

Report of Judges Trainers Meeting 24-10-17 and Judges Working Party 8-11-17

Judges Trainers Meeting

Jen Lewis was welcomed to her first meeting as a newly appointed Judges Trainer.

At the Judges Trainers Meeting there was a presentation and discussion about the changes to the Judges Training Programme, the first of the new Course Design and Practical Judging Seminar this was very well received and there were positive comments from the trainer and participants.

There were also several other areas that were discussed;

The course measurement and time matrix has been updated and extended to reflect the changes in the regulations covering distance between obstacles, and there will be additional data collected over the next twelve months to ensure that it still is appropriate.

Using whistles to signal to either indicate that the judge is ready for the competitor to start or to mark elimination. The trainers could see no value in the use of whistles and therefore recommend that whistles are not used for either of these purposes, it was also felt that at a large multi-ring show it could also be confusing for competitors. The recommended starting procedure is that the scime confirms the competitors name and indicates that the Judge is ready for the competitor to start.

At the end of the class only the Judge has the authority to close the class or part of the class if they are judging both LHO and standard height.

The practice of the judges pointing at contacts to indicate where faults occurred was felt to be unnecessary and potentially distracting to both the competitor and dog, and could be construed as showmanship by the judge for the spectators. The judges attention should be focused solely on the dog and handler.

Within the KC Regulations the judging of a refusal, is about whether the dogs refuses to take and obstacle or not. Other organisations have guidance of judging refusals, which include the judges interpretation of what the dogs path should be and whether it deviates from this, this is not within the KC Regulations.

If there is any deviation from standard marking this should be recorded in the incident book.

Mentoring of new judges, ideally this should be carried out by Judges Trainers with Championship Judges being invited if no Judges Trainers are available. Questions were also raised as to how up to date the Championship Judges are with the regulations and that all mentors are reminded that they should not be mentoring in a class which they are running in. There was an instance in Scotland where a Judges Trainer had been appointed as a mentor and another Championship Judge was also saw fit to try to mentor and did not only providing a wrong interpretation of the Regulations and was also competing in the class.

Review and reassessment of Championship Judges every five years would ensure that they keep up to date with regulations and rule changes.

Judges Working Party Meeting

The main area under discussion was further development of the KC Academy and scripts for the other disciplines.

The Agility Representatives were asked as to provide ideas as to what additional short video clips they would like to see developed for the academy and the points/issues that they felt were appropriate to cover.

There were several areas discussed and clarified during the meeting, the International Agility Working Party requested that we should think about educating KC Judges on FCI courses. Options as to how this can be developed are under consideration. They also requested that we should consider the introduction of "Prestige" level judges, it was felt that the KC already had an informal structure in place to develop judges for prestige events and whether this was deemed to be sufficient or needed to be formalised.

The marking of the wall was also clarified according to the current regulations as there have been inconsistencies in marking when a pillar is knocked over, but the part the dog clears is left standing, as some judges treat the pillars in a similar way to long jump marker poles. The regulations consider the wall as the same as a hurdle that if any part is displaced it should incur faults.

The breaking of the wait and resetting of the dog on a startline was raised and the regulation has already been amended to cover this stating that: *"if the dog runs by the first obstacle it should be faulted with a refusal"*. This has been further clarified by a press release. Faults should not be given for anything else (other than fouling the ring or harsh handling) before the dog attempts the first obstacle; judges are reminded that that you are assessing the dog's ability to complete the course set before them, not a startline wait.

There has also been a reduction in the numbers of Judges Trainers with some stepping down from this role, we would like to thank all those who have been involved in the delivery of Judges Training. The Agility representatives were also tasked with developing a person specification and requirements for new Judges Trainers.

Chris Huckle
13/11/17