

SECTION 6.0 RACE TRACK AND EQUIPMENT

6.1 RACE TRACK

All WRA meets should be run over a straight, flat, level surface of 200 yards for adult races. All puppy races are 150 yards. An extra 30 to 50 yards should be allowed from the finish line to where the lure stops, the over-run. The width of the track should be not less than 20 feet in width, preferable 20 feet wide at the box area, increasing to 30 feet at the finish line and after. The track can be of any texture, such as turf, dirt, synthetic footing, etc., providing it does not injure the pads and feet, or hinder the natural stride of a Whippet during the running of a race. A wide, smooth track allows freedom of stride, resulting in less bumping and body contact by the racers taking part. The track, when at all possible, should have both inside and outside rails to keep spectators and Whippet owners off the track at all times during the running of a race.

In case of rain or other unavoidable reasons, the location must be quickly changed, the following policy is in effect:

In case of rain, or for other unavoidable reasons at a scheduled race meet, the location of the track must be changed, two-thirds (2/3) of the original Whippets entered (allowing for a minimum of 15 adult starters) are still available, and their owners are willing to race under the existing condition, it can be considered an official race meet. If less than 15 adult Whippets originally entered are available for racing, the event will be considered unofficial, even though those Whippets present might actually run in a series of races.

It should be the responsibility of the group or club offering a race meet to check the racing surface thoroughly several days before a scheduled meeting, as well as the day of the race meet. Every effort must be made to offer only the best possible racing surface.

6.2 PADDOCK AREA

An area should be set aside by bunting or rope adjacent to the track so racing Whippets can be called to this area by the announcer. The paddock area will do much to speed the race meet: Blanket check, muzzle check, and organize the racers in a group to "parade" to the starting boxes. The Whippets should be loaded into the starting box in numerical order, 1 to 6.

6.3 PADDOCK IDENTIFICATION BOARD OR OFFICIAL SCORE BOARD

A board showing race number, each Whippet racer's official name, post position and racing points will be located in the paddock area. The board should be large enough so Whippet owners can easily identify their Whippets and post positions in each race for each program. To eliminate confusion, it is mandatory to list the Whippets racing by the Official Registered Name, though call names, titles, divisions may also be listed.

6.4 LOUDSPEAKER

Some type of loudspeaker equipment should be available to properly inform Whippet owners and spectators of all activities in connection with a WRA meet.

6.5 RACING BLANKETS

Only the following colors are used:

#1 is Red Blanket, White Number	#4 is Green Blanket, White Number
#2 is Blue Blanket, White Number	#5 is Black Blanket, White Number
#3 is White Blanket, Black Number	#6 is Yellow Blanket, Black Number

Blankets must have bright, pure colors. The Race Secretary may excuse any Whippet with improper color or number. Numbers should be large, 4 1/2 inches to 5 inches tall, and be placed in proper order - not backward!

Race blankets should be designed to give the racing Whippet complete freedom of stride. Do not make these blankets too tight or so big or loose as to create extra wind resistance. Methods for fastening the blanket around the Whippet can be of Velcro, cotton ties, etc., and should be strong enough to prevent the blanket from coming loose from the Whippet during the running of a race. That could cause a serious injury to the racer. The race blanket should fit along the Whippet's topline from shoulder blade to slightly beyond the last rib.

6.6 RACING MUZZLES

All Whippets must wear racing muzzles of good quality and in good condition during the regular race event and schooling races. Muzzles should be of the box type and should give a Whippet full freedom to open its mouth before, during and after the race. Any owner new to racing should first inquire of the experienced race Whippet owners before having a special muzzle made. There are several types available constructed of leather, plastic and Teflon. Muzzles made of heavy wire that could bruise or cut other Whippets at the finish of a race are forbidden. Also, muzzles that allow a Whippet to grab the lure at the end of a race are forbidden. Light wire muzzles covered with a heavy rubber or plastic coating of the English type are permissible, but not recommended. Uncoated wire muzzles are not allowed. Anyone using an uncoated wire muzzle will have his or her Whippets excused from the race meet. Race muzzles will be inspected by the Inspection Committee before racing begins, at "Check-in and Measuring."

Whippets will wear muzzles while parading to the starting box. The Race Secretary may alter this ruling in cases of extreme heat or under any emergency situation where it might be considered abusive to the racing Whippet. "NO BARK" type muzzles are forbidden.

