

**JOHN BEARGREASE SLED DOG
MID-DISTANCE
2009 OFFICIAL RULES**



www.beargrease.com

The mission of the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon is to conduct the best long-distance sled dog race in North America in a culturally sensitive manner, conducive to generating tourism in Northeast Minnesota.

It is the intention of the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon Inc. (otherwise referred to in these rules as the Corporation) to conduct a race that follows the spirit of frontier adventurism established at the turn of the century by John Beargrease, along with a host of other North Shore mail carriers. Beargrease and his fellow carriers were a colorful, boisterous breed whose ingenuity and determination helped ensure the tradition of continued mail delivery, even under adverse conditions.

In an effort to bring the legend of John Beargrease to life, the Corporation presents the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon to the people of the North Shore. The Corporation has made a special effort to give high visibility to the Marathon and associated races. *However, ensuring the safety and care of the animal athletes and maintaining a positive spirit of competition are the priorities.*

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John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc.
PO Box 500, Duluth, MN 55801

SECTION I -- ENTRY

A. ENTRY FEE

1. a. The entry fee for the 2009 Beargrease 150 is \$275 until October 15, 2008. The entry fee from October 16, 2008 until December 31, 2008 is \$300. On January 1, 2009, the fee will be \$325.00 until January 16, 2009. All entries will be submitted online.
- b. The deadline for registration is Friday, **January 16, 2009**.

B. QUALIFICATIONS

1. All entrants in the Beargrease will be paid members in good standing. Musher Membership dues of \$30 per year, are included in the entry fee. Musher Memberships are nonrefundable.
2. The Corporation reserves the right to reject any entry in any Beargrease event.

C. DRIVER

1. **A driver must be named at least two weeks prior to Race Day.**
2. The driver starting at the beginning of the race shall drive the team throughout the race.
3. Driver qualifications:
 - a. The driver must be sixteen (16) years of age or older. An experienced musher, 14-15 years old, that wishes to enter must apply to the Corporation in writing for a waiver of minimum age requirement. Underage applicants (drivers) must supply years of experience, race history, related experiences and references from at least two veteran long-distance drivers; and written consent from a parent or legal guardian.
 - b. In all races, any driver who is a minor must supply the Corporation with a written release signed by a parent or legal guardian before they will be allowed to race.
4. Substitution of drivers may be allowed by the Race Marshal up to the Drivers meeting and **only in the case of an emergency**. (providing the substitute driver meets the criteria in "a" and "b" above).
5. Drivers Meeting
All entering drivers must attend the mandatory Drivers Meeting. **Failure of driver to meet first roll call will result in a \$50 fine.** Failure to attend the meeting may result in disqualification.
5. All drivers must attend opening ceremonies to **pick up their bib. Failure to attend will result in a \$50 fine which will be collected prior to the start of the race.**

D. DOGS

1. Each team must start the race with a minimum of six (6) dogs, a maximum of eight (8), and have a **minimum of five (5) dogs** standing in the team at all times.
2. All dogs must undergo a veterinary check as scheduled by the Corporation. All dogs must meet the criteria for the signing of an OFFICIAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE, and any other specific criteria as published by the Corporation.
3. There will be no early Vet Checks.
4. Any dogs NOT meeting the criteria for an Official Health Certificate will not be allowed to run the race.

5. All entered dogs must have current Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza and Rabies vaccinations:
 - a. Proof of Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza vaccinations must come from a Veterinarian OR, if administered by the driver, records must include type of vaccine, proof of purchase (i.e., receipt), and date of vaccination in writing. The vaccines must have been given between January 31, 2008, and fourteen (14) days prior to the Pre-Race Vet Check.
 - b. Proof of Rabies vaccination must come from a licensed Veterinarian only. Rabies vaccines must be given at least thirty (30) days prior to the Pre-Race Vet Check and/or must be current through March 10, 2009.
 - c. Dogs coming from Alaska having valid certificates signed by Lay Vaccinators will be accepted. The manufacturer and vaccine serial number of the Rabies vaccine administered to such dogs must be available to the Corporation.
6. All dogs will be marked prior to the start of the race. If there are two separate teams in the same vehicle, each team will be marked separately.
7. Any dog dropped, before or during the race, must be marked out and cannot be substituted or re-entered.
8. Only northern breed dogs will be permitted to enter the race. Northern breeds will be determined by the RIC.

