



WORLD SLEDDOG ASSOCIATION

Sleddoggraces since 1995

MINUTES

WSA General Assembly
9th September 2023, 10:00 AM
Lindensaal, Buchen-Hettingen, Germany

Topic 1: Welcome and report of the previous year

At 10:30 hrs, the Chairman Arno Steichler opens the WSA General Assembly (GA). He welcomes the delegates to the Lindensaal in Buchen-Hettingen and thanks the municipality of Hettingen for allowing the WSA to hold the GA in the Lindensaal.

Looking back, the Chairman reminds the delegates of the WSA GA in 2019, which was also held in Buchen. The mood at the time was buoyant. Exploratory talks had been held with the leadership of the IFSS in the run-up to the GA and the Assembly approved further work on a common rulebook and an ever-closer collaboration with the IFSS. Fast forward to 2023 and we must recognise that as long as the current IFSS leadership is in place, there will be no rapprochement between our organisations. The WSA will therefore focus its energy on maintaining and expanding our leading position in the world of purebred sled dog racing.

More recently, we are looking back with pride on the 2022 WSA Dryland World Championship in Houthalen-Helchteren (Belgium) and the on-snow WSA Sprint and Mid-Distance World Championships in Vermiglio (Italy). Both championships were highly successful, showcasing competitions at the highest level of our sport in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Our heartfelt thanks go once again to Rudiger de Pauw and his team from Mushing Belgium and Felice Buglione, Fabrizio Filoni, and the team from FIDASC Italy for all the hard work they have put into making these Championships the success that they were.

Topic 2: Acceptance of invitation and agenda as per WSA statutes

The invitation and agenda of the GA is accepted unanimously.

Topic 3: Counting of delegates and votes & attendance list

Apologies were received from the delegates of Italy and France and from Ellie Camacho (Aspirant Race Judge).

After the attendance list is checked, Arnold Petutschnig, Vice-Chairman of the WSA counts the votes that are represented at the GA in Hettingen and confirms that 25 votes are present. The absolute majority is 13 votes.

Appendix 1: List of attendees

Topic 4: Report of the Treasurer and the Financial Controllers - Discharge of Board

Cindy van den Brink, Treasurer of the WSA, reports on income and expenditures of the past year. The WSA started the year with a bank balance of €11,710 and finished the year with a balance of €18,801. In the 2022/23 accounting year, the WSA charged for the first time for the WDL, which accounted for the increase in the balance. The major outgoings were the costs for the 2022 GA, costs related to the World Championships in Belgium and Italy, and the WSA World Trophy, administrative expenses, and travel costs for the WSA Board Members.



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Ahead of the GA, the financial auditors Attila Kiss (ROU) and Rudiger de Pauw (BEL), who was elected unanimously by the GA in lieu of the unavailable Gudrun van de Mortel, checked the bookkeeping of the WSA. They confirm that the Treasurer has done a thorough job and that they found the books to be in good order. They ask the Assembly to discharge the Treasurer.

Arno Steichler then asks the Assembly to discharge the entire Board.

The General Assembly unanimously discharges the Treasurer and the Board.

Topic 5: Changes to WSA Race Rules and WSA World Trophy Rules

Following the 2022/23 racing season, the WSA Race Marshals and Race Judges recommended a few alterations to the WSA Race Rules. The proposed changes were sent to the members with the agenda ahead of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly votes as follows on the proposed Race Rule changes:

- Prologue (trail length at championships): Unanimously approved
- Prologue (trail inspections): Unanimously approved
- Rule 1.7.4 (time penalty for forgotten transponder): Unanimously approved
- Rule 1.8.18.4 (time penalty for serious overtaking violations that can be evidenced): 15 seconds penalty - unanimously approved
- -Rule 2.2.4 (banning of BGB hooks): Unanimously approved
- Rule 7.6.2.2 (time penalty for late starting teams): 15 second penalty in Sprint and 1 minute penalty in MD (option 1) - approved (22 yes/ 2 no/ 1 abstention)

The 2022/23 racing season saw the birth of the WSA World Trophy. Following the experiences of the inaugural season, the WSA Board proposes a number of changes to WSA World Trophy rules. The two main changes are:

- The WSA World Trophy will run from the day after the WSA Sprint and Mid-Distance World Championship until the second race day of the WSA Sprint and Mid-Distance World Championship of the following year. The prize giving ceremony for the WSA World Trophy will take place during the mushers' dinner of the WSA Sprint and Mid-Distance World Championship.
- Nominations for World Trophy races need to be received by the date of the WSA General Assembly. If by 30 September a weekend during the racing season is still available, a WSA member can propose a second sprint or dryland race as a World Trophy event.

