

British Flyball Association

July 2026 Rule Changes

Member Guidance Handout

Purpose of this handout

This handout summarises the rule changes voted in by members and effective from July 2026. It is designed as a quick, practical reference for members, captains, tournament organisers, judges and officials. For the full and definitive wording, always refer to the BFA July 2026 Rulebook.

⚠ **Some changes are deferred until 1 September 2026. These are clearly marked throughout this document.**

How to use this handout

- Start with **Changes at a Glance** for the headline changes.
- Look for yellow callouts where a change is deferred until **1 September 2026**.

Introduction

Following the 2026 Annual General Meeting, a number of rule changes were voted in by BFA members. These changes cover a wide range of areas, from competition rules and box specifications, to the constitution and judging qualifications.

This guidance is written for all BFA members at the same level. The changes are grouped by topic, so members, captains, tournament organisers, judges and officials can read the same explanation and understand how each change may affect them.

Changes at a Glance

The table below summarises the main practical changes for members. Detailed guidance follows by topic.

| Topic | What is changing | When it applies |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Box specifications | The whole of Proposal 14 is deferred, including the requirement for the ball to sit fully behind the front edge of the box and the pressure-plate angle provisions. | Deferred to 1 September 2026 |
| Box checking and malfunction | Clearer process for box checks, late arrival arrangements and two-minute repair or replacement during a malfunction. | July 2026 |
| Interference and distractions | Definitions have been rewritten to make the difference between interference, distraction and loose balls clearer. | July 2026 |
| Flyball Foundation | Minimum age increases to 15 months for Foundation events and the fewer-than-four-dogs scoring adjustment changes to a sliding scale. | July 2026 |
| Declared times | Declared-time teams are now subject to the divisional break-out rule rather than a separate team break-out time. | July 2026 |
| Hybrid teams | Hybrid teams are not part of the July rulebook implementation and should be treated as September guidance only. | Deferred to 1 September 2026 |
| Adverse weather | The rulebook refers to the Adverse Weather Policy. Appendix B includes the policy guidance and practical implementation notes. | Rule from July 2026; see Appendix B |

Changes not covered in detail

Some proposals approved at the AGM made minor wording, consistency, or governance amendments. These are reflected in the July 2026 Rulebook but are not explained separately in this handout because they do not materially change how members, teams, or officials need to act at tournaments.

SECTION 1 · Racing, Dogs and Team Conduct

1.1 Box Specifications (Proposal 14)

Deferred change — effective 1 September 2026

The whole of Proposal 14 is deferred until 1 September 2026. This means the ball-position requirement, pressure plate angle, face plates and snubs should not be applied to July or August racing.

1.2 Interference and Distractions (Proposal 23)

- Interference is about a dog preventing or delaying the opposing team from releasing or completing a run, including during warm-up.
- It applies in all bound areas of the ring, including the racing lanes and the run-back area.
- A loose ball only becomes interference if it prevents or delays the opposing team from racing or warming up normally.
- If the same dog has a second interference recorded at a sanctioned tournament, that dog may only be released after the opposing team has completed its race for the rest of that tournament.
- Distractions are generally caused by people or equipment, such as throwing motivational items, using noise-making devices, leaving loose balls on the floor, dropping treats, or leaving open treat containers unguarded.
- A loose ball dropped, mis-fired or accidentally launched during a heat is not automatically a distraction, but the judge must still stop the heat if there is a safety risk.

1.3 Runner Rule (Proposal 30)

- For a dog in start position, the runner must run toward the lights on the outside of the dog: left side in the blue lane and right side in the red lane.
- For a dog in any other position, the runner must run toward the lights on the right side of the dog.
- The runner must not run further than the start line, or this will be classed as a fault.

1.4 Flyball Foundation Events

- Flyball Foundation and Ring Time Training are now listed as sanctioned BFA activities.
- For Flyball Foundation events, dogs must be at least 15 months old at the time of the event.
- The minimum age for Ring Time Training remains 12 months.
- Dogs that have been formally retired from competition are not eligible to take part in Flyball Foundation events.
- The scoring adjustment for Foundation teams starting with fewer than four dogs has changed to a sliding scale.
- A Foundation scoring spreadsheet is available from the BFA Downloads section and should be used as the standard calculation tool.

| Dogs at start | Adjustment |
|---------------|---------------|
| 3 dogs | 5% reduction |
| 2 dogs | 10% reduction |
| 1 dog | 15% reduction |

Note: the adjustment applies where the team starts the competition with fewer than four dogs.

1.5 Membership Fees and AGM Proposals

- The BFA Committee may review and increase membership fees annually in line with CPI, using January CPI data as the reference point.
- Increases above inflation, or expenditure on fixed assets, costs, or services above £5,000, require consultation with all adult members.
- Members must use the online proposal form for rule changes.
- Anyone proposing a rule change must personally attend the AGM to present it.