E. DRUGS

1. No injectable, oral or topical drugs that may suppress signs of illness or injury may be used on a dog. A driver may not inject ANY substance into his/her dogs. No drugs or other artificial means may be used to drive a dog or cause a dog to perform or attempt to perform beyond its natural ability.
2. THE FOLLOWING DRUGS AND TREATMENT ARE PROHBITED:
 - a. Anabolic Steroids
 - b. Analgesics (prescription and non-prescription)
 - c. Anesthetics
 - d. Antihistamines
 - e. Anti-inflammatory drugs including but not limited to: Cortico-steroids (only those provided by the Beargrease Veterinarians for use on feet.), Antiprostaglandins, Non-steroids, Salicylates, and DMSO.
 - f. Brochodilators
 - g. Central Nervous System Stimulants
 - h. Cough Suppressants
 - i. Diuretics
 - j. Injectable Anticholinergics
 - k. Muscle Relaxants
 - l. Tranquilizers & Opiates
 - m. Anticonvulsants
 - n. Acupuncture is not allowed

The only medication approved for use under sweats is Furacin Ointment (Nitrofurazone) and Algyval.

3. It is the intent of these rules that no drugs or other artificial means be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability. A driver must have his/her team free from any prohibited drugs at the time of the Pre-Race Vet check and during the race. If, in the opinion of a Race Veterinarian, it is necessary to use one of these drugs for the dog's well-being, administration of any such DRUG will be done only after the dog has been dropped.
4. The use of blood doping -- i.e., injection of whole blood, packed blood cells or blood substitutes -- is prohibited.
5. Use of ANY prohibited substance will result in disqualification or other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Rules Interpretation Committee as determined.
6. Beargrease Race Veterinarians and/or their representatives shall have the authority to collect blood and/or urine samples at random at any point commencing with the Pre-Race Vet Check and ending **six (6) hours after the finish of the race**. It will be the driver's responsibility to assist the Race Veterinarians and/or their representative in the collection of these samples. All samples will be sealed and signed for, before the collection is considered complete.

F. EQUIPMENT

1. All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest areas.
2. All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file.
3. Some type of sled shall be drawn.
4. Above said sled shall be equipped with an adequate working brake (not only a track), brushbow, snowhook and reflective tape on the rear stanchions of the sled.
5. Above said sled shall include a sled bag capable of restraining and completely enclosing a struggling dog and, if necessary, covering a severely injured dog. Sprint bags are not acceptable.
6. All ganglines must be made of coated cable, or have a cable core, or be made of iron rope. No bare cable allowed.
7. Reflection tape a minimum of twelve (12) inches by one (1) inch wide must be on all dog harnesses.
8. A working headlamp shall be worn and must be turned on at all times from dusk to dawn.
9. At least one lead dog must be equipped with a working light, which must be turned on, from dusk to dawn, that is visible from the front when approaching the team.

G. MUSHER'S MANDATORY GEAR (REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES)

- * Two (2) complete working headlamps capable of reaching lead dog.
- * Knife
- * Sleeping bag
- * One pair snowshoes with bindings; each shoe to be at least 252 square inches in size
- * Ax (minimum of 22 inches long)
- * Promotional materials (not to exceed ten (10) pounds)
- * A cutter you know will cut your cable gangline
- * Set of booties (4) for each dog.
- * Vet book must be carried with musher and be available at each checkpoint
- * First Aid Kit (to consist of Ace bandage, pressure dressing and tape—to be used in case of major bleeding)
- * Matches, lighter or other fire starter

H. REQUIRED UPON LEAVING EACH CHECKPOINT

1. One (1) day's food ration for the driver and each dog in team.
2. Disposal of required items other than for their specifically intended purpose is strictly prohibited. A

maximum fine of \$200 will be imposed for littering including checkpoints. Any team snacking on the trail may not leave trail food behind.

