

GUIDE FOR NEW OBEDIENCE COMPETITORS

HOW TO ENTER OPEN AND CHAMPIONSHIP OBEDIENCE SHOWS

1) Dogs must be registered with the Kennel Club to be eligible to enter but they do not have to be pedigree dogs to do this.

2) These shows must be entered in advance. Information as to where and when they will be held may be found on/in:-

a) the Obedience UK web site - www.obedienceuk.com

b) Dog Training Weekly, e-mail dtwpress@aol.com

c) the Kennel Club web site - www.thekennelclub.org.uk

The ObedienceUK website is available to anyone but a small annual fee is payable to enable you to download Show schedules – they're virtually all on there.

Dog Training Weekly is a magazine devoted to Obedience and contains, amongst other obedience related things, advertisements for a lot of obedience shows.

The Kennel Club website contains much other useful information relating to our sport.

3) As with any sport it's a good idea to know the rules and these are published and updated annually by the Kennel Club in the form of a little booklet called "Obedience Regulations". They can be obtained direct from the Kennel Club for a small fee or they can be downloaded from the Kennel Club website.

4) Some other useful publications for you:

b) Why Not Try Obedience – an information sheet downloadable from the Kennel Club website

c) The Code Of Conduct for Obedience Competitors. This is also available to download from the Kennel Club site but hopefully it's something you won't need immediate access to.

5) Once you have found a show you wish to enter you will need a schedule and you can obtain this from the Show Secretary by sending them an s.a.e. – details of their address will be available in Dog Training Weekly or on the Kennel Club website – obedience diary information. Alternatively you will be able to download a copy from the ObedienceUK website – see the note above regarding a small annual payment.

6) Once you've received your schedule you'll find that it will include all the information you need regarding the show plus an entry form.

7) Some other useful information you'll need when making your entries for the Show:

a) You have to enter the lowest class you are eligible for and this is explained to you in the Schedule but you'll need to read the small print. It's all part of the Obedience Regulations. This will vary from show to show but will probably be either the Introductory Class, the Pre-Beginner Class or even the Beginner Class at some shows.

b) In addition to your lowest class you will be allowed to enter at least one other class with your dog. This will all be explained in the schedule and may vary slightly from show to show so you are advised to read it carefully and also to make a personal note of the

classes you enter.

c) Your entry must be sent in time for the closing date which will be clearly indicated on the front page of the schedule. If you would like confirmation that your entry has been received enclose a stamped addressed post card stating the name of the show on the back. The secretary will usually be happy to return this to you upon receipt of your entry.

d) A catalogue may be purchased when you enter and collected from the Secretary's tent/office when you arrive at the show. This contains all the show entries, owners and dogs names and the classes they have entered. If your class has been split into more than one part this will help you to determine which part to look for.

ARRIVAL AT THE SHOW

1) It's advisable to arrive at the venue at least an hour before judging starts. This will allow you plenty of time to sort yourself, your dogs and your vehicle. You must be weather-wise, making sure whatever the weather your dogs are left safely and protected from the heat of the sun.

2) Always park as directed by the car park stewards – theirs is a thankless but important task.

3) Establish where the dog exercise areas are so that your dog can have a quick toilet break and be comfortable whilst you sort yourself out.

4) Remember that your dog should be on a lead whilst at the venue, unless of course you are working in the ring or preparing to work. Obviously your dog should always be under control.

BOOKING IN

1) First of all you will need to find your rings and it may be best to leave your dog in your vehicle at this point. There may be a map near the secretary's tent/office showing the location of the various rings. There may be several parts to your class, each in a different ring and it is important that you get the right part. The name of the class, and the part, will be displayed at the ringside. Remember that each dog entered MUST be "booked in" at the ringside of every class entered.

2) Each ring will have:

a) A Scoresheet. The first 10 dogs numbers will be on it (those in the compulsory running order) plus the time for stays and Judge's lunch.

b) A Booking In sheet which will have all the competitor's dogs names on it. This may be quite small so look carefully. Find your dog's name and ring number on this sheet and place a tick by it (a pencil in your pocket will be useful). REMEMBER - you MUST book in within the first hour of the competition otherwise you won't be allowed to compete.

c) The Ring Number Cards. If this is your lowest class then the ring number for your dog will most probably be there and this number should be worn all the time you are competing. Alternatively you may have to collect your ring number from the Secretary's tent/office. If you have entered more than one dog, each dog will have a separate ring number. It's often useful to make a note on the ring number of the stay times and also the judge's lunch time.

If you have any trouble locating your ring number or your dog's name on the booking in sheet go to the Show Secretary who will be able to sort the problem out for you.

RUNNING ORDERS

All classes have a running order. All dogs entered in a class will be put in a draw and the

first ten dogs to work will be randomly drawn. This will only be the first 6 if the class has less than 25 entered. If your dog is drawn then you will usually be informed by post. However, if you have agreed to be notified either by e-mail or on the ObedienceUK website, then it will be your responsibility to make sure that you check for this. If you are drawn in the running order you should be aware that some of those drawn earlier than yourself may not be there on the day so you could actually be required in the ring earlier than you think.

COMPETING

- 1) If you do not have a running order then you may compete when you choose, within reason, bearing in mind that it's discourteous to keep judges waiting and also that others may be waiting at the ringside to compete.
- 2) If you can, try to establish who is in front of you so you can prepare for your turn. Sometimes there will be a scoreboard steward who will keep a list of those waiting to work.
- 3) Should you decide not to compete it is good manners to let the judge know so he/she will not be waiting for you at the end.
- 4) Regardless of how many points you lose always keep a check on the scoreboard during the day and make sure that if you are placed you are there for the prize giving.

STAYS

- 1) Find out early in the day where the stay ring is located because the stay exercises invariably take place in a different ring.
- 2) Always arrive at the stay ring at least 5 minutes before your stay time. If you are late you may not be able to take part.
- 3) Always check that you have the right class and part for your stays because if you do the wrong set of stays it means that you will not be allowed to do the correct set later.
- 4) Remember to leave any food or toys well away from the ring.

If at any time you need help or advice do not hesitate to ask the show organisers or your Judge.