The revised WSA World Trophy rules are approved unanimously.

Appendix 2: Revised WSA Race Rules and WSA World Trophy Rules



Topic 6: New membership applications

New membership applications were received from Gripen Draghundsklubb (Sweden) and the Italian club NCS (New Club Sleddog).

Gripen Draghundsklubb, Sweden

The membership application of Gripen Draghundsklubb had provisionally been approved by the WSA Board in November 2022 to provide Swedish mushers with a way to compete in WSA Championships when the previous Swedish member SPHK decided not to renew their membership. The WSA Board has checked the admission documents and recommends approving the membership application of Gripen Draghundsklubb.

The WSA GA agrees unanimously to the membership application of Gripen Draghundsklubb.

NCS (New Club Sleddog), Italy

Though the WSA Statutes allow in exceptional circumstances for a second member from a country, the WSA General Assembly feels that the criteria for such an exception is not met by NCS and that next to all Italian mushers are represented by the current Italian member FIDASC.

The membership application from NCS (New Club Sleddog) is rejected (18 no/ 2 yes/ 5 abstentions).

Topic 7: Appointments of new Race Judges

Giulia Rosetta (ITA) and Ellie Camacho (GBR) both delivered outstanding work as Aspirant Race Judges at the WSA World Championships Sprint & MD in Vermiglio and at the WSA Dryland World Championship in Houthalen Helchteren (Giulia) and Firlie (Ellie) and met the WSA's requirements to become WSA Race Judges.

The WSA GA approves both appointments unanimously.

Topic 8: Future Championships

The preparations for the 2023 WSA Dryland World Championship in Mühlberg (Germany) are in full swing. Arno Steichler will be in Mühlberg again on 14 October for the press launch and to review the final details for the Championship.

RSSC Austria has offered to host the 2024 WSA World Championships Sprint & Mid-Distance. Sportgastein's reputation precedes it. In this unique mountain paradise only the weather can really throw a spanner in the works.

The General Assembly unanimously approves the bid from RSSC Austria to host the 2024 WSA World Championships Sprint & Mid-Distance in Sportgastein (AUT) from 1-3 March 2024.

The WSA Board is also delighted with AMWA's offer to once again host a WSA Dryland World Championship.

The General Assembly unanimously approves the bid from AMWA (Great Britain) to host the 2024 WSA Dryland World Championship in Haughley Park (GBR) from 24-25 November 2024.



Topic 9: Proposals WSA Board

The WSA Board proposes to trial the relay format as a potential new discipline for future WSA World Championships at the upcoming WSA Dryland World Championship in Mühlberg (Germany). The intention is for the relay to take place between the final race of the WSA Dryland Championship and the price giving ceremony.

Every nation is entitled to enter one team. Every team must consist of 4 mushers and 3 dogs. Each musher and each dog may run the trail only once. The trail will be approximately 2 km long and needs to be covered by a Canicross, a Scooter and a Bikejor team. The fourth person in the team acts as the human baton in the change-over area to avoid dogs meeting when handing over from one team member to the next. The relay will commence with a Canicross mass start. The team that finishes first after having completed all three disciplines, wins the relay.

As this is a trial, there will be no World Championship title on offer in this category. Detailed rules will be published ahead of the Championship.

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

Topic 10: Any Other Business (AOB)

Letter from Felice Buglione, President of FIDASC, regarding the organisation of an international sled dog competition in conjunction with the 2026 Winter Olympic Games in Italy

Felice Buglione sends his apologies, but he has sent a letter, which was also sent to the WSA's members. In the letter FIDASC proposes to help raise the profile of the sled dog sport by organising an international sled dog competition in conjunction with the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy.

The WSA Board agrees and offers FIDASC its full support in this endeavour.