1.6 Hybrid Teams (Proposal 29) – Coming 1 September 2026

Hybrid Teams are deferred and do not apply to July or August racing. This section is included only as advance notice that separate operational guidance will be needed before 1 September 2026. Until that date, members should continue to follow the existing team rules.

Deferred change — effective 1 September 2026

Hybrid Team rules do not apply until 1 September 2026. Treat this section as advance notice only.

SECTION 2 · Tournament Administration, Box Checking and Paperwork

2.1 Tournament Venue Distances (Proposal 26)

- Tournament application venues must now be within 60 miles of the team captain's home address.
- Venues must be more than 60 miles from any other sanctioned tournament on the same dates, unless the venue types are different, for example indoor and outdoor.
- The 60-mile distances should be measured using What3Words and Google Maps, via the shortest route possible.
- Measurements should be taken from the competitor entrance gate at the tournament venue and the entrance to the team captain's residence.
- Where an application falls outside the 60-mile limit from the team captain's home address, it requires further consideration by the Show Secretary or Committee and may be allowed where it is in the best interests of the membership.

Implementation note — Rule 1.2, Application Requirements: The existing Rule 1.2 wording on late applications was omitted from Proposal 26 in error. This affects the provision stating that late applications may be approved on their merits, applications less than 30 days will not be approved, and a change of date, but not venue, is covered provided the new venue remains more than 60 miles from an existing sanctioned tournament on the same date. In the previous rule this distance was **50 miles**; it has been updated to 60 miles solely to reflect the approved change made by Proposal 26. This wording is included in the July 2026 Rulebook for implementation purposes only, to avoid any inconsistency or gap. It is not a new rule, and does not alter the member vote on Proposal 26.

2.2 Declared Times and Divisional Break-Outs

- The rule now confirms that teams on declared times are subject to the divisional break-out rule rather than a separate team break-out time.
- The practical implementation is through the updated C2 paperwork.
- Teams should be reminded to download and use the latest C2 form, especially if they normally use a saved copy from a previous season.
- Tournament organisers should ensure the divisional break-out time shown on the paperwork is applied consistently across the whole division.

2.3 Box Checking and Box Malfunction

- Boxes should be presented for checking at the time set by the tournament organiser wherever reasonably practicable.
- If a team knows in advance that its box cannot be checked at the main checking time, the team must notify the tournament organiser so that a later check can be arranged.
- If a team is unexpectedly delayed on the way to the tournament, such as because of a vehicle issue or other circumstance outside the team's control, the team must contact the Head Judge or Tournament Organiser as soon as possible and before its first division starts.
- Box checkers do not need to remain available all day as a general requirement. They only need to be available outside the set checking time where a team has notified the Tournament Organiser or Head Judge that a later check is needed.
- If a box malfunctions during racing, the team has two minutes to repair or adjust it, or they may borrow a replacement box that has already been checked.
- If the box malfunctions a second time in the same race, the heat and all remaining heats in that race are forfeited.

Key point: box checking should be planned, not open-ended. A later check is only needed where the team has notified the Tournament Organiser or Head Judge in advance, or where an unexpected delay has been reported as soon as possible before the team's first division.

SECTION 3 · Judging, Measuring and Race Decisions

3.1 Head Judge Retention Requirements

- Head Judges must now complete at least two head judging assignments per calendar year.
- This is in addition to the existing requirements for divisional judging assignments, current BFA membership, seminar attendance, and the Judges Survey Questionnaire.
- The Judges Board will confirm any requalification process where the annual Head Judge assignment requirement is not met.

3.2 Adverse Weather, Divisional Judge Positioning and Measuring Officials

- Appendix B sets out the BFA Adverse Weather Policy and practical guidance; in adverse weather conditions, the Head Judge must use that policy when deciding whether to cancel, reduce, delay or suspend racing.
- The Divisional Judge should position themselves in the centre of the racing lanes during racing and be visible and accessible during warm-up.
- The membership requirement to apply as a Measuring Official has been reduced from 36 months to 18 months.
- All measurements taken by Head Judges or qualified Measuring Officials, including test measures, must be recorded on BFA Form C9.
- Measurements taken by Provisional Measuring Officials solely for training and logbook experience do not need to be recorded on the C9.

Further Information and Member Reminder

If you have questions about any of these changes, contact the BFA Committee through the usual channels. This handout is intended to help all members understand the practical impact of the July 2026 rule changes. It is guidance only and should be read alongside the full BFA Rulebook, which remains the definitive source.

Final reminder

Changes marked ⌘ do not apply until 1 September 2026. All other changes in this handout are effective from July 2026 unless specifically stated otherwise; see Appendix B for the Adverse Weather Policy guidance.

