

# Snowsport England



## **A Guide to the Rules of Ski Races**

The rules for ski racing in Britain are based on the International rules published by the FIS. Different rules are put in place only when there is a very good reason (for example, FIS rules do not encompass plastic slope racing). The reason for keeping as close to FIS rules as possible is to make it easier for racers to turn up at any venue and know what they have to do.

OK, so you're going to take part in a ski race, which basic rules do you really need to know and why? This guide is primarily intended for those racing on a plastic slope but most of the rules are common to racing on all surfaces.

They represent the minimum that you need to know.

### Before the Race

You need to ensure that your equipment conforms to the rules for ski shape and length, binding height, and boot design. These rules are there for your safety and to ensure fairness. You can find those rules on the web at <http://www.gbski.com/docstore/BACR/BACR%20VI.pdf>

You need a helmet designed and approved for ski racing.

Your ski poles need to have a diameter at the tip of at least 15mm. This is to minimise the risk of a penetration injury in the event of a fall.

You need to ensure that your race clothing covers your body from ankles to wrists. You must also wear gloves at all times on the slope. This is to minimise the risk of abrasion injury in the event a fall.

During inspection you need to wear your bib so that it is visible. This is to show that you are entitled to be in the course area.

During inspection you may not ski the course at speed nor shadow its characteristics from the side. You may snowplough or sideslip SLOWLY through the course. You may not do practice starts (although you can view the course from the start gate). However, the Jury decides the method of inspection and, depending on the circumstances, may forbid snowploughing or sliding the course. In such circumstances, you must inspect the course from the side.

You can inspect on skis or snowblades but not on foot. This is to prevent damage to the matting and to stop mud being brought onto the surface.

### At the Start

Be at the start in good time. It gives you time to get yourself ready and prepare your gear.

You may be denied a start if you have illegal equipment or if you behave in an unsportsmanlike manner in the start area.

Ski preparation must take place well away from the start gate. This is to protect the start officials from inhaling potentially harmful substances.

On artificial slopes, you may carry your skis into the start gate and put them on there.

For an artificial slope race, you must be ready to enter the start gate as soon as the racer before you has started. If you are late, you may be sanctioned. The 'one minute rule' does not apply in artificial slope races.

You must wear the bib issued to you with the number clearly visible.

For a slalom, the start happens like this:

You will be called into the gate.

You will be given a reasonable but limited time to put on your skis and get ready.

The starter will say 'Ready'. This is not a question; it is information that the course is clear for you and that you will get the start order very soon.

The starter will say 'Go'. You must start no more than 10 seconds after this order or you will have committed a false start. Similarly, if you start before the word 'Go', you will have committed a false start.

### On the Course

You must go through each gate with the tips of both skis and both boots.

If you do not go through the gate correctly, you may stop, climb back, and correct the fault.

You may ask gate judges for information but they can only say 'Go' or 'Back'. You cannot receive any other assistance. Irrespective of the advice received, you alone are responsible for your actions and you cannot hold the official responsible in this regard.

If you commit a fault, and do not stop and go back you are not allowed to go through any more gates and you must leave the course as soon as you safely can.

Once you have left the course, you may not re-enter it, nor should you cross the finish line. This is on safety grounds; when officials see a racer leave the course, they may start course repair activity, or they may start the next racer. If you go back into the course, an accident may happen. If you do you may be sanctioned.

If you commit a fault very close to the finish, it may be impossible to leave the course safely without crossing the finish line. It would be unreasonable to sanction you in such circumstances; racer safety is paramount but the jury will decide.

The finish line is different from all other gates; you can go through it on both skis, or one ski, or with no skis at all. For example, if you lose both skis close to the finish without committing a fault, the momentum of the fall must carry you across the line. You are not allowed to fall, stop, get up and cross the line on foot.

You are entitled to a clear, safe course. If you want to claim a rerun because you think that you have been impeded at any time on the course (for

instance by an official repairing a gate or by an animal running across the course), you must stop immediately. You should report to the nearest official and tell him/her what happened. You will then be sent to the Finish Referee (Do NOT cross the finish line) who will contact the Jury for consideration of a re-run. If you are given a re-run, it will be what is known as a provisional start, and the Jury will decide later whether the re-run will count.

If you are given a re-run, get back to the start as soon as you can. You will be given time to prepare yourself and then be slotted into the running order at the earliest opportunity. The race will not be delayed unreasonably for you, so don't delay or you may not get the re-run. This is because it would be unfair to keep other racers waiting and because of the pressure to get the race finished in reasonable time/conditions.

If you cross the finish line (other than because you cannot stop as outlined above), you are considered to have accepted the run and you will not be granted a re-run.

#### After the Run

After the run, the officials will collate all available information and the Referee will prepare and publish a Report (sometimes known as 'the Protocol'). The report lists those who did not start (DNS), those who did not finish (DNF) and those who committed a fault leading to disqualification (DSQ).

The contents of the Report will also normally be read out over the PA.

A copy of the Report will be placed on the Official Notice Board. You need to read the report. If you are on the list and you do not think that you committed the fault, you are entitled to protest the decision but you must do this within 15 minutes of the Report being published.

If you want to protest, you must contact the race office and tell an official (preferably the Race Secretary), complete a form and pay a fee that is refundable if the jury agree with you. The jury will look at the incident and consider all the evidence including any statement you make. They may overturn or uphold the decision on the protocol.

If you are DSQ or DNF you may be allowed a further run on the course. This will take place before all the racers with a valid run. You are no longer in the competition but all the rules still apply. You must treat this run in exactly the same way you would any other.