



GUIDE FOR RALLY
JUDGES
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THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

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Introduction

This guide is intended as a useful reference for those embarking on a judging career at Rally competitions and to assist established judges in understanding their obligation to competitors, societies and the Kennel Club.

It is important that the information enclosed is read in conjunction with Kennel Club Regulations, which always take precedence. The updated Regulations are published every January in a separate booklet for each activity, and full Regulations are included in the Kennel Club Year Book published every July. Rally judges should read in particular the current 'Rally Regulations' booklet or the section Regulation S – Kennel Club Rally Regulations in the Kennel Club Year Book.

These Regulations apply to all judges whether domiciled in this country or overseas who officiate at Kennel Club licensed competitions. The references refer to the appropriate Kennel Club Regulations or announcements in the Kennel Club Journal.

It should be noted that this booklet is intended as a guide to the relevant Kennel Club Rally Regulations and the practical aspects of judging.

Chapter 1. Code of Best Practice for Judges

Introduction

The overall and stated objective of the Kennel Club is to promote in every way the general improvement of dogs and this objective also applies to judges.

The overall aim and objective of a judge, at whatever level, is to provide value for the time, training, effort and money which the competitor puts into presenting their dog. Moreover, the decision of judges will ultimately affect the future development of Rally.

There is therefore an expectation that judges will be competent and trustworthy. Judging is not a right but a privilege. Judges should be respected by the competitor. To that end the following Code sets out the relevant aspects that Judges should be capable of demonstrating.

Integrity

- I.1 Judges should act honestly and impartially when undertaking an appointment.
- I.2 A dog should be scored on merit only according to the Competition Regulations.
- I.3 Judges should conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the standing of a judge at all times whilst at a competition and in any other capacity which might have bearing on the interests of the canine world.
- I.4 Judges are referred to the factors set out below which may be said to affect their standing and may result in exclusion from judging lists or future judging contracts or withdrawal from an agreed appointment;
 - I.4.1 Criminal convictions
 - I.4.2 Threatening behaviour at any time
 - I.4.3 Misrepresenting or abusing authority
 - I.4.4 Not judging in accordance with Kennel Club Rules and Regulations
 - I.4.5 Using the name of the Kennel Club in an unauthorized manner.
 - I.4.6 Harsh handling as a competitor or judge at any time
 - I.4.7 Breach of Kennel Club Rules and Regulations

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Age

- I.5 No new judging appointments will be considered once a judge has attained the age of 75 years (at the time of fulfilling the appointment).

Health Guidelines

- I.6 Judges are expected to decline, or to withdraw from, an appointment which they cannot fulfil. The aim of the competition can only be fulfilled when the judging of dogs is carried out in a fully competent manner.
- I.7 Ill health of various kinds can temporarily or permanently make it impossible for a person to complete a judging appointment according to the demands which are set forward in this Code of Best Practice. A Society or Club can, if necessary, either temporarily or permanently cancel the judging contract should it become apparent that the judge cannot appraise his/her own situation and can no longer fulfill the judging appointment.
- I.8 Judges must be able to undertake the judging of the dogs with an obvious independence and in a confident and convincing manner. Judges must not at any time rely on others to assist with the main work of judging.
- I.9 Judges must be capable of meeting the physical requirements of fulfilling the judging appointment, thus should be sufficiently mobile to move around and judge the dogs from all aspects.
- I.10 From the above it follows that a person with definite lessening of capabilities, and who is dependent on assistance or the presence of various forms of technical help e.g. mobility aids, may need to consider if he or she is capable of fulfilling a judging appointment in an adequate and satisfactory manner.
- I.11 The competition organisers shall endeavour to establish that invited judges are able to fulfill their appointments.
- I.12 As far as reasonably possible the competition organisers are responsible for ensuring that the aims of the competition are fulfilled and that the competitors receive the quality of judging that they deserve.

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- I.13 The Kennel Club has an overriding responsibility and may in individual cases either temporarily defer or permanently withdraw approval when the judge in question is considered not to have the necessary capabilities. That is not to say that any particular disability will preclude judging. A common sense approach needs to be adopted by both the competition organiser and judge.