SECTION II -- OFFICIATING

A. RACE OFFICIALS

1. The Rules Interpretation Committee (RIC) is a three (3) person committee. Once called together by the Race Marshal on a specific question, its decision becomes the final word on that issue. The RIC consists of the Race Marshal and two (2) Assistant Judges.
2. The Race Marshal has the final word over all safety considerations for both the dogs and drivers. S/He has the authority to interpret rules at the Drivers Meeting, alter any participant's official running time, disqualify dogs, teams or drivers, and refer rules questions to the RIC. S/He can order drug testing and determine winners and subsequent placements. The Race Coordinator will supply any information as required by the Race Marshal for the purpose of providing the best possible decision. Prior to closing or changing a checkpoint, the Race Marshal will advise the Race Coordinator of any problem at hand and give him/her time to correct it.
3. The Race Veterinarians are consulting specialists to the race on matters pertaining to dog care and treatment. Dogs are under the care of the Chief Veterinarian and the Veterinarians from the time of the Pre-Race Vet Check until after the Awards Banquet. All dogs must undergo a Post-Race Vet Check at the time they cross the finish line. The Race Veterinarians, in addition to the Pre-Race Vet Check, will be available throughout the race for consultation, First Aid, and major medical situations. Two Race Veterinarians may delay or prevent a dog or team from leaving any checkpoint or the starting line for medical or health concerns. If the driver is not in agreement, a consultation between the Veterinarians and a Judge will result in a final decision.
4. Timers, Checkpoint Checkers and Race Veterinarians will act as consultants to the Judges.

B. CONDUCT AND DISQUALIFICATION

1. **Drivers are responsible** for the conduct of themselves, their dogs and their designated handlers whether they are in the race area, on the trail, or dealing with race personnel, officials or the general public.
2. IF THE RACE MARSHAL DETERMINES THAT A DRIVER, HANDLER, OR TEAM AT ANY TIME -- WHETHER IN THE RACE AREA OR ON THE TRAIL -- IS ACTING IN A WAY THAT IS DETRIMENTAL TO THE SPORT, THAT TEAM WILL BE PENALIZED OR DISQUALIFIED. ALL OFFICIAL DECISIONS ARE FINAL. FURTHER ARGUING OR COMPLAINING MAY RESULT IN A FINE OR DISQUALIFICATION FROM FUTURE BEARGREASE EVENTS. COMMON SENSE AND GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP SHALL PREVAIL.
3. Failure to adhere to the published rules will result in disqualification or penalty. Determining this will be the responsibility of the RIC. A disqualified driver will forfeit all entry fees, placements and monetary awards.
4. The RIC may assess penalties other than disqualification. These will take the form of time penalties or fines and can affect the final placement of a team.

C. PROTESTS AND HEARINGS

1. Any driver wishing to register a written protest must do so at the next checkpoint after the alleged

infraction occurs. Any protest must be accompanied by a \$25.00 deposit.

2. Any occurrence between the final checkpoint and finish must be reported within one (1) hour after arrival at the Finish Line.
3. PROTESTS must be submitted directly to a Judge and shall not be discussed with spectators, media representatives or the general public prior to a decision being handed down. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in disqualification.
4. An official decision will be made by the RIC following a hearing attended by all parties involved.
5. PROTEST fee refunds may be obtained at Race Headquarters in Duluth providing written protest has been submitted.