6.7 LURE EQUIPMENT

The lure machine and the actual lure used to attract the racing Whippet are the most important factors in offering top quality Whippet racing.

6.7.1 LURE MACHINE

The lure machine may be the hand-wind type or battery driven. The important thing is to have a machine that can pull the lure at a consistent, steady pace approximately 25 feet ahead of the Whippets. An operator and lure machine that jerks the lure away from the Whippets and then slows it down or keeps the lure so far ahead that the Whippets become unsighted makes a mockery of true Whippet racing. Even the very best racers will turn in a poor performance when there is poor pacing of the lure. Two or more lure machines should be available at any WRA meet in case of mechanical breakdown.

6.7.2 THE LURE

The lure will be of the squawker style, "Jack-A-Lure," type sold by the National Greyhound Association, P.O. Box 543, Abilene, Kansas, 67410; telephone (913) 263-4660. It's made of real or synthetic fur and contains a squawker. Replacement reeds and squawkers are available from Pete Rickard Inc. RD#1 Box 292 Cobleskill, NY, 12043 phone (518) 234-2731. This squawker type lure has been proven to create extra keenness and diminish dishonest tendencies. The lure should be large enough and should bounce in a straight line during the race so it can be sighted at all times by the Whippets. Rags, towels or cloth can be used as part of the lure, but it must include some fur. The small amount of fur that is attached helps to bring the Whippets to the lure at the finish of a race.

At times many tracks are dusty or muddy, making it virtually impossible for the Whippets to see the lure. Here is might be well to add a piece of white plastic, white rags, or something else light in color and weight, so that the lure will be more visible to the lure operator as well as the running Whippets. Therefore, the lure should not be allowed to take on the same coloring as the track; such blending of colors make it impossible for the Whippets to see the lure.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on having a lure that can be seen by the Whippets from the time they are placed in the starting box until they hit and attempt to kill the lure at the finish of a race. Do not be afraid to replace a lure several times during a race meet if the lure becomes so dirty it cannot be seen by the racers. It is advisable to have several spare lures for each race meet. It would be well for all people participating in a WRA meet to be constantly reminded that unsighted Whippets at any point from the starting box to the finish line, have little chance of winning, and most often this is the reason for strictly honest racers causing unnecessary bumping crowding, fighting, etc. Also, it should be remembered that the lure must always be brought to a halt well beyond the finish line. This encourages the Whippets to finish strongly, and it also makes it much easier to pick the Whippets up at the end of a race because they are trying to pin down or "kill" the lure after it has stopped.

An important reminder, the lure, at the start of each race, should be centered ten to fifteen (10 - 15) feet in front of the starting box in the circle specially outlined, (usually with white spray paint,) in clear view for all the Whippets to see.

6.8 STARTING BOX

The great majority of races are won by Whippets who leave the starting box promptly, and then give their best efforts during the running of the race. More races are won or lost leaving the starting box than at any other point during the race.

It is absolutely necessary to have all starting boxes of virtually the same type (standardization). Various sizes, types of door, strange noisy devices only hinder and confuse racers who are not familiar with all the different box configurations. For WRA meets it would be well to consider a starting box of lightweight materials. The box can have a base of 3/4" plywood, a top of 1/2" plywood. The door should be of metal tubing with the lower 10" made of 1/2" rods set vertically on 1" centers. The upper 2/3 should be of fiberglass, painted so the Whippet cannot see through, forcing the racer to take a good position for starting. The floor of the starting box should be covered with matting of some type to avoid slipping. Rear doors should not fit flush with the bottom; allow one (1) to two (2) inches of space so the Whippets' tails will not be smashed when the rear door is slipped down. The rear doors must also be painted the same colors as the racing blankets - Red, Blue, White, Green, Black, and Yellow - #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6.

Boxes should be of such construction to make dismantling a simple process in the event the box must be transported.

Before building a box, it would be advisable to write the NRD for plans on starting boxes; several plans are on file that have proven to be satisfactory for our WRA program. In the interest of standardization of box plans, local groups or clubs wishing to use boxes which differ greatly from those recommended under Official Rules and Regulations, should request special permission from the NRD regarding box building plans. Written approval by the NRD for box plans prior to construction for WRA is mandatory. Please see Starting Box Plan in the Appendix.