Acceptance of lateral flow serological tests as an alternative to titre tests & WSA Vaccination Rules

At the 2022 General Assembly Mushing Belgium proposed for the WSA to accept lateral flow serological tests as an alternative to titre tests to establish whether a dog had sufficient antibodies against DHP to not require a booster. As the WSA's Chief Veterinarian was unable to attend the 2022 General Assembly due to Covid-19, the proposal was carried forward to this year.

The WSA's Chief Veterinarian Dr Karsten Hesse uses this proposal as an opportunity to not only investigate the efficacy of the lateral flow tests on the market but also to review the WSA Vaccination Rules more broadly.

Dr Hesse presents current research findings showing that not all serological point of care lateral flow tests provide reliable results regarding the amount of DHP antibodies in a dog. Only in the case of parvo does the FAST test seem to show a good correlation with the titer tests in the laboratory. To correctly assess the relevance of these tests for a race with over 1000 dogs, Dr. Hesse will contact the word leading department in this filed at LMU Munich and report back to the WSA GA as soon as possible.



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To provide adequate protection at races where often more than 1000 dogs are present, the latest research suggests that:

- For a core vaccination against DHP (distemper, hepatitis, and parvo) to be effective, puppies under the age of one year need to receive the last DHP vaccination at the age of at least 16 weeks. Dogs over the age of one that have received a proper base immunization are protected for 3 years.
- The immunization against rabies follows the legislation of the country hosting the championship. As a rule, a rabies vaccination provides 3 years of protection.
- The available vaccinations against kennel cough and Bordetella alleviate the symptoms at best but don't prevent dogs from getting ill or being able to transmit the infection and are therefore no longer required.
- As the L2 vaccination doesn't include the most common strain of leptospirosis in much of Europe, all dogs should be vaccinated with L4 (e.g. NobivacL4 (MSD) or EuricanL Multi (Boehringer Ingelheim)). Furthermore, the L2 vaccines do not prevent pathogen excretion in the urine and the pathogen from spreading, an important consideration for events where many dogs are present.

The GA approves the revised Vaccination Rules unanimously. The updated Vaccination Rules will come into effect immediately.

Appendix 3: Revised WSA Vaccination Rules

The Chairman thanks the delegates for attending the General Assembly and closes the meeting at 13:50 hrs.

Minutes:
Irene Valenkamp/ Secretary

Approved by:
Arno Steichler/ Chairman



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Appendix 1: List of Attendees

Association	Country	Delegate Name	Number of Votes
WSA	Austria	Arnold Petutschnig	1
WSA	Austria	Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber	1
WSA	Germany	Christof Diehl	1
WSA	Germany	Karsten Hesse	1
WSA	Germany	Michael Landau	1
WSA	Germany	Arno Steichler	1
WSA	Great Britain	Irene Valenkamp	1
WSA	Netherlands	Cindy van den Brink	1
WSA	Scotland	John Carter	1
		Total Number of Votes Board	9
RSSC	Austria	Manuela Petutschnig-Gruber	1
		Arnold Petutschnig	1
MBEL	Belgium	Rudiger de Pauw	2
VDSV	Germany	Rüdiger Rink	2
		Rüdiger Bartel	2
AMWA	Great Britain	Irene Valenkamp	1
DSO	Netherlands	Siebrén Molenaar	1
		Roderick Glastra	0
PASS	Poland	Jacek Włodarczyk	1
		Jolante Włodarczyk	1
CSSBN	Romania	Bogdan Berende	1
SDAS	Scotland	John Carter	1
SSV	Switzerland	Norbert Ramseier	2
RJ	Netherlands	Melis de Heus	Guest
		Total Number of Votes Members	16
		TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES	25

Appendix 2: Revised WSA Race Rules & WSA World Trophy Rules

WSA Race Rules: <https://www.wsa-sleddog.com/images/Downloads/Rennregeln/WSA%20RACE%20REGULATIONS%201.23EN%20final.pdf>

WSA World Trophy Rules: https://www.wsa-sleddog.com/images/Downloads/WSA-World-Trophy/wsa_world_trophy_rules_2023-24_EN.pdf

Appendix 3: Revised WSA Vaccination Rules

WSA Vaccination Rules: <https://www.wsa-sleddog.com/images/Downloads/Rennregeln/WSA%20VACCINATION%20RULES%201.23EN%20final.pdf>