SECTION III -- THE RACE

A. START/FINISH

1. Bib Numbers
 - a. The starting positions for the race shall be determined by a draw.
 - b. Bibs will be drawn prior to the Opening Ceremonies by the Rules Committee in two separate groups. The first half of the bibs will be drawn from the first half of the entries. The second half of the bibs will be drawn from the second half of the entries.
2. Start
 - a. Pre-start Schedule
 - i. All drivers, handlers and team trucks must be in the official musher parking area and available to the public on Race Day by the time announced at the drivers meeting. Each driver's sled and mandatory equipment must be ready and available for inspection at anytime upon Judges request. A \$2.00 per minute late fee will be charged for arriving after time designated at drivers meeting.

b. Common Start-time/Differential Allotment

- i. For elapsed time purposes, the race will be a common start event. Each driver's elapsed time will be calculated. Any driver who cannot leave the starting line within ten (10) minutes of the last team's departure will be disqualified unless extenuating circumstances prevail.
- ii. The actual difference in departure times from the starting line will be made up at either of the two check checkpoints. Late-starting teams (teams unable to depart in the order of their bib numbers) will have their differential times calculated from their official start times.

c. Single Starts

- i. There will be single starts. Any changes due to safety concerns will be announced at the Drivers Meeting.
- ii. There will be a device (tire, post or cable) at the Start Line for the driver to fasten his/her team to. At the signal, each driver will release his/her team and begin the race.

d. Assistance/Start Handlers

- i. The Race Marshal may allow or require that a qualified handler and/or second sled accompany each team at the Start. Handlers may be required or allowed at other sections of the race, as specified by the Race Marshal.

3. Finish

- a. The nose of the lead dog crossing the Finish Line signals a team's official finish. In the event that the driver is not with the team when it finishes, the finish time will be officially recorded when the driver crosses the line after the team.
- b. No entrant has officially finished until time cards have been verified by an official for mandatory accumulated time and differential.

4. No Man's Land

- a. There will be no calling of the trail in "No Man's Land." This section of the trail will be announced at the Drivers Meeting.

B. CHECKPOINT LIST

Billy's Bar (former Prime Time)
Highway 2
Finland
Finish at Tofte

ONLY CHECKPOINTS WILL BE DOG DROPS.

C. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

1. Drivers and teams may not receive outside assistance.
 - a. Drivers must not use planned outside assistance between checkpoints.
 - b. Drivers may assist each other in appropriate ways in an emergency.
 - c. Dog handlers are NOT allowed at road crossings. This may result in a one hour time penalty or disqualification of team

2. In a case where a dog's or musher's life or limb is in threatening danger, any outside assistance is acceptable.
3. Other Assistance
 - a. Replacement of broken or lost equipment between checkpoints must be arranged through, and directed by, a Race Judge. In the event of a broken sled, the driver must send word to a Race Judge, who will then direct a handler to transport a replacement to the stranded driver.
 - a. Drivers may accept rides on motorized vehicles in an emergency. Such incidents must be reported to a Judge at the next checkpoint.
 - c. Drivers may not arrange for any person or persons to instruct them between checkpoints. Requests for directions along the way are acceptable.
 - d. Pacing of any kind is strictly prohibited.
 - e. Two-way radios are prohibited.
 - f. Cellular phones are prohibited.
 - g. GPS units are permitted.
 - h. Ski poles are permitted except within 50 feet of another team and "No Man's Land."

D. MANAGEMENT/HANDLING OF DOGS

1. The cruel and/or inhumane treatment of any dog by any driver is strictly prohibited and will be penalized by disqualification and barring from future Beargrease events.
2. Whips are not allowed.
3. Boxing of Dogs
 - a. Dropped dogs must be presented to and marked out by a Veterinarian or Judge before the driver leaves the checkpoint and before the dog is boxed. A handler may drop a dog. However, the driver will be held responsible if there is a mistake in dog identity. All dogs dropped must be checked by a Veterinarian prior to boxing.
 - b. Any dog that remains in the race shall not be boxed once the race has begun.
4. Expired Dogs
 - a. Any dog that dies on the trail for any reason must be taken to the nearest/next checkpoint. Expired dogs must be covered completely when being carried in the sled. The driver must stay at that checkpoint until the Chief Veterinarian comes to investigate the situation. At that time, there will be an interview between the driver and Race Officials. The driver MAY be allowed to continue/finish the race contingent on the Gross Necropsy and/or only after approval of the Chief Veterinarian and Race Marshall.
 - b. Any dog that dies during the race will have a Necropsy performed by a licensed Veterinarian according to ISDVMA Necropsy Guidelines.
 - c. Prize money will not be paid until the final results of the Histopathology portion of the necropsy

are returned (may take 4-6 months). If it is determined that the cause of death was other than natural causes, the team will be disqualified. The place money will then revert to the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon General Fund.

