

# **ASHRIDGE CANICROSSERS**

## **RULES - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE FILLING IN ENTRY FORM**

### **CLASSES**

- Male & Female Canicross (1 Dog) – Distance approx. 10K – age 18-39
- Male & Female Canicross (1 Dog) – Distance approx. 10K – age 40+
- Combined Male & Female Canicross (2 Dog) – Distance approx. 10K – age 18+

### **SPECIAL POINT**

COVID: do not attend if showing any Covid symptom. Maintain Personal Hygiene. Keep 2M apart, maintain social distance (no hugging!). Due to Covid we will not be providing water or refreshments for runners on the course. Please carry water for both you and your dog.

There is a mandatory Walk Section across the monument drive at the Request of the National Trust, This is compulsory and will be Marshalled, so don't eliminate yourself...

### **DOGS & EQUIPMENT**

Dogs to be at least 1 year old for Canicross on the day of the race, given the distance we would suggest 18months for most breeds.

Dogs must be kept on the lead or line at all times prior, during, and post the race. The following are not permitted, slip lead, check/choke chain, head collar, flexie lead or any collar that restricts breathing for the race. 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 among other wildlife. This is a requirement from the National Trust so do not abuse our hosts hospitality.

For your dogs comfort we recommend they run in a suitable Canicross 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 to standard canicross equipment are at the discretion of the Race director.

Clear up after your dog even when racing. There will be bin liners to deposit your dogs deposits at the start and with the Marshalls on course. The carpark and Monument Drive Must be picked up, other parts of the course you may stick and flick off the paths. Do not leave poo bags around the 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.

No pregnant or nursing bitches are allowed to compete.

Bitches in season are not allowed to race, leave them at home.

Dogs should not be brought to the event if they are coughing or have recently been in contact with infectious disease. It is the owners responsibility to ensure their dog is fit and healthy before racing. If in doubt consult your vet. Kennel cough needs at least 21 days after last cough so don't risk infecting other dogs.

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.

## THE COURSE

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 for dogs, Canicrossers are ultimately responsible for providing water for their dogs at all times.~~

***Due to Covid we will no longer be providing water for participants or dogs. Please carry adequate water for yourself and for your dog.***

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 with 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.

Follow the countryside code and remember to close any gates – though the 2 gates on the course we aim to have marshals.

A numbered bib will be given to each competitor prior to the race by the event organisers. The competitor must wear this number visibly throughout the race. Without a bib, results will not be recorded for this competitor. Timekeepers must see bib clearly to record time.

The course will be of time trial format starting at 10sec intervals. Please ensure you are at the start in bib order in time for start. Failure will mean you will start at the back and have a time penalty.

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 dog's 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 marshals 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.

There will be a First Aid point identified at race briefing.

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

**REGISTRATION** Registration will be closed 7 days before the race (27<sup>th</sup> Sept). No Entries on the Day. Any waiver to this is subject to the arbitration of Directors of the race.

**PRIZEGIVING** prizegiving 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 prizegiving, nor to mail them out after the event.

## DISTANCES & TEMPERATURES

The race will be over a distance of approx 10K

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 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 weather 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 dogs paws and long booties can help where fur is likely to get snowballs.

## INSURANCE AND CANCELLATION

**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.

**COVID** As mentioned, please do not attend if you are showing any Covid symptoms and always observe social distancing guidelines. If the race must be cancelled due to Covid we will convert all entries into a virtual race and medals will be sent in the post.

**CANCELLATION** Should the race have to be cancelled or postponed for reason beyond the 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 web if there are any last minute changes - please check before travelling.