director and the Regional Director, and subject to the approval of the Executive Director, a team entered in a class other than the Open Class may be converted from its original status to an Open Class entry prior to the start of the tournament. Such conversion is a privilege and entirely at the option of the Tournament Director, the Regional Director and the Executive Director.]

PART 4: Accepting Individual Pick up Entries

Another option is to allow entries on a team-by-team basis without regard to club affiliation of the dogs on the time sheet. This would place us, unless we write specific exceptions into our Pick Up team appendix of rules, in the position of having either to simply repeal section 7.5 for a year (see part 1 above), or of doing so but only partially, for some of the Rules. The question then becomes: To which aspects of our competition would the 90 day rule stated in section 7.5 still apply and why or why not? There is some suggestion, for example, that pick up teams, if allowed, should be able to place but not to affect Regional Championships. Is this a distinction we should

draw? Why or why not? Similarly, it has been suggested that pick up teams should run for neither points nor placements. This places pick-up teams on essentially the same footing as FEO entries. Is this what we want?

Like the draft rules offered in part 3 immediately above, these individual entry rules would begin with the general rules set out in part 2 above, or some variant of them. Specific additional rules we'd need to consider are as follows:

[INSERT LEAD IN AND PARAS. 1 – 3 FROM PART 2 ABOVE HERE.]

4. Host Club Option

Accepting pick up team entries shall be at the option of the host club. In requesting sanctioning, a host club electing to accept such entries shall indicate under the "Special Rules, Requests or Comments" section of NAFA Form C.3 that it will accept entries from pick up teams. This information shall be indicated in the NAFA News and the published list of tournaments maintained on the NAFA website at the time the tournament is announcing and not later than the closing date.

5. Regular Class Only

[Pick up teams can only enter and compete in the regular class in either unlimited entry tournaments or in tournaments where the regular class is limited but the class does not fill. If a limited entry event goes to a draw, pick up teams shall not be included in the draw. If a limited entry event does not fill, remaining spots may be filled by a draw of the pick up teams.]

6. Placements and Awards

[A pick up team entry is not eligible for tournament awards or placements. A pick up team will not be awarded any wins in any races or heats. In an elimination event, pick up teams shall be placed at the bottom of the elimination brackets, with the pick up teams being ranked by time among themselves by seed time in the event more than one pick up team is in the elimination schedule.]

7. Record Times, NAFA Seed Times, and Championships.

- a. [A pick up team is not eligible to set a NAFA world record. The rules governing world records stated in Section 7.2 of the Corporate Policies and Procedures do not apply to pick up teams.]*
- b. Times set by a pick up team shall not be entered into the NAFA Database as club times*
- c. [Regardless of the regional affiliation of the club fielding the pick up team, such teams shall be treated as out of region teams for purposes of the Rules governing Regional Championships.]*
- d. [Not eligible for national champions]*

8. Pick Up Team Status Declared

A team's status as a pick up team entry shall be clearly shown on the team's time sheet and declared prior to the start of racing. The team's status as a pick up team shall be disclosed on the seeding list prepared and circulated by the host club prior to the tournament and/or at the captain's meeting before the racing starts. Once a team is declared to be a pick up team, its status does not change, even if the non-club dog(s) listed on the time sheet do not earn any points.