



A GUIDE FOR SPECTATORS AT WORKING RALLY'S & TREK'S

Introduction

Sled dog racing (Rally's) which are short distance timed events, and working treks which are longer distance untimed events are becoming more popular. It can be a fantastic experience from a spectator's point of view taking in the atmosphere of Musher's (Dog driver) working their teams in harness.

A lot of work goes into planning and putting on these events. As much as it is for the enjoyment of the Musher's and dogs alike, the welfare and safety of our dogs takes the highest priority. At the same time we welcome spectators and want you to have an enjoyable and safe experience.

With any sport there are guidelines in place for the benefit of all to ensure safety measures are followed and members of the public are aware of what is going on.

Guidelines

While we welcome you to our events we respectfully request you follow these guidelines.

- ❖ Our dogs are pack animals and as such there is a hierarchy. There will always be an Alpha (dominant) dog or bitch and a pecking order within the pack (group). As much as the dogs can be very friendly they can protect their territory and may not appreciate the intrusion of another dog whether a sled dog breed (Alaskan Malamute, Canadian Eskimo, Greenland, Samoyed and Siberian Husky) or other breed.
- ❖ **Please do not bring your dogs to events if at all possible.** If you do choose to bring them please always keep them on a lead at all times and away from any competing dogs and teams.
- ❖ The competing dogs can be very excitable and vocal as they are keen to get out on the trails. This can often scare non-working sled dogs.
- ❖ Whilst you may think it would be good for your dog to meet the working sled dogs this isn't actually a good idea and could end up being quite intimidating for your dog. Please never approach working sled dog staked out or in harness with your dog without the permission of the owner or handler.
- ❖ At all events Safety notices are posted to notify the general public of the event with general safety advice
- ❖ Please *do not* walk the trails if you have a dog with you as this can interfere with an approaching team and could cause an accident. Working sled dogs in harness are focused on what they are doing and do not appreciate distractions. Dog teams can approach silently and at speed!
- ❖ Please keep children under control and *do not* approach a working sled dog without the owner's permission. Generally are dogs like a fuss and their bellies rubbed but always ask first.
- ❖ Do feel free to ask questions. Most Musher's will talk for hours!

- ❖ Feel free to take general photos of the event but please ask owners if you would like to take specific photos of their dogs. Try where possible to avoid using a flash.
- ❖ Please *do not* feed any of the working sled dogs treats without the owner's permission. Some have quite specific diets and some treats could cause an upset stomach.
- ❖ Do feel free to walk the trails and see the working sled dogs in action. It would be appreciated if you stand back from the edge of the trail as a team approaches so as not to distract them.
- ❖ Most of the activity is at the start and finish lines. Please ask advice where a suitable place would be to stand so as not to interfere with teams preparing to go or coming in.
- ❖ Do turn up early! Generally the first teams will start from around 8.30 am to take advantage of the lower temperatures. At a rally the last teams will be finished by early afternoon. However we also compete at night! At a trek teams go out in small groups and depending on the distance will be out on the trails for several hours.

We hope you have a great time and look forward to seeing you on the trails again.