



## Guidelines for Competing in Canicross

**The health of the dogs taking part in any Canicross event is paramount!**

### Dogs

- The sport of Cani-Cross welcomes any breed or cross breed of dog.
- All dogs taking part in Cani-Cross events must be 12 months or older on the day.
- All dogs must be aged 18 months or older to compete in distances over 10 miles.
- Competitors are advised to seek veterinary advice before undertaking strenuous distances with a young dog. Breed specifics should be acknowledged and owners are responsible for their dog's welfare.
- It must be remembered that larger breeds develop at a slower rate than small breeds and participation may have to be delayed until they are 18 or 24 months old for health reasons.
- To enter any event over 10 miles, all competitors must have completed at least a 10km event in the previous 6 months, with the dog you plan to run with.
- No bitches in season, pregnant or nursing bitches are allowed to run.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times, whilst at an event unless to do so would present a danger for the dog, the owner, or others.
- Dog fouling must be cleared away as soon as possible and disposed of responsibly.
- Cani-Crossers should not run dogs that are nervous of humans or other dogs, as this can cause undue stress to these dogs.
- It is strongly recommended that dogs receive a vet health check before competing at any Cani-Cross event.
- Any dog(s) deemed unfit to race by the organisers or any Vet in attendance must be withdrawn from the event.

## Ownership

- It is assumed that dogs will be running with their legal owners. Where a dog has been borrowed for a Canicross run, the Event Organiser(s) must be informed in advance.
- The legal owner of a dog is the person named as such in the dog's vaccination book and/or Kennel Club registration paperwork.

## Responsibilities

- The legal owner of a dog is required to have liability insurance (or family insurance) for any damages that their dog may commit.
- The legal owner must ensure that the animal is owned (cared for) in accordance with the law.
- It is recommended that all dogs have current vaccination certificates.

## Equipment

- Dogs must wear a suitable harness which allows them to breathe unrestricted and be attached to their handler by a line containing a shock-absorbing bungee.
- Lines must be no longer than 2 meters when fully extended. A waist belt is strongly recommended for handlers.
- No head collars, choke chains or flexi leads are permitted.
- Muzzles may be used but they must be the open, basket type, through which dogs can drink and take treats.
- Runners are not allowed to wear shoes that could be dangerous for dogs. Shoes with metal spikes are strictly forbidden. "Orienteering shoes" are acceptable.
- Cani-Crossers are responsible for providing water for their dogs at all times, although water may be available at certain events and locations.
- Exceptions may be granted in regard to the above equipment requirements where a competitor is learning how to Canicross (debut).
- A hand-held leash and flat (classic) collar will be accepted. The competitor must make this known at registration; all exceptions are at the discretion of the Event Organiser.

## Etiquette

- Cani-Crossers must do their utmost to ensure that their dogs do not interfere with other runners or dogs.
- If an organiser determines that a handler's conduct at any time in the event area or on the trail is detrimental to the sport/event, 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 Event Organiser(s) or any qualified Vet present, abuses a dog, that runner will be disqualified and may result in having their membership revoked.

- If a dog becomes unfit or refuses to advance for any reason, the competitor is not permitted to finish the event. They must remain where they are until the remaining runners have passed and then make their way back to the start/finish location. They should advise the event sweeper/tail runner of their withdrawal and also whether their dog requires attention.
- It is deemed acceptable for your dog to be behind or downhill on technical sections of a route.
- When overtaking, the advancing Cani-Crosser should shout 'Passing on the right' or 'Passing on the left' to warn the runner in front of their intentions.
- The Cani-Crosser who is being overtaken must assume responsibility to ensure that their dog(s) are to one side of the track and do not interfere with the runner going past.
- It is recommended that Cani-Crossers 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.
- All Cani-Crossers should show their fellow runners 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 it is reasonable and safe to do so.
- The use of personal stereos, MP3 players or any electronic device with headphones etc. that impairs the ability to hear is strictly forbidden. Anyone using such a device will be asked to refrain immediately or be disqualified.

**NB:**

*Please refer to Club Rules and Regulations for Club Runs.*

*Please check each individual event/race for their exact rules and regulations.*