During Judging

Judges should observe the following formalities when judging:

- I.14 Judge all competing dogs in a confident, careful and consistent manner.
- I.15 Conduct themselves in a courteous manner to all and concentrate fully on the dogs. It is inadvisable for judges to call any competitor by their name, initiate or engage in a conversation initiated by a competitor whilst judging is in progress.
- I.16 Dress in a conventional and acceptable fashion precluding them from being the centre of attention, or from causing any distress to the dog competing or its owner.
- I.17 Judges should not smoke, consume alcoholic drinks or use or activate a mobile telephone whilst judging. Mobile telephones should be switched to silent or turned off when judging.

General

The following are general requirements for judges;

- I.18 Absolute integrity in order to judge honestly and impartially, and to score dogs solely on their merit.
- I.19 A suitable temperament and sufficient stamina to cope with what can be a physically and mentally demanding task.
- I.20 To judge in a customary fashion acceptable to the competitor:

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Rally Competitions

- I.21 A comprehensive knowledge of Rally and its Regulations.
- I.22 A particular understanding of Kennel Club Regulation S – Judging.

Summary

- I.23 Judges should have a comprehensive knowledge of competition procedures and etiquette. It is the responsibility of the judges to keep abreast and up to date with developments in such matters.
- I.24 Judges should be familiar with the Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and the Guide for Judges as amended from time to time and to keep up to date with all relevant regulations governing the competition and judging.
- I.25 Judges should give value to the competitor and ultimately the activity in question. Judges should act at all times with honesty and integrity and impartiality.
- I.26 The Kennel Club reserves the right to observe a judge.

Chapter 2. Invitation to Judge

The soliciting of judging appointments is not acceptable. Judges usually receive a first invitation after being seen as a successful handler.

Judges at all shows should:

- 2.1 Ensure that they have received a written invitation from the Society.
- 2.2 Confirm that they are available and are able to comply with any conditions laid down by the society, as long as these do not contravene the Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. Judges will be asked to sign and return a declaration confirming that they currently meet the qualification and health requirements laid down in the Rally Regulations.
- 2.3 Ensure eligibility and acceptance of the appointment in writing and state any requirements for expenses.
- 2.4 Ensure that their acceptance is followed by written confirmation of the appointment by the society.
- 2.5 The invitation, acceptance and confirmation form the basis of a contract between the judge and the show society. All parts of the contract may be conducted electronically.
- 2.6 If a judge is unable to honour an engagement the judge should notify the society immediately in writing in order that a report can be made by the society to the Kennel Club.
- 2.7 Judges at a Rally competition may enter a level that they are not judging, providing it does not conflict with their judging assignment. However; host societies will not interrupt or delay any class or level to accommodate judges.

Chapter 3. Before the Competition

- 3.1 Following the confirmation of the judging appointment the society will usually send a copy of the competition schedule to the judge as a reminder of the appointment. This will of course indicate the class to be judged and may also include directions to the competition venue. If directions are not included but required, a request should be made to the society. Some time after entries for the competition have closed judges will receive an indicator of the number of dogs to be judged, which must not exceed 50. It is important at this time that the route to the competition is planned to avoid arriving late.
- 3.2 All judges must be aware of the S Regulations in respect of a judge being able to honour an appointment.
- 3.3 Judges must provide their own scribe sheets and it is advisable to prepare these in advance.
- 3.4 It is the competition organiser's responsibility to provide the signs, station numbers and appropriate holders. However, many judges prefer to take their own signs, already in the holders and in the order they will be required for the course.

Setting the course

- 3.5 Courses suitable for the standard of level should be planned, and if possible tested by the judge, before the date of the competition. A courtesy copy of the plan together with a list of required equipment should be sent to the society prior to the competition to assist with planning.
- 3.6 Levels 1 and 2 shall have a maximum course time of 4 minutes and Levels 3 to 6 shall have a maximum time of 5 minutes. The Bonus Exercise, if undertaken, is not included in course time.
- 3.7 Levels 1 and 2 are performed on-lead with the exception of Bonus Exercises 1 and 3. The handler may remove the lead for these exercises or may have the dog drag the lead. A Level 1 or Level 2 course consists of 10 - 15 exercise signs, exclusive of the Start and Finish exercise signs and the Bonus Exercise sign(s).
- 3.8 Levels 3 and 4 are performed off-lead. A Level 3 or Level 4 course consists of 15-17 exercise signs, exclusive of the Start and Finish exercise signs and Bonus Exercise signs.

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- 3.9 Levels 5 and 6 are performed off-lead. A Level 5 or Level 6 course consists of 15-17 exercise signs, exclusive of the Start and Finish exercise signs and Bonus Exercise signs.

