

### Camel Racing

Camel racing holds a cherished place in the cultural heritage of the United Arab Emirates, blending tradition with athleticism and showcasing the deep bond between camel and handler.



Camel Racing is a traditional Emirati sport combining skill, strategy, and connection with the animal. The Open Masters Games version emphasises heritage, inclusivity, and fair play. This event is open to all eligible Masters athletes as defined by the Games' age category regulations.

Races will be held across 2km distance.

Each athlete may compete in their respective age category, which will be determined based on their age as of 31 December 2026. The age groups include 35–39, 40–44, 45–49, and 50+.

### Competition Dates

The provisional Camel Racing competition at Open Masters Games Abu Dhabi 2026 (OMGAD2026) is scheduled to take place on 14 February, 2026.

February 13 Friday	February 14 Saturday
	
Camel Matching and Familiarisation Day	Race Day

The date and time are subject to change, pending final entries received. A detailed schedule by event for each discipline will be developed throughout 2025.

### Competition venue: Al Wathba Race Track, Abu Dhabi

 Pin Location

**Eligibility**

Participants must be aged **35 years and above** as of 31 December 2026. All participants must undergo a **mandatory safety and handling training session** prior to the race and riders must be in good health and medically cleared for camel riding.

Races will be held across several distances to reflect different endurance demands and traditional formats. These include:

2km Sprint Races	35–39, 40–44, 45–49, 50+
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**Competition format**

The Camel Racing competition at the OMGAD2026 will follow a traditional format adapted for national-level competition and aligned with UAE racing standards. Each race will be conducted in separate age divisions, ensuring fair and competitive participation. The competition will operate under time-based results, with the fastest finishing times determining the winners. In the event of a photo finish, official race footage and timing systems will be used for final placement confirmation.

Camels participating in the races must undergo pre-race veterinary checks to ensure their health and fitness for competition. All camels must meet minimum conditioning standards, and athletes are responsible for ensuring their camels are properly trained and cared for. Only qualified riders with proven experience in camel handling will be permitted to race.

**Competition standards and rules**

All races will be conducted under strict guidelines to ensure the safety, fairness, and integrity of the sport. Participants must comply with rules regarding camel eligibility, rider conduct, and equipment use. Camels must be registered, meet age and health requirements, and pass veterinary inspections prior to racing. Any form of performance enhancement, abuse, or violation of animal welfare protocols will result in immediate disqualification. The races will be officiated by certified judges, and electronic timing systems will be used to record official results.

Participants will be briefed on all safety measures implemented to protect both riders and camels throughout the competition. These measures may include mandatory orientation or training sessions, pre-race health screenings for both athletes and camels, and clear guidelines to ensure safe and responsible race day preparations.

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Disqualification and penalty rules in camel racing are enforced to ensure fair competition, animal welfare, and adherence to traditional and safety standards. Participants may be disqualified for violations such as unsportsmanlike conduct, tampering with equipment, failure to follow the designated racecourse, or causing harm or distress to the camel. Additionally, non-compliance with safety regulations, failure to present required documentation may result in time penalties or exclusion from the event.

Further information regarding parking arrangements, camel stabling facilities, and participant check-in procedures will be provided in due course.

### **Equipment and Attire**

All camels will be **provided by the UAE Camel Racing Federation**. Personal camels are **not permitted** for standardisation and safety. Riders must wear the following attire/gear:

- Certified helmets (provided or approved)
- Protective riding gear, including padded vests and long sleeves
- Closed riding boots
- Traditional attire over gear is allowed if safe and approved

### **Race Format**

- Track length: 1.5 to 2 kilometers
- The race is timed, with rankings based on fastest completion time
- Each race will have a maximum of 6 riders for safety
- Relay format (if conducted) involves a baton hand-off in designated zones

### **Camel Handling**

- Only **trained camel handlers** will saddle, guide, and align camels at the start line.
- Riders are not permitted to whip or aggressively control camels. Use of reins and voice commands is permitted within humane standards.
- Camel behavior and welfare will be monitored by veterinarians and race officials.

### **Conduct & Disqualification**

Participants may be disqualified for:

- Unsafe riding or endangering other participants

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- Excessive force or mistreatment of camels
- Leaving the designated race track
- Use of unauthorized equipment or personal camels
- Disregarding officials' instructions

### Cultural Note

This event honours Emirati heritage and the deep relationship between people and camels. Participants are encouraged to embrace the cultural aspect respectfully.

### Technical Delegate

The Technical Delegate endorsed by UAE Camel Racing Federation will be announced in Version 2 of the Guide. The Technical Delegate will oversee the implementation of all sport specific rules and requirements at the Games

### Updates

This guide will be updated Version 2 by 1 September 2025. Important additional information will be available at that time. In the meantime, please address all inquiries to: [sports@omgad2026.ae](mailto:sports@omgad2026.ae)

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