

Para-Nordic Race Event Guidelines

Visual Impairment/Blind (B1-B3)

Guides: The role of the guide is to be responsible for the safety of the visually impaired competitor. He/She may lead or follow the visually impaired competitor in the same track or ski alongside the parallel track.

The guide has to be treated as a competitor with respect to all rules governing.

- For B1 athletes, a guide is obligatory. For B2 and B3 athletes, a guide is also allowed. A competitor may change guides if the guide has an accident or cannot keep up.
- The guides wear a yellow/orange bib printed with a "G" meaning the word "Guide" or other forms of identification.
- Guiding must be by voice only. Radio communication between guide and competitor is accepted. The guide can also use an amplifier. No other means of communication is allowed. The amplifier must not disturb other competitors.
- Excessive music or noise at the start line can create confusion.

Start line;

- Most athletes will not see the starting clock. It is always good practice for the starter to inform the athlete of the timeframe before the gun. Usually placing a hand on the athletes shoulder and lift the hand when "0". This is only used when there is not start wand, otherwise there is no contact.
- The competitor must have his feet behind the start line and remain stationary before the starter gives his starting commands. The poles remain stationary and should be placed over the starting line and/or starting gate.
- The athlete must be behind the start wand but the guide can be in front, beside or following the athlete.
- There are no set distance requirements for the guide in front of the start wand and their athlete.

Finish line;

- For all B classes the clock will be started and stopped as the competitor and not the guide crosses the line. The time of the guide must not be recorded. The guide does not need to cross the finish line in front of the athlete.
- Guides are allowed to cross the finish line in front of the athlete. They are the ones that will advise the athlete when to stop and how to avoid potential hazards at the finish line such as other athletes lying on the ground.
- It is important for the finish line area to be clear of coaches or volunteers. Leave sufficient stopping space at the finish line.

Holding zones (ONLY athletes with visual impairments are allowed holding zones);

- Holding zones for B competitors shall be determined by the Jury and be marked clearly with visible signs/flags in contrasting colours for the beginning (green) and ending (red) zones.
- Holding zones are created for safety reasons, the guide is allowed to hold a Class B athlete (one arm or one pole) on certain sections of the track which shall be clearly marked.
- No physical contact between guides and athletes with a visual impairment is allowed during the race except holding zones. It is forbidden to hold on, to hold up or pull the competitor even on the downhill sections. After a fall a guide or a marshal may hand him his skis and/or poles.

Track;

- When athletes are integrated it is important that the able bodied skiers are informed not to pass in-between the guide and the athlete.
- Should a visually impaired competitor wish to change his wax during a race due to changing snow conditions, the guide may apply the wax.
- Once the competitors enter a zone where corridors are marked the athlete and the guide must ski in the same corridor.

Standing (LW2-9)

Standing category skiers must abide by the same rules as the able-bodied race events with some minor exceptions.

- Waxing, scraping or cleaning of the competitor's skis during the competition is forbidden. Exception: in classical technique competitions competitors may scrape their skis to remove snow and ice, and add wax if necessary. The competitor must do this outside the track without help from any other people. It is not allowed to place branches, tools or materials on or adjacent to the groomed course.
- Should an LW5/7 (impairment in both upper arms, does not use poles) athlete wish to change his wax during a race due to changing snow conditions, they can be supported by a team official that may apply the wax.
- In the case of any ski exchange, the competitor must do it outside the track. The athlete can be supported by a team official.

Start line;

- The competitor must have his feet behind the start line and remain stationary before the starter gives his starting commands. The poles remain stationary and should be placed over the starting line and/or starting gate.

Sit ski (LW10-12)

Start line;

- Sit skiers may not know when they are cold. It is important to ensure they have an area to stay warm prior to a race. Blankets are also a good idea to have on hand for those that are in line waiting to race.
- The competitor must have his feet/chest behind the start line and remain stationary before the starter gives his starting commands. The poles remain stationary and should be placed over the starting line and/or starting gate.

Track;

- Fallen competitors in the LW 10 - 12 classes may be brought back to the track by official help. They have to re-enter the race at the same place.
- If a sit skier has fallen on course, they need to ask for assistance before an official can assist them back up.
- If a sit skier is going uphill, stops and starts moving backwards. The official (official, staff, team support) CAN stop the sit skier by placing a leg or hand behind the sit skier. The sit skier **MUST** continue on their own steam/propulsion. The official is **NOT** allowed to push the sit skier once they are back in position.
- LW10-12 athletes are not allowed to use one or both of their legs to steer or brake the sledge during competition.
- In the case of any ski exchange, the competitor must do it outside the track. The athlete can be supported by a team official.

Other

- Para-Nordic skiers can be integrated into the able-bodied race events. It is important that they race the correct distance for their category not the age range.
- There is the possibility of an athlete having a **hearing impairment** with or without having another disability. Other means of communication may be needed such as an interpreter or simply that the starter may need to place a hand on the athletes shoulder.
- Athletes with a hearing impairment are not classified under Para-Nordic skiers. Meaning that they can race with able-bodied skiers.
- Wax testing and warming up on the ski competition course must always be done in the competition course direction. Anyone testing skis on the competition course must consider the safety of others on the course and the course preparation. Electronic timing devices used for testing skis will not be allowed on the course during the competition.

Examples that can lead to disqualifications

- An athlete participates in the competition under false pretences (e.g wrong bib number)
- The athlete either jeopardizes the security of persons or property or actually causes injury or damage
- The athlete does not ski the entire marked course
- The athlete violates the use of correct technique (unless specified by their classification that they can only classic ski in a free technique race)
- The athlete intentionally causes obstruction

Cross Country Canada abides by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) rules and regulations.

For more information visit the IPC Nordic Skiing website;

<http://www.paralympic.org/NordicSkiing/RulesandRegulations/Rules>