

USDAA Policy Statement on Bitches In Season (BIS)

Effective Date: For events beginning on or after September 4, 2018

BACKGROUND

Section 1.1 of USDAA Rules & Regulations specifies that dogs & handlers in competition sets forth provisions that Bitches in “heat”, commonly referred to as Bitches in Season (BIS) shall not be permitted to compete.

This rule has been amended with the effective date of this policy statement and transfers the option of applying this provision to the sole discretion of the Organizing Committee of the Host Group conducting the event. It is viewed that the Organizing Committee is best able to assess and manage the risk of such conditions relative to their event. When properly managed, it has been observed through trials that BIS do not necessarily impose risk to the dog or others, and their presence and participation does not significantly impede the operation of an event when sufficient attention and resources are employed to monitor and manage such matters.

When the Organizing Committee determines that they will permit BIS to compete, the provisions of this Policy Statement shall apply.

POLICY STATEMENT

At the option of a host group, Bitches in Season (BIS) will be allowed to participate in USDAA events whose closing dates are on or after September 4, 2018, subject to the following conditions:

- Handlers are required to notify the trial secretary/show committee they will be running a BIS at the event
- The organizing committee will determine which of the following shall apply:
 - To require BIS dogs to start on a protective mat at the start line, which shall be provided by the competitor.
 - To require BIS dogs to run in sanitary britches (panties).
- The organizing committee will determine what classes BIS may participate in at the event.
- Bitches in Season must wear sanitary britches (panties) when they are on the event grounds at all times except:
 - When in the competition ring (provided that the group has chosen to require use a protective mat).
 - At the practice jump.
 - In the exercise (potty) area.
- The host group shall establish the point in the running order at which time BIS shall run. BIS may run at the beginning or end of a class, or in their assigned position in the running order. The host group shall determine the best circumstance for managing the running order given their grounds layout, class schedule and other relevant factors.

- BIS shall be notated next to their name on the gate sheet so that other competitors and ring crew are aware.
- BIS should be kenneled in a designated area, away from other dogs to the extent possible.
- A handler exercising good sportsmanship should minimize exposure of their BIS to other dogs and limit their movements about the grounds.

Host Groups are given latitude in determining how best to administer BIS at their events. BIS rules shall be spelled out in the test schedule.

If a Group decides not to allow BIS at their events it is recommended that they offer a refund for BIS in the form of a voucher for the handler to use at future events.

BIS is a good faith policy to provide all handlers the opportunity to compete. Handlers choosing to compete with a BIS should provide due consideration to their dog's condition and temperament and the impact on others it might have in determining whether they will participate with a BIS. In so doing, they must at all times be respectful to the show committee and fellow competitors.

Any failure to comply with these provisions or any disturbance arising from BIS are subject to review of the Disciplinary Action Committee as set forth in Appendix C— Rules of Conduct & Disciplinary Actions and are subject to the full range of actions described therein.

The application and reference to this Policy Statement incorporated by reference should be disclosed in the Agility Test Schedule for the Event, which shall also outline options permitted in this Policy Statement.

TRANSITION & IMPLEMENTATION RULES & NOTES

For events for which Agility Test Schedules are already published and the date for entry has not passed, a group must include immediate notification upon receipt of entry, or as soon reasonably practicable thereafter that the policy may be in effect. In such cases, should a competitor wish to withdraw their entry, the Group shall fully refund all fees paid by the competitor without recourse.

This policy does not change the policy at National and Regional Championships events where the policy has already been approved. The effect of this policy is that all local event organizers may now opt to apply this policy.

Issues that may arise from noncompliance with this policy or with incidents that may occur involving BIS at an event may impact the future application or possible rescission of this policy.

Questions regarding this policy statement shall be directed to the USDAA office via email at rules@usdaa.com, or if by phone, (972) 487-2200 x102.