



# THE KENNEL CLUB

## ALC Judge's Panel Report

Judging Panel Remit:

- To look at ways of helping and supporting judges in all aspects of the role of being a judge
- To regularly assess and update all literature pertaining to judges
- To review any incidents sent to The Kennel Club/Scottish Kennel Club regarding judges and judging
- To support and pass on ideas on how to improve judges' training and mentoring.
- To give feedback to the Activities Judges Sub-Group

### **1, Qualifications and skill of agility judges**

a, understanding how many current judges we have and how many new judges are,

-Taking online exam 91 in.... 2022

-Taking Practical assessment 37.2022

(Figures correct Oct 2022)

Our proposed action is for the Judges Panel to liaise with Kennel Club regarding administration and ensure that the scheme runs smoothly in 2022 and data are collected to feed into the judges panel's review.

### **2, Mentor Scheme**

To create guidance. For mentors to new judges.

Such guidance could include, -

Mentors to advise on Safety and appropriateness of course design whilst not influencing individual judge's style.

To produce a full set of guidelines to ensure that mentors are all working to the same appropriate guidelines.

There is a general view that the current mentoring process is not working. However, we have no data to see if this is true or what the problems are. To help us understand this better we would need some information from the Kennel Club. We would like to clarify how the Kennel Club is matching new judges with appropriate mentors

When a request is received who is emailed to see if they are available to mentor this person?

How are these emails then followed up to ensure a mentor is found?

How many requests are they getting for mentors?

How many are paired successfully?

### **3, Recruitment and retainment of Judges**

To enable us to monitor this situation the Judge panel would like to conduct a review of all existing judges to see when they last took the online judge's exam and if they are still accepting appointments. Possible to ask a question on online exam to determine new vs Qualified judges.



it is really difficult to assess the status of judges when KC does not hold a current list of all judges. This must be a priority for KC to progress. This would also allow judges to be contacted with updates and clarifications on rule changes,

#### **4, Judges Subgroup Report Online Judges exam**

Ensure all questions are current and up to date.

Do we need a separate online exam for champ judges' current exam has a lot of questions purely relating to champ judging is this appropriate for new judges.

#### **5, Judges Trainers**

No further update from previous meeting No new Trainers appointed although the process is ongoing.

#### **6, Layout of rings entrances and exits and the placement of leads and rewards**

##### **Better management of the start and finish.**

A number of measures are proposed to improve the safety around rings, particularly in relation to the start and finish. These measure increase safety for dogs, handler and stewards and also make for a fairer competitive environment. These issues were discussed at length at the last Agility Liaison Council Meeting (June 2022).

The Judges Panel proposes four new regulations along with more detailed guidance for show organisers, judges, and ring parties.

##### **Distance of start and finish jumps from the edge of the rings**

There have been a number of incidents where dogs have been set up to start out with the confines of the ring. This is either due to a lack of space or where handlers have developed start routines that involve recalling the dog to them at the start.

To ensure the dog is able to start and finish within the ring the first and last jump must be set at least 5m into the rings – taking into account the most likely path that a dog will follow.

New regulation

H (1) B

1 a (4)

The first and last obstacles must be set a minimum of 5m from the edge of the ring, measured along the dog's most likely path when taking the obstacle taking into account the dogs likely path from obstacle 1 to obstacle 2

*Subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered.*

Another regulation is then required to ensure that handlers no longer start their dogs out of the ring. Handlers are not allowed to enter the ring without the dog and call it in to join them.

New regulation

H (1) 10 h

Handlers must set their dogs up to start within the ring. Dog and handler must enter the ring together and under no circumstances may a dog be left outside the ring off lead and recalled or sent to the handler in the ring.

*Subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered.*

##### **Gangways between rings**

Adequate space between rings is essential to ensure that there is sufficient room for competitors and spectators to move safely around rings without disrupting competitors. In venues where space is limited and adequate space for gangways then a smaller distance may be used by some form of visible barrier must be used.

New regulation



H (1) 9 b.

The minimum space between adjacent rings marked only with single ropes is 5m. Where the distance is less than 5m at least one ring must have a visible barrier (such as netting). Entrances and exits from different rings should not be adjacent to avoid congestion in these areas.

*Subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered.*

**Crates around rings**

There have been a number of issues arising due to the use of crate ringside at shows. Handler have often leave crates behind scribes tend and near entrances and exits or rings. These can cause crowding and problems even when there is no dog in the crate. Show can designate appropriate areas for crates to be left away from entrances and exits to rings if they wish.

New regulation

H (1) 9 c.

Societies may-, if they wish, designate areas where dogs' crates and boxes may be left in the vicinity of the rings. No dogs' crates or boxes should be left near or between rings unless they are in such an area.

*Subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered.*

**Additional guidance**

The Guide for Agility Judges and Stewards) gives guidelines on these issues for judges and will be updated to recommend:

- The use of specific facilities for handlers to leave dogs leads and toys (such as buckets or boxes) that can be moved from the start to the finish and left in a place designated by the judge. This enables dogs to enter and exit on lead.
- The use of clearly marked areas for queuing to prevent spectators walking through queues.
- The ring set up should allow a handler to enter the ring with their dog on lead and then collect their lead and put the dog on lead before leaving the ring. Where space allows the use of start and finish areas are valuable to allow handlers to prepare to enter the ring and gather themselves as they leave without interference from others. This can also speed the flow of dogs through the rings.
- Handlers should not leave toys, leads etc. in any place other than that designated by the judge. Ring parties should be prepared to advise handlers of the system in place on each ring.

**7, Number of runs to be judged in a day.**

This will remain in review while we carry out a greater review of what issues cause judges genuine concern.

**8, Guide for Agility Judges and Stewards including a guide to agility equipment Updates for 2023 version**

The version prepared for 2022 has not been released. The panel has agreed the following changes to this document for 2023 before it is released.

Once we receive the document from the Kennel Club these changes will be made and agreement with Agility Representatives on the Judges Subgroup in time for the 2023 version to be published early in 2023.

Subject	Changes to be made
Format	Document to be numbered for easier reference.
Course design – use of first and last jumps	Clearer guidance on the appropriateness of repeating the first or last jumps during the course.



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Double handling - better examples of circumstances and action to take.	Better examples to be included along with actions to be taken, defined difference between deliberate assistance=E and deliberate contact =5 faults
Eating & drinking in the ring	Guidance for the whole ring party as well as the judge as to what is acceptable (no food, drinks in closed containers only)
Emergency judging	Clarification of when the “emergency rule” comes into play and who can then compete under a judge.
Championship judges	Guidance to clarify that acting as an emergency judge does not impact on the judge's future judging appointments.
Incident Book	Improve the guidance on how, when and where the incident book should be completed.,
Marking the tyre – “displaced elements”	Guidance to clarify the definition of displaced elements (does not to be displaced at all break points) and when 5 faults should be awarded
Weaves	Update to reflect the change in regulations
Putting dog back into weaves	Clarify how a judge should mark the weaves when a dog is put back in part way through – dog must be put back in exactly the place where the dog came out.
Reserve judge – taking over halfway through a course and /or judging courses designed by others.	Advice and guidance as to what action should be taken and who should be consulted.
Restarting a class.	Clearer guidance on when a class must be restarted, how this should be done, what options are available and the need to change obstacles.
Layout of tunnels	Replace diagrams using angles to demonstrate how a tunnel may curve with diagrams showing the minimum distance between tunnel end as these are more practical to measure in the ring.
Run offs	Improve the guidance on when and how run-offs should be organised.
Taking cover (from rain or sun)	Guidance as to how judges may take cover from rain or sun during a class.
Touting for appointments	Clarification that making it public you are available for judging is acceptable and to what approaches to clubs are and aren't appropriate.
Judges testing course	Improve guidance on how judges may test their course at the show – only judges may run a dog around a course and the dog must not be competing at the show.
Judges wearing earphones	Guidance for judges on why the use of earphones whilst judging is inappropriate.
Judges making public commentary	Clarification of what comments should and should not be made to handlers at the end of their run
Tunnels Under contacts positioning and marking	Clarification on how tunnels placed under contacts should be marked – especially in regard to the dog crossing the line of the contact whilst attempting the tunnel
Update on safety at exits / entrances.	Improved interim guidance on how exits and entrances should be managed (note proposal for some regulation changes in this area in the future)
What dogs can wear in the ring	Clarification that “stopper pad protectors” may be worn by dogs when competing.

Work ongoing that will need to come to the Agility Liaison Council before incorporation includes guidance on setting grade appropriate courses and better definitions of refusals.