- d. If the Necropsy determines the cause of death to be abuse, the team will be disqualified and barred from participation in any future Beargrease events.

5. Hauling Dogs

- a. A driver may not allow any of his/her dogs to be hauled by another team.
- b. A dog hauled in a driver's sled must be handled in a humane fashion.

6. Loose Leaders

- a. There will be no loose leaders. All dogs will be in the team or on the sled.

E. CHECKPOINT PROCEDURES

1. Checking In

- a. Each driver must **sign** both in and out of all checkpoints. If no time is to be spent at the checkpoint, both can be done upon arrival.
- b. All drivers must personally **sign** in and out at each checkpoint. All dogs must be accounted for. It is the driver's responsibility to make sure this is done.
- c. A driver may return to a check point with his/her team and may use his/her truck to return a dog but may not have handler assistance.
- d. Each driver will be responsible for reporting any dogs in the bag to the Judges or Vets.

2. Accommodations

- a. Accommodations (space for bedding down dogs, rest rooms, parking, etc.) are on a first-come, first-served basis. Available accommodations will go to the drivers. Checkpoint Officials may designate additional areas for teams if necessary. Parking is limited at checkpoints, only one vehicle per musher.
- b. Handlers or driver are responsible for cleanup and removal of straw or hay in a timely manner. Officials will inspect and **approve** each team's area. Penalties (time or fines) will be imposed for non-compliance.
- c. Boisterous behavior or other infractions on the part of drivers or handlers in the checkpoint area is strictly prohibited.

3. Mandatory Layovers

- a. For the 150 there will be a total of 8 hours accumulated rest plus start differential.
- b. All drivers will remain at checkpoints. Every effort will be made to secure quiet, controlled parking areas.

4. Food and Water

- a. Each driver and his/her handlers are responsible for having necessary food and water at checkpoints. The Corporation will make no arrangements for food and water distribution. All checkpoints are accessible by truck.

5. Unattended Teams

NO TEAM SHALL BE LEFT UNATTENDED. Any driver wishing to leave a team within a checkpoint shall leave his/her team under the supervision of a handler.

6. Handlers may feed and water teams at any checkpoints.

F. RUNNING THE COURSE

1. The Trail

a. Participants of the Beargrease Marathon, the 150, and related events are guests of the City of Duluth, North Shore State Trail, Duluth Snowmobile Trail System, the North Shore Corridor Snowmobile Trail, the Lutsen-Tofte Ski Trail Superior National Forest and the Gunflint Trail Association. In consideration of this fact, drivers will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, and at no time demand "rights" to the trail.

b. Teams inadvertently leaving the trail must regain the course at the point at which they left it and then continue on.

c. Two or more teams may not be tied together except in an emergency. Any team so involved must notify a judge at the next checkpoint.

d. Any team snacking on the trail may not leave trail food behind.

2. Cutoff Times

a. For the 150, any participant team not prepared to leave Finland within 12 hours of the first team's departure from that checkpoint will not be allowed to continue in the race.

b. There will be a twelve (12) hours cut-off in the race, meaning that no official finishes will be recorded beyond 12 hours after the first finishers in the race. Those teams en-route but who have not finished shall be deemed "did not finish". The Race Marshal may remove participants from the race if they are deemed noncompetitive.

3. Passing

a. When being passed, an overtaken team must let the team that is overtaking them fully overtake them before proceeding. The passed team must use common sense and common courtesy in determining when to continue on. When overtaking another team, the driver shall call "trail," and the overtaken team must relinquish the trail and assist the passing team when necessary.

b. When neither of the teams is able to pull away from the other, the drivers shall mutually agree on the appropriate team to lead out. In no way is the passing rule designed to assist a team in "manipulating" its way into trail position.

c. In a head-on passing situation, the homeward-bound team has the right of way and the outward-bound team must relinquish the trail. The exception to this rule is when the outward-bound team is moving downhill. In this case, the outward-bound team has the right of way.

