

**Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group  
progress report December 2014**

**Health and Welfare Guidelines**

- The code of conduct was developed and reviewed by the AHWSG to ensure that the dog's welfare takes precedent over all other demands and at all stages during the preparation and training of the canine athlete for, and during, competitive and non-competitive canine activities. The code of conduct covers a range of areas included:
  - Equipment, Facilities & Training Venues
  - Canine Health Status, Nutrition & Diet
  - Injury Management
  - Doping and Medication
  - Events and Facilities
  - Availability of Veterinary Cover at Shows
  - General Advice to Owners / Handlers Regarding Fitness for Purpose
  - Breaches of the Code of Conduct

**Canine Sports Science Seminar 2014**

- The Canine Sports Science Seminar was held on Saturday 8th November at the Kennel Club Building, Stoneleigh.
- The seminar addressed the Health and Welfare of the Canine Athlete which consisted of four speakers: Marge Chandler speaking on Nutrition in the Canine Athlete, Lez Graham discussing The Impact of Training the Canine Athlete, Emma Fretwell demonstrating First Aid for the Canine Athlete and Samantha Bremner-Harrison speaking about Personality Profiling.
- The seminar was well received by 64 delegates who were on the KCAI scheme, Students and various others who had an interest in the topics.
- All delegates listened to Marge Chandler for the beginning part of the seminar, before breaking up into smaller groups to attend the other sessions.
- The AHWSG play an important role in the Canine Sports Science Seminar, which include helping to identify speakers, contributing to the layout, format and set up of the seminar.

**Removal of dogs**

- Following a recommendation from the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group Regulations relating to withdrawal or removal of dogs from events across all activity disciplines have been amended.
- The amendments achieve consistency across all disciplines and allow a dog to be prevented from competing if, in the opinion of the show management or a veterinary surgeon it should not compete due to concerns about its health.
- Regulations G10, H14, I11, L22 and S22 refer.

## **IAF Judges Incident sheet**

- The International Agility Festival was held over a four day period (7 – 10 August, 2014) and recorded a total of 2,734 dogs entered.
- A judge's incident recording form was designed and distributed to all judges prior to the International Agility Festival 2014.
- In total forty judges incident forms were received. Overall, 12 minor dog or competitor incidents were recorded. Three incidents were noted to be caused by competitors slipping, in some cases it was noted due to poor footwear. The remaining nine incidents were dog related and were noted to be slipping or colliding with equipment (e.g. Dog Walk, A Frame, Tyre and Collapsible Tunnel) or handler/competitor. An example of a described dog and competitor incidents is below.

Example Dog Incident noted:

*"A dog entered the ring and collided with a competing dog which was exiting the collapsible tunnel, no injuries"* - International young handler Jumping 12 & Over, Large

Example Competitor Incident noted:

*"Handler ankle gave way at jump 2 - 3, first aid called."* - Grade 5 Agility – Large

- In all accounts no serious injury was noted, but in some cases a short period of lameness in dogs was noted directly after the incident. First aid treatment was noted to be provided for competitors who had slipped and twisted their ankle.
- In conclusion, only a small number of forms were received which may indicate there are no real concerns from judges. Finally, it was positive to see that only a small number of incidents actually occurred during the International Agility Festival.
- The Activities Health and Welfare Working Party will continue to carry out this research in 2015 as it is a proactive approach to monitoring the number of incidents, highlighting any concerns, which occur at the International Agility Festival.

## **Obedience Questionnaire**

- The aim of this study was to investigate the frequency of both injured and non-injured dogs who are actively involved in Obedience.
- Of the injured dogs we aim to investigate the cause, where possible, the type and severity of injury and treatment received.
- In addition the frequency of training, warm up/warm down frequency and methods, amongst others factors were asked.
- A questionnaire was designed and peer reviewed by the AHWSG and distributed to all Kennel Club Obedience clubs, through social media and relevant publications. A summary of the results is as follows:

## **Dog information**

- Data was obtained for a total of 182 dogs from 126 owners.
- The median number of dogs owned per respondent was 2 range (1 – 7 dogs).
- An exact or estimated height was provided for 88 dogs, with a median height of 48.4cm (range 17.0 – 81.3cm).
- Exact or estimated weight was provided for 148 dogs, with a median weight of 20.7kg (range 5.0 – 56.0kg).

## **Obedience and Training**

- The majority of dogs were reported to be currently participating in obedience training (n=139; 76.4%) and a further 21 dogs (11.5%) were retired from Obedience training.
- For dogs currently participating in obedience training, the majority were trained, on average, for up to 30 minutes per session (n=100; 71.9%).
- The majority of dogs always received some form of warm up prior to Obedience training and/or competition (75.3%; n=137).
- The majority of dogs always received some form of cool down following Obedience training and/or competition (56.6%; n=103)

## **Injuries**

- A total of 50 injuries were reported, affecting 41 dogs.
- Median dog age at the time of injury was 5 years
- Where categorisation was possible based on reported information, 88.0% of injuries were classed as acute injuries (n=44/50), 6.0% were classed as chronic injuries (n=3/50) and 6.0% were classed as degenerative conditions (n=3/50).
- 70% of injuries occurred whilst exercising (e.g. walking running playing)

## **Treatment**

- The majority of injuries received veterinary attention (n=38/50; 76%) and a further 14% of injuries were treated by paraprofessionals only (including chiropractors, physiotherapists etc.) (n=7/50;). For four injuries (8%; 95% CI 4.8 – 15.5%) the owner did not seek any form of treatment.
- Recovery and return to obedience training was reported following 74% of injuries (n=37/50; 95% CI 61.8 – 86.2%).

## **Heelwork To Music Questionnaire Questionnaire**

- The aim of this study was to investigate the frequency of both injured and non-injured dogs who are actively involved in Heelwork To Music.
- The questionnaire was distributed from 17<sup>th</sup> February to the 24<sup>th</sup> March.
- A total response included 106 dogs from 65 owners was received.

## **Dog Information**

- An exact or estimated height was provided for 47 dogs, with a median height of 49.0cm (range 23.0 – 69.9cm).
- Exact or estimated weight was provided for 99 dogs, with a median weight of 20.0kg (range 2.1 – 65.0kg).

## **Obedience and Training**

- The majority of dogs were reported to be currently participating in HWTM training (n=92; 86.8%; 95% CI 80.3 – 93.2%) and a further 11 dogs (10.4%; 95% CI 4.6 – 16.2%) were retired from HWTM training.
- Fifty-nine percent of dogs were reported to be currently competing in HWTM (50.1 – 68.8%).
- The majority of dogs always received some form of warm up prior to HWTM training and/or competition (88.7%; n=94; 95% CI 82.6 – 94.7%).
- The majority of dogs always received some form of cool down following HWTM training and/or competition (63.2%; n=67; 95% CI 54.0 – 72.4%).

## **Injuries**

- A total of 26 injuries were reported, affecting 19 dogs (19.8%).
- The majority of injuries were classed as acute injuries (84.5%; n=23/26).
- Only two injuries were reported to have occurred during participation in HWTM/freestyle training (7.7% of all injuries).
- Most injuries occurred during exercise (53.8%; n=14).

## **Working Trials Questionnaire**

The Working Trials Questionnaire has been recently distributed to all Working Trials Clubs