

INWA RACE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

1. Race Officials

Race Officials ensure fairness for all walkers by disqualifying competitors who are not racing with the appropriate Nordic Walking technique or behaving in an appropriate manner.

- The Race Officials shall have the sole authority to determine the fairness or unfairness of warnings and disqualifications, and their rulings thereon shall be final and without appeal.
- The appointed Race Official shall elect a Chief Race Official that acts as Recorder.
- All Race Officials shall act in an individual capacity and decisions are made as seen by the human eye.
- Irrespective of the distance of the event there should be a minimum of 5 Race Officials in NW races and 3 in Nordic Hill races.
- All Race Officials operate independently and should not discuss the competition with others.
- Race Officials should be clearly visible to all participants.

2. Nordic Walking Technique

To comply with INWA Nordic Walking race rules, every participant must:

- 4.1. Ensure that at no point both feet or both poles are off the ground at the same time.
- 4.2. The poles contact the ground at the same time as the opposite heel.
- 4.3. The poles must be planted behind the front foot except when ascending or descending steep rises or steps.
- 4.4. Ensure that the arms and legs move alternately in a natural manner.
- 4.5. The centre of gravity must not be abnormally lowered.
- 4.6. There must be an active push through the poles in order to propel the body forward. When pushing through the pole the hand should at least reach the hip.
- 4.7. Participants must use their poles at all times, except when stopped at the water stations, according to the specific course rules.

- 4.8. Participants must wear the pole straps correctly in accordance with correct Nordic Walking technique
- 4.9. Participants must wear the race numbers in accordance with the instructions provided by the course officials
- 4.10. Participants must not block the way to other participants.

To comply with INWA Nordic Hill Racing rules, every participant must:

- 4.1. While running with the poles, the poles must be planted behind the front foot, but the poles can be planted also in front of the alternate foot when ascending steeper rises.
- 4.2. Ensure that the arms and legs move alternatively in a natural manner.
- 4.3. There must be an active push through the poles in order to propel the body forward.
- 4.4. Participants must wear the pole straps correctly in accordance with correct Nordic Walking technique
- 4.5. Participants must wear the race numbers in accordance with the instructions provided by the course officials
- 4.6. Participants must not block the way to other participants.

Nordic Walking Techtime competition:

Special kind of competition where participants Nordic Walk a marked trail. Criterias are time accuracy per round and Nordic Walking technique which is evaluated by referees along the way. Rules and guidelines for the competition are provided by ANWI (INWA Italy)

3. Warnings and disqualification

Nordic Walking races:

Race Officials will have one yellow and one red card.

When a Race Official takes a decision it must be immediately be communicated to the participant issuing the appropriate card and stating the reason of the call.

The warning and disqualification procedure is as follows:

- A warning yellow card will be issued to participants when failing to comply with the technique points described in point 4 of the INWA Competition Rules.
- A disqualification red card will be issued to participants by Race Officials when the participant:

1. Fails to keep to the course
 2. Fails to follow the specific directions of a race official
 3. Verbally or physically abuses any official or other participant
 4. Behaves in a disorderly or inappropriate manner
 5. Has been shown 3 yellow cards
- Disqualification procedure:
 1. All warnings and disqualifications must be immediately communicated to the participant issuing the appropriate card alongside the reason for the call and sent to the Chief Race Official who acts as Recorder.
 2. Disqualification due to scenarios outlined in point 11.2. is immediate by issuing the participant a red card.
 3. Disqualified participants must immediately withdraw from the event.

Nordic Hill racing: Possible disqualifications are decided by the referees right after each round of race. For the disqualification min. 2/3 votes of the referees are needed.

4. Race Official positioning

- A Race Official should position himself to allow a clear view of the participants.
- A Race Official should never lie on the track nor run along the side of the competitors while judging.
- The participant should not be judged directly from the front or the rear.
- Participants are most likely to be illegal: during the acceleration at the start; when passing another participant; in the middle of a group; around turns; near aid and refreshment areas; entering and leaving road courses; and during the finishing sprint immediately before the finish line.

5. Chief Race Official

Before the race the Chief Race Official coordinates the Race Officials Team:

- synchronizing watches
- establishing a communication protocol
- distributes Race Official record sheets

During the race the Race Official record in the Race Official Summary Sheet the calls from the different Race Officials.

After the race the Chief Race Official certifies for accuracy the Race Official Summary Sheet by signing the form.

The Race Official Summary Sheet should be available to participants.

6. Race Official good practice code

- If in doubt, a Race Official gives the benefit to the participant.
- Judging is based only on the participant's performance at that particular race.
- A Race Official is responsible for his/her decisions and should not be influenced by outside comments.
- A Race Official should not intimidate participants.
- A Race Official acts immediately on all judgments.
- A Race Official ensures that the participant is aware of the card issued to him/her.
- A Race Official does not converse with anyone other than the Chief Race Official while judging the race.
- A Race Official does not take active interest in the positions or times of the participants or teams.
- A Race Official does not convey any information to the participants about the progress of the race.
- A Race Official acts impartially.
- A Race Official should not lie down on the track or road.
- A Race Official should promptly report to the Chief Race Official any card issued (NW races)
- A Race Official concentrates on his primary job of proper and fair judging of each participant in the competition. He/she protects the integrity of the competition and the event and judges the race so that it is a fair competition for everyone.
- A Race Official doesn't use a camera, binoculars or other optical devices while judging. A Race Official uses only the human eye to determine the legality of a walker during the race. In Nordic Hill racing videos can be used to help judging in unclear situations.