4. Lost Teams

a. In the event of a lost team, the team will not be disqualified if the driver regains control of the team, provided the team and driver complete the entire race trail and comply with the rules, including checkpoint requirements. All teams must follow the trail as marked.

- b. A driver may receive assistance from another contestant in recovering his/her team.
- c. The driver may not check in at a checkpoint with a dog missing and may not continue the race until the dog is found.
- d. A driver who has lost his/her team may accept any assistance he/she can find and may continue on from the point where he/she regained the team.

5. Safety

- a. It is the driver's responsibility to check for traffic at road crossings. Every attempt will be made to secure these crossings. Toward the end of the race, however, when teams are spread over a several-hour stretch, it is likely that some crossings could be unattended.
- b. Always use your head lamp to signal snow machines while traveling at night. During daylight hours, travel can be more challenging as the snowmobiles will not be able to see the light of your headlamps. Be cautious.

6. Non-Competitiveness

- a. The RIC may remove a participant from the race if they are deemed non-competitive.

G. WEATHER AND TRAIL CONDITIONS

- 1. The race will continue under all but the most severe trail and weather conditions. Drivers must be prepared to run in cold, wind, storms, and over sections of bare ground if necessary.
- 2. In the event of questionable trail conditions, the Board of Directors will make a decision to postpone or modify the course, no less than seven (7) days before the race.
- 3. A panel consisting of the RIC, and the Race Coordinator assume responsibility for any further postponement or alteration of starting location. The primary consideration will be the safety and the well being of the dogs, not the comfort of the drivers.

SECTION IV--AWARDS PRESENTATION

All drivers finishing the race must be present at the Awards Banquet. Failure to appear will result in forfeiture of any winnings.

SECTION V – REFUNDS

Refunding of entry fees will be granted upon written request by the musher as follows: 80% of entry fee will be refunded until Dec. 1, 2008, 50% of entry fee will be refunded until December 31, 2008. No refunds will be granted after Dec. 31, 2008. In the event of race postponement or cancellation a refund will be offered.

SECTION VI – BIBS

Drivers are required to wear their race bibs on the outside of their outer clothing at all times, from the beginning of the race through the finish. Please be cognizant of the fact that sponsors of the Beargrease paid for these bibs. The more exposure we can provide for the businesses that support the Beargrease,

the better the opportunities to attract additional sponsors and consequently increase the race purse in future years. Your consideration will be appreciated.

All race bibs must be returned to a Race Official at the finish or a checkpoint or a \$50.00 penalty will be charged.

SECTION VII -- CLAIMS

Each driver agrees to hold the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon Inc, race sponsors, and other contributors (sponsors and contributors of the Corporation as distinguished from sponsors of any individual driver) harmless from any claim or demand based on any alleged action or inaction by the driver, his dogs, agents, or others acting on his/her behalf. The driver also agrees to release John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc., race sponsors and agents and employees from any claim, or demand resulting from injury to the driver, his/her dogs, or his/her property. Further, John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc. has the unqualified and unrestricted authority to authorize race sponsors to photograph and otherwise collect information about the race and all participants therein and to use such photographs and information for advertising, public relations or other publicity purposes.

Each driver shall sign any and all documents as may be requested by the Corporation to evidence the foregoing. These documents will be executed at registration. Any driver who does not sign the documents requested by the Corporation will not be allowed to participate in the race.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL!

OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT -- Upon the request by a musher or handler, the Chief Veterinarian will be available for continued care and treatment of dogs after the finish of the race until the dogs or team leaves Duluth.

OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT -- FINISHERS' MEETING

The 2009 John Beargrease Sled Dog 150 Finishers' Meeting gives mushers the opportunity to discuss any problems or concerns that may have occurred during the race. In an effort to continually improve the Beargrease, it is critical to receive feedback from all finishers. The Finishers' Meeting time and location will be announced at the Mushers' Pre-race meeting. Voting will take place for musher representatives at that time. Musher Reps are members of the Beargrease Board of Directors.