Course Design

- 3.10 Judges must design their courses to meet the requirements laid out in Kennel Club Rules & Regulations S(B) - Course Design
- 3.11 Judges should also refer to the latest guidance from the Working Party which can be found in the Summary of Recommendations document. This can be accessed on the Rally Working Party page of the Kennel Club website.
- 3.12 Judges are advised to design courses that enable handlers to showcase their abilities and to avoid traps and gimmicks.
- 3.13 Judges should ensure that their courses flow with a good balance between static exercises and moving exercises, a good guide at Level 1 would be to plan no more than six sits, downs etc. to every 10 exercises.

Chapter 4. At the Competition

At the competition all Judges must:

- 4.1 Arrive in ample time for their judging appointment – it is discourteous to keep the Society and competitors waiting.
- 4.2 Report to the society secretary to collect badge/rosette, together with any papers, instructions and special requirements.
- 4.3 Find out where their judging ring has been provided by the society.
- 4.4 Arrive at their ring in good time, meet with their scribe, and brief them on their duties etc.
- 4.5 Ensure that their course is laid out in accordance with Kennel Club Rules and Regulations S, if the society has laid the course out the judge must check they are happy with the layout. The Chief Steward will check the course before the walkthrough.
- 4.6 Be available during the walk through to answer any questions. Handlers are provided with a 30 minute period during which to walk the course (without dogs) and ask the judge any questions. This time may be reduced for smaller classes.
- 4.7 During the walkthrough (usually at the beginning) the Judge will give a briefing to competitors to make them aware of any matters of concern such as signs placed other than expected for space or safety reasons.

Judging the dogs

- 4.8 Apart from the competitors in the Level, only the judge, scribe and those authorised by the competition management are allowed in the ring while judging is in progress.
- 4.9 Judges should concentrate solely on the competitors they are judging and they should remain courteous to them throughout the day.
- 4.10 Judges must judge in accordance with Kennel Club Ltd Rules and Rally Regulations (S).
- 4.11 The eligibility of dogs entered in any Level is not the concern of the judge or scribe. Any queries should be referred to the Chief Rally Steward.

Chapter 4. At the Competition

4.12 Judges may dismiss from the Level, with the agreement of the Show Management, any dog if it is:

- A bitch which is in season
- Suffering from any infectious or contagious disease
- Interfering with the safety or chance of winning of an opponent
- Of such temperament or so much out of hand as to be a danger to the safety or well-being of any person or other animal
- Likely to suffer if it continues competing

The circumstances of such a removal shall be recorded in the competition Incident Book and submitted to the Kennel Club.

4.13 Judges are not permitted to make any oral commentary on the dogs.

Whilst officiating Judges should not:

4.14 Smoke at any time.

4.15 Consume or have available alcoholic drinks.

4.16 Use or activate a mobile telephone.

4.17 Consume food.

Chapter 5. After the Competition

Records

- 5.1 It is important for all judges that they keep records of all their judging experience. This is of particular relevance to those hoping, at some future date, to be invited to award Kennel Club Rally Championship Certificates.
- 5.2 It is worth noting that the Kennel Club produces an inexpensive Judges Record Book that can be obtained from the Kennel Club Publications Department.
- 5.3 If at any time this information is misplaced the appropriate show secretaries can be contacted to confirm judging experience.
- 5.4 Judges are responsible for their scribe sheets and should keep these in case of query for 12 months after the competition.

Chapter 6. Helping at Rally Competitions

Getting Involved

- 6.1 Every variety of dog competition needs helpers and, although their work is carried out voluntarily, Rally competitions simply could not take place without their assistance. There are no specific qualifications necessary to become a helper and, as such volunteering to help as a scribe or with the scoring is an ideal starting point for those people keen to become more involved in Rally competition management or the dog scene in general.
- 6.2 If you have not helped at a Rally Competition before and would like to try, most clubs are only too glad of an offer of help and will put you in touch with an experienced person to “learn the ropes”.
- 6.3 A good working knowledge of Kennel Club Rules and Regulations is most useful, but you do not need to be an “expert” in these matters by any means, as the interpretation of rules and regulations lies in the hands of the competition management and judge.
- 6.4 It should also be noted that before embarking on a judging career a person must have acted as a scribe for a complete standard Rally class on at least one occasion.



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