



**Note:** Application online is required for the 2019 Derby Dog Dash. We will NOT be accepting in-person or mailed applications. Entries are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Entry form may close prior to posted deadline if racing heats are full.

## 2019 Derby Dog Dash Event Rules

The Derby Dog Dash is held on the Wine Country Racing track in between races on Sundays during the Sonoma County Fair. The rules are presented at the beginning of each heat by the race judge and volunteers will be available to provide any assistance that you might need.

- Each dog will run in one preliminary heat. The winner of each heat will compete in the Championship race.
- There will be a maximum of 8 preliminary heats. If there are fewer than 96 entries, the number of heats will be adjusted accordingly.
- The number of dogs in each heat will depend on the number of entries, with a maximum of twelve dogs per heat.
- If entries exceed 96 dogs, owners will be limited to two dogs per human competitor. Owners are encouraged to enter as many dogs as possible. If we are not able to accommodate more than two dogs per owner, we will contact the owner by phone to determine which two dogs will get to run.
- The Derby Dog Dash is open to any breed of dog under 25 pounds in weight, with height not exceeding 15" at the shoulder. Dog height and weight may be measured by racing officials.
- Contestants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. If you submit an application for a dog and we have already received the maximum allowed applications (96), we will contact you by email to let you know that your dog will not be able to compete. If fewer than 96 entries are received, than we will do our best to place an equal number of dogs in each heat.
- **Two handlers are required per dog:** one handler remains with the dog behind the starting line, the other handler will stand behind the finish line to call the dog and collect him/her after the race. At least one handler must be 18 years of age or older. For the safety of the dogs, **handlers are not permitted to leave their designated places while the dogs are competing.**
- We will not be using a starting gate. Owners will stand at the starting line and hold their dog. Once the dogs are settled behind the starting line, the track announcer will state "Ready, Set, Go" and the handlers will release the dog. Please allow your dog to run freely from the starting line of his/her own accord. **ANY HANDLER RELEASING THE DOG BEFORE "GO" WILL BE DISQUALIFIED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE RACING OFFICIALS. Any unsportsmanlike conduct by the handlers/owners will be cause for immediate elimination.**
- Once the announcer has said "GO" and the dog has been released, finish-line handlers are to call their dogs across the finish line and into the receiving area. You may use snacks, squeaky toys, etc. to coax your dogs. Loud noisemakers, live animals other than the dogs racing, and anything deemed to be disruptive to other dogs will not be permitted. **In order to be declared the winner, all 4 paws must cross the finish line.**

- Once the first dog (with all four paws) has crossed the finish line, the handlers of the other dogs are requested to continue to call their dogs until all dogs are with their respective owners. If your dog does not come to you within a reasonable amount of time after the finish of the race (determined by the Racing Official), you will be allowed to enter the course and collect your dog. **Please be careful, and do not interfere with anyone else's dog.**
- Dogs will be issued a colored jacket that will correspond with their starting position. All dogs must wear the jacket. If a dog cannot wear the jacket, the dog will not be allowed to start.
- The Championship Heat will consist of the 1st place winners of all the previous heats and possible "wild card" spots. The procedures for the final heat will be the same as above.
- Racing Officials will determine the winners. Decisions regarding placing by Racing Officials are final.
- The winner of the Derby Dog Dash Championship and his/her owner and handlers will come to the winner's circle on the racetrack for photos.
- **Once a dog has been declared the winner of a Championship race he/she cannot be entered in any other race days remaining in the meet. If the dog has already been entered that entry will be "scratched" from future race days.**
- Management reserves the right to interpret all questions and conditions in regard to this event, without claim for damages or recourse of any kind. All questions and definitions not covered explicitly in these rules will be decided by the management of the Sonoma County Fair, with those decisions being final.
- **Dogs MUST BE kept on LEASHES at all times while in the Racing Grandstand Area (the only exception being when the dog is racing). Dogs are not allowed on the rest of Fairgrounds property. Violators will be asked to leave the property. No exceptions.**
- Entrance to the Fair on the day of the race is included for dog owner and 1 handler (2 persons total) per dog entry. After registration you will be emailed 36 hours prior to your race date a confirmation detailing your heat assignments and directions on how to get your dog into the racetrack area (gate to enter, etc.).
- Please bring a dog potty pick up method to maintain a clean racing environment.
- Please **DO NOT** leave dogs unattended in parked cars in the parking lots.

All dogs must meet the weight and height requirement (less than 25 lbs AND 15" at the shoulder). Dog may be weighed and measured at the discretion of the Racing Officials. Racing Officials can disqualify any dog that does not meet these requirements. Every effort will be made to run dogs of similar breeds and weights in the same heats.

**Waiver Submission Deadlines:**

Waivers are due by mail, email or drop-off two days before the date you are scheduled to race by 5 PM

**Deadline Dates:** 8/1 & 8/8

**If a waiver is not received, the dog will not be able to race.**