



# NORDIC WALKING COMPETITION RULES

## 1 Definition of Nordic Walking march

Nordic Walking march is a forward movement by taking alternating steps which requires at least one foot maintaining permanent contact with the ground. Losing contact with the ground by two feet simultaneously is forbidden. Moreover, following aspects of NW technique are supported:

- a) Planting poles and pushing off matches with your gait rhythm.
- b) Extensive arm movement underlining the arm passing the torso as the grip of the pole is released at the end of the swing (exception of the slope above 20% )
- c) Pushing the pole must be performed behind , not to the left or right side.

During marches special Nordic walking poles should be used. Fitness technique is advisable.

## 2 Equipment

- a) Poles -using Nordic Walking poles is recommended . Length of the stick must be selected according to the overall rule that an angle between a shoulder and a pole planted vertically should be approx. 90 degrees, with an acceptable difference of +/- 10 degrees.
- b) Electronic equipment - using any type of devices is permitted provided they do not disturb other competitors' walking.
- c) Water containers - using personal water containers is not forbidden . However, making use of points of refreshment, available on the route of competition, is recommended. Competitors can also deliver their own drinks to the points of refreshment.

## 3 Safety and medical aid

- a) Organizers of the competition are responsible for guaranteeing the safety of competitors and referees.

- b) A competition should be planned with the purpose of both the start and the finish held by day (i.e. at the daylight).
- c) A competitor must immediately retreat from a competition, if he/she is given such an order by a representative of a medical team appointed by the organizer of the competition.

#### **4 Points of refreshment**

- a) Water and other appropriate nutrients should be available at the start and finishing-line during each competition
- b) Refreshment points should be organized approx. every 5 km. Moreover, if weather conditions are justifying such a need, additional points supplied with the drinking water should be located approximately in half road between points of refreshment or even more often.
- c) Food which can be delivered by the competitor should be placed in points indicated by the competitor. It should be arranged as to offer an easy access to the food or can be handed in directly to a competitor by a previously accredited person .
- d) Points of refreshment are fixed zones called zones of supply which include area of 50 meters before and after the refreshment points. In this space competitor's arm movement is not to be assessed by referees.

#### **5 Clothes, the footwear and competitors' starting numbers**

- a) In every competition competitors must wear appropriate clothing, whose cleanness and design is acceptable with no reservations. Clothing must be made of the opaque (even after becoming wet) material.
- b) During the competition every competitor must be equipped with two starting numbers, worn in a visible way on their chest and on the back (recommended to use different colours on starting numbers to each distance)
- c) Putting on competitors' surnames or other types of identification on starting numbers plaques is acceptable

## 6 Routs

- a) It is recommended that the competition is played on loops whose subsequent laps sum up to 5 km.
- b) The finish should be marked with a white line, at least 5 cm wide.
- c) The ground of a route of each competition may be either hard or soft. However , it cannot threaten the safety of competitors.
- d) At every change of the ground type 50 m zone of changes of tips is arranged, in which the competitor can remove or put on rubber tips on their poles. In this space competitor's arm movement is not to be assessed be referees.
- e) A walker overtaking another competitor does not interfere,  
or impede the movement of a player competitor overtaken by him.
- f) Each 5 km of the route should be labeled . More frequent labeling of the route is recommended.

Recommended:

- Use of "protective factor against too short routes" of +/- 1% of the rout length.
- m) The final decision regarding the route is taken by the referee approving of the main event.

## 7 Leaving the route

- a) A competitor may leave the track with the consent and under the supervision of a referee , provided that this will not shorten the distance that the player must walk.
- b) If the chief referee of the competition receives information from another referee or another observer that a player has left the marked route, shortening the distance they should walk, and the chief referee considers disqualification justified enough, then he or she can opt for it.

## 8 Distances

Typical distances for men and women are loops whose subsequent laps sum up to 5 km.

## 9 Start

- a) Start of the Nordic Walking competition should occur after the gunshot sound.

- b) Start command should be “on sites”, and only after setting all participants on the starting-line, the gunshot should occur.
- c) Recommended order of starts:
  - 1. 20 km / halfmaraton – men with women or by series
  - 2. 10 km – firstly men series, secondly women series
  - 3. 5km – men series by category, women series by categoryMain referee can change start order (it's necessary to inform participant about new start order min. one hour before start time)
- d) Start with a different age category result in the calculation of the time difference between start the appropriate category and the actual take-off.
- e) Start series should be in executedt 10 seconds from start signal. In the case of deliberate delaying the start, referee may disqualify player or move to the next category.

## 10 Referees

- a) All of the Nordic Walking Referees should act independently, and their judgments should be based only on their own observations made by the human eye.
- b) During the Nordic Walking Competition, six referees, including the main referee should be conducting the evaluation.

## 11 Warnings and disqualifications

- a) Competitors must be warned, when the technique of their movements creates risk of the violation of the competition regulations, as defined in Article 1, by:  
**WARNING** – (yellow card) showing them a yellow card, stopping the participants and putting a red vertical bar on his/hers starting number. If participant collect three warnings, it's proposition to diqualification
- b) If participant breaks the rules technique drastically, then she/he is immediate disqualification  
**DISQUALIFICATION** – (red card) showing them a red card, stopping the participants and putting a red vertical bar on his/hers starting number, sign it in referee's protocol, the disqualified participant should immediately leave the route.

## **12 Disqualification requests**

In case of observing that participant's movement manners, during the course of the competition was incompatible with the article 1, application for participant's disqualification should be sent to the main referee.

## **13 Protests and appeals:**

- a) Protests concerning results achieved by the participant in the event must be submitted within 30 minutes after the announcement of the not preliminary results.
- b) Any protest must be at first reported verbally to the main referee by the player him/herself or by a person acting on his/hers behalf.
- c) After the decision of the main referee, a participant is entitled to appeal to the Appeals Committee. The appeal must be submitted within 30 minutes of the main referee's decision. Cancellation should be submitted in writing and signed by a person officially acting on behalf of the contestant, along with the 200 zł deposit. In case of the appeal dismiss, deposit is not refundable.
- d) The Appeals Committee consists of the organizer's representative, the Polish Nordic Walking Federation's representative and the main referee. Composition of the Appeals Committee must be announced before the beginning of the event.
- e) The decision of the Appeals Committee is ultimate. There is no possibility of any further protests.

## **14 Unsporting behavior**

From all the people who actively or passively take part in the Nordic Walking event, ethical, moral and socially approved behavior is required.

## **15 Time measurement**

- a) Three different measurement methods should be considered official:
  - 1) Manual measurement,
  - 2) Entirely mechanic measurement,
  - 3) Measurement with use of transponder system.
- b) The time must be measured from a moment in which contestant's torso vertically reaches the finishing-line.

- c) Every participant's result should be measured on the finishing-line. When it is possible results should be measured after every lap. Results of all marches should be round up to the nearest second.
- d) Only the result measured from the gunshot to crossing the finishing-line, can be considered as a winning result

## 16 Result's types

There are two types of results: preliminary and official.

- a) Preliminary results- first official results drawn by the event's organizer after the last contestant crosses the finishing-line. Preliminary result are always valid with appeal eventuality, publicly announced and placed near the finishing-line as well as in the event's office as soon as the last participant crosses the finishing-line. Time in which results are announced must be measured and placed on a proper list signed by the main referee.
- b) Official results- official results are indisputable and announced immediately after the appeals deadline expires or after the declaration that an appeal has been submitted.
- c) Publication of the results – copies of the results obtained during the event should be placed in the finishing-line area or made available online.

## 17 The main referee

The main **referee** acts as a supervisor as an evaluating referee.