



## EVENT RULES

### **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE FILLING IN ENTRY FORM - SEE LIST OF CLASSES BELOW**

Class 1: Male & Female Canicross (1 Dog) – Distance approx. 5 Miles – age 18-39

Class 2: Male & Female Canicross (1 Dog) – Distance approx. 5 Miles – age 40+

Class 3: Male & Female Canicross (2 Dog) – Distance approx. 5 Miles – age 18+

### **DOGS & EQUIPMENT**

Dogs to be at least one year old for Canicross on the day of the race.

Dogs must be kept on the lead at all times prior, during, and post the race and should not be run in a slip lead, check/choke chain, head collar, flexi lead or any collar that restricts breathing. If a muzzle is required it should be the open basket type, through which dogs can pant, drink and take treats.

We require dogs to be on a lead at all times as the Ashridge Estate has a head of 1500 deer. This is a requirement from the National Trust so do not abuse our host's hospitality.

For your dog's comfort we suggest they run in a suitable harness and be attached to their handler by a line containing some bungee to act as a shock absorber. These lines must not be longer than 2 metres when fully extended and a waist belt is strongly recommended for handlers. Exceptions may be granted in regard to the above equipment requirements if a competitor is learning how to Canicross (debut), then a hand-held leash and flat (classic) collar will be accepted. The competitor must make this known at registration; exceptions are at the discretion of the Race Director.

Clear up after your dog even when racing. There will be bin liners to deposit your dog's deposits at the start and with the Marshalls on course.

Runners are not allowed to wear shoes that could be dangerous for dogs. Shoes with metal spikes are strictly forbidden. "Orienteering shoes" are acceptable. Trail shoes with good grip are recommended.

The course is of cross-country type, so the terrain will be uneven and there will be roots, mud, fallen branches, stones etc. Runners should be aware of this and run their race according to the conditions, and runners accept the risk of running cross country. The Race Organisers will make runners aware of any major hazards at the race briefing.

Whilst Race Organisers will make every effort to provide water on site and at marshal points, Canicrossers are ultimately responsible for providing water for their dogs at all times.

No pregnant or nursing bitches are allowed to compete. Bitches in season are not allowed to race, please leave them at home.

Dogs should not be brought to the event if they are coughing, unwell, or have recently been in contact with infectious disease. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure their dog is fit and healthy before racing. If in doubt consult your vet.

A dog may only run in one event per day. Given the course distance and timing entering multiple classes for the runner is not an option.

### **AGE GROUPS**

Age is that of runner on the day of the race.

### **BORROWED DOGS**

It is presumed that you are running with your own dog. If you must borrow a dog to race with you should be familiar with each other, have trained together prior to the race and the handler should be aware of the dogs behaviour in a race environment and be responsible for its care throughout the event. You will not be permitted to race with a borrowed dog that you have only just met. You must also ensure the dog has adequate insurance and have the permission of the owner.

### **SAFETY**

Please listen to the race briefing and marshal's instructions. If your dog(s) are likely to be noisy and excited please do not bring them to the race briefing so that everyone can clearly hear safety instructions.

### **RACE ETIQUETTE**

Canicrossers must do their utmost to ensure that their dogs do not interfere with other runners or dogs. If a Race Marshal determines that a handler's conduct at any time in the race area or on the trail is detrimental to the sport/race, that runner shall be disqualified. This includes prior to, during, and after the event. Abuse of dogs, both physical and verbal is prohibited. If a handler, in the opinion of the Race Marshal abuses a dog, that runner will be disqualified.

We do not have exclusive rights to the forest so respect other users. If there is a horse rider on the course (we will try and divert the rider to a different track), bring the dog to heel and walk past the horse. Be polite to all other forest users.

If a dog becomes unfit or refuses to advance for any reason, the Competitor is not permitted to finish the race. They must remain where they are and wait to be picked up by the event sweeper and advise a marshal as soon as possible if the dog is need of urgent attention.

It is deemed acceptable for your dog to be behind on downhill or on technical sections of a route, however your dog should not be dragged. When overtaking, the advancing Canicrosser must shout 'Trail' or 'Runner behind' to warn the runner in front of their intentions, ideally stating which side they intend to pass. The Canicrosser who is being overtaken must assume responsibility to ensure that their dogs are to one side of the track and do not interfere with the runner going past.

It is recommended that Canicrossers who have dogs who are worried by other canines should allow plenty of space for their dogs, especially at the start of the race, to alleviate any undue stress.

At all events an on call vet will be organised in advance and their name, emergency phone number, address, postcode and directions from the race to the vets will be displayed in a prominent position for the duration of the event. Competitors should familiarise themselves with this information on arrival at the event.

All Canicrossers should show their fellow Competitors and their dogs respect at all times and should not use the misfortune of another to unfairly gain an advantage. Additionally, if a runner or a dog is in distress, ALL competitors have a duty to assist if reasonably and safely able to do so.

The use of personal stereos, MP3 players or any electronic device with headphones etc. that impairs the ability to hear marshals or other runners is strictly forbidden. Anyone using such a device will be asked to refrain immediately or be disqualified.

### **ACCIDENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Owner of a dog is required for the race to have liability insurance (or family insurance) for any damages that their dog may commit. The Owner of a dog is the person named as such in the dog's vaccination book and/or official paperwork. The Owner must ensure that the animal is owned (cared for) in accordance with the law.

### **REGISTRATION**

Registration will be closed on the 28<sup>th</sup> Dec. Any waiver to this is subject to the arbitration of Directors of the race.

### **PRIZEGIVING**

Prize giving will take place for all classes as soon as possible on completion of all classes. It will not be possible to give any prizes before prize giving, nor to mail them out after the event.

### **DISTANCES & TEMPERATURES**

The race will be over a distance of about 5 Miles.

The temperature is an important consideration when racing, in case of high temperatures, it is essential to respect the welfare of the dogs and to adapt to their pace. Handlers must allow their dog to drink at the water points and to use the water points to cool down.

The Race Organiser will provide water around the course at the Marshall points where practical, though it is the Competitors responsibility to ensure their dog is adequately hydrated. If you do stop, please ensure you do not obstruct other Competitors.

In case of extreme Cold the course may prove unsuitable for Racing. If the course is considered dangerous due to Ice or deep snow cover the event will be cancelled. If the course is run in cold conditions paw wax is good to help protect the dog's paws and long booties can help where fur is likely to get snowballs.

### **INSURANCE**

All Runners should ensure they have 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability for themselves and their dogs and accept the risks associated with running cross country.

### **CANCELLATION**

Should the race have to be cancelled or postponed for reason beyond the Race Organisers control or in the event of bad weather making the course too dangerous to run on, or the event be accessed, the Organisers reserve the right to take expenses already incurred from entry fees before using any remaining moneys to refund entrants.

To claim a refund Competitor(s) should send a Self-addressed and stamped envelope to the Organiser within a month of the event date, any funds left will be distributed to a nominated charity. NOTE it is the Entrants responsibility to check that the race is still on before travelling, the Organisers will post on Facebook and the Ashridge Web Site if there are any last minute changes.