Appendix A · Foundation Scoring Spreadsheet

The Foundation scoring spreadsheet supports sliding-scale scoring for fewer-than-four-dog teams. Download the current standard calculation tool from the BFA Downloads section; the compact tables below show clean-run percentage scores.

| Number of Clean Runs | 4 Dog Team | 3 Dog Team | 2 Dog Team | 1 Dog Team |
|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 48 | 100% | | | |
| 47 | 98% | | | |
| 46 | 96% | | | |
| 45 | 94% | | | |
| 44 | 92% | | | |
| 43 | 90% | | | |
| 42 | 88% | | | |
| 41 | 85% | | | |
| 40 | 83% | | | |
| 39 | 81% | | | |
| 38 | 79% | | | |
| 37 | 77% | | | |
| 36 | 75% | 100.00% | | |
| 35 | 73% | 97.22% | | |
| 34 | 71% | 94.44% | | |
| 33 | 69% | 91.67% | | |
| 32 | 67% | 88.89% | | |
| 31 | 65% | 86.11% | | |
| 30 | 63% | 83.33% | | |
| 29 | 60% | 80.56% | | |
| 28 | 58% | 77.78% | | |
| 27 | 56% | 75.00% | | |
| 26 | 54% | 72.22% | | |
| 25 | 52% | 69.44% | | |
| 24 | 50% | 66.67% | 100.00% | |
| 23 | 48% | 63.89% | 95.83% | |
| 22 | 46% | 61.11% | 91.67% | |
| 21 | 44% | 58.33% | 87.50% | |
| 20 | 42% | 55.56% | 83.33% | |
| 19 | 40% | 52.78% | 79.17% | |
| 18 | 38% | 50.00% | 75.00% | |
| 17 | 35% | 47.22% | 70.83% | |
| 16 | 33% | 44.44% | 66.67% | |
| 15 | 31% | 41.67% | 62.50% | |
| 14 | 29% | 38.89% | 58.33% | |
| 13 | 27% | 36.11% | 54.17% | |
| 12 | 25% | 33.33% | 50.00% | 100.00% |
| 11 | 23% | 30.56% | 45.83% | 91.67% |
| 10 | 21% | 27.78% | 41.67% | 83.33% |
| 9 | 19% | 25.00% | 37.50% | 75.00% |
| 8 | 17% | 22.22% | 33.33% | 66.67% |
| 7 | 15% | 19.44% | 29.17% | 58.33% |
| 6 | 13% | 16.67% | 25.00% | 50.00% |
| 5 | 10% | 13.89% | 20.83% | 41.67% |
| 4 | 8% | 11.11% | 16.67% | 33.33% |
| 3 | 6% | 8.33% | 12.50% | 25.00% |
| 2 | 4% | 5.56% | 8.33% | 16.67% |
| 1 | 2% | 2.78% | 4.17% | 8.33% |

Appendix B · Adverse Weather Guidance

Adverse Weather Policy

The health, safety and welfare of dogs and people competing in Flyball within the British Flyball Association (BFA) is a priority for all members of the Association.

One of the key challenges that can impact our sport is the weather. Whether competitions are held indoors or outdoors, and regardless of season, Flyball events can be affected by adverse conditions including extreme heat, cold, wind and rain.

The Adverse Weather Policy allows Head Judges, in consultation with Tournament Organisers, to make decisions about the need to adjust, suspend or cancel racing by using the documented criteria and triggers within the policy. It also provides a clear summary of thresholds and actions that should be taken in adverse conditions.

To allow Head Judges to monitor temperatures, the BFA is providing Lights Custodians with an indoor-outdoor thermometer/hygrometer.

The actual product used is one advised by the Vets team and can be used by following this link: https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B075VMLZB9?ref=ppx_yo2ov_dt_b_fed_asin_title

The main display unit is used to measure the indoor temperature and humidity, and displays both those readings and those being recorded by the smaller outdoor sensor.

The main display unit should be positioned 3ft–4ft above ground under the marquee in the racing ring, attached to either the light tree or a marquee leg.

The outdoor sensor should be positioned at a similar height within the racing ring, either on the light timers or the Judges Stand.

The main display unit should be monitored regularly throughout the day by the Head Judge to allow timely decisions to be made and appropriate actions to be taken to keep dogs and members safe.

The rules of racing have been changed to make clear that Association Head Judges have the authority to take action under the policy at sanctioned tournaments.

Rule reference: 2.3 In adverse weather conditions, the Head Judge will use the Association's Adverse Weather Policy when making decisions to cancel, reduce, delay or suspend racing. This decision will be taken in consultation with the Tournament Organiser; however, the Head Judge's decision is final.

Tournament organisers are responsible for implementing this policy at BFA sanctioned tournaments.

The Committee will send a separate email to all tournament organisers reminding them of the introduction of the policy.

The Adverse Weather Policy will also be included in the updated Member's Handbook, and a copy of all policy documents will be available in the Downloads section of the Website.

Links to relevant documents:

Adverse Weather Policy

http://drive.google.com/file/d/1OHWZe94bDVjkDq98i16LHGVBCTdu-R-H/view?usp=drive_link

Summary of Thresholds and Action

https://drive.google.com/file/d/169zLQoCi0ZtZ5YreMjflP9FdZy4vRpA/view?usp=drive_link

TO Checklist

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oMcHTbMwULr4_dCgQwwFso9nM466J7g5/view?usp=drive_link