



**MEETING OF THE OBEDIENCE LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD
ON THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 10.30AM IN THE
BOARDROOM, THE KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES STREET – AGENDA**

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ITEM 2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Following the resignation of Mr McCartney from the role of Vice Chairman, the Council is requested to elect a Vice-Chairman for the remaining term of office i.e. until 31 December 2021

ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 (copies previously distributed).

ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

a. The Council is invited to note that the Board, at its meeting on 8 October 2019, approved the following amendments to G Regulations:

Regulation G(C)4.e.(3)

TO:

Class B. In this class at normal and slow pace the only permissible turns are turns of 90° to the left or right, 180° about turns to the right or the left and diagonal turns to the right and left. Medium or large circles and arcs can be included. At fast-pace the only permissible turns are turns of 90° to the left or right, **diagonal turns to the right** and 180° about turns to the right. Medium or large circles and arcs can be included.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2020)

Regulation G(C)4.e.(4)(i)

TO:

Class C (i) Permitted turns

At normal and slow pace the permissible turns are 90° to the left or right, 180° about turns to the left or right, diagonal turns to the left or right, and circles or arcs. At fast pace, the only permissible turns are 90° to the left or right, **diagonal turns to the right and** 180° about turns to the right, and circles or arcs.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2020)

b. Training for commentators

At its previous meeting, the Council was advised that subsequent to its request, the Board had approved the principle of practical training for commentators but with the stipulation that such training should be available company-wide, as appropriate.

The scheduling of a Commentators Seminar (to encompass all disciplines) is currently on hold due to resourcing. A supporting business case will be submitted on behalf of the Obedience Liaison Council in due course. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.



c. Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar

At its July meeting, the Council had agreed that it would be a positive step to invite Dr J Boyd, chair of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group, to attend the Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar in October 2019 to raise awareness of the work of the Sub-Group. However Dr Boyd had been unable to attend and it is suggested by the office that if the Council wishes, she should be invited to attend the next seminar which would take place in autumn 2020.

d. Distance between dogs during stays

At its previous meeting, the Council discussed suggested amendments to the G Regulations, which would stipulate that a minimum distance of 1.5 metres should be left between dogs in the stay ring, with a recommended gap of 2 metres where possible. It did not support the suggestion, however it noted that Regulation G(C)4(h) stated that stays in all classes were group tests and all dogs must compete together, but 'where this is impracticable at an indoor show, the class may be equally divided but the judging for the groups must be consecutive.'

It was suggested that it would be helpful for this Regulation to be amended to provide for stays to be split at outdoor shows as well as indoor ones, as this would provide all show organisers with the opportunity to ensure that competitors had adequate space in the stay ring.

It is invited to consider the following proposal submitted by Mrs Le Fevre:

Regulation G(C)4.h. – Stays in ALL classes

TO:

The judge or steward will direct handlers to positions in the ring. The command 'last command' will be given and handlers should then instantly give their final command to their dogs. Any further commands or signals to the dogs after this 'last command' will be penalised. Handlers will then be instructed to leave their dogs and walk to positions indicated until ordered to return to them. These are group tests and all dogs must compete together, but where this is impracticable at an indoor any show, the class may be equally divided but the judging for the groups must be consecutive. **The stay ring shall be large enough to cater for the largest expected attendance for each class.**

ITEM 5. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

a. The Council is invited to note a written report from Mr Rutter on the work of the Activities Judges Sub-Group following its meeting on 14 November 2019. **(Annex A refers)**

b. Proposed amendments to Regulation - Mr R Kebble

G.31.c. Approval of Judges

The Council is invited to consider the following proposals for amendments to G Regulations, submitted by the Accredited Trainers for obedience, following their annual seminar on 22 October 2019:

Regulation G.31.c. Approval of Judges

TO:

c. At the time of judging a first Championship appointment the Judge must have ~~attended a Kennel Club Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination.~~ **completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar, and have attended a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar, and passed the assessment.**

d. Qualifications for judges at Premier and Open Shows and for the non-certificate classes at Championship Shows

On first appointment judges must satisfy the Show Committee that they:

(1) have judged a minimum of four appointments within at least two years at a lower level including Limited/Companion Obedience Shows and matches/club or fun competitions.

(2) have won out of Beginners at a Licensed Championship, Premier or Open Obedience Show as a handler, and have acted as a Caller, Scribe or Marker Steward on six occasions at Licensed Shows; and



(3) have ~~attended a Kennel Club Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination.~~ **completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar.**
(4) have ~~attended an Obedience Test Design and the Practice of Judging Seminar.~~ **a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar and passed the assessment.**

(Deletions struck through, insertions in bold)

Rationale

The proposal is made with the objective of using technology as a resource in the education of judges, which would make it more attractive to those thinking about taking up judging, by allowing them to take the Obedience Judges examination online. **(Annex B refers)**

ITEM 6. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

The Council is invited to note a written report from Mrs Patrick on the work of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group following its meeting on 19 September 2019. **(Annex C refers)**

ITEM 7. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB

The Council is requested to consider a report from Mrs Lavender regarding developments relating to the YKC. **(Annex D refers)**

ITEM 8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OBEDIENCE WORKING PARTY

The Council is requested to consider recommendations made by the Obedience Working Party, which was appointed at the Council's July meeting with the objective of discussing ways in which obedience may be promoted.

The Working Party was keen to encourage new competitors, with a wide range of breeds and crossbreeds, into obedience, and to retain existing competitors as they progressed through the classes. With this objective in mind, it wishes to recommend the following:

Introduction of height-classified classes, in which awards would be offered based on the height classification of competing dogs. Such classes would be judged in the usual way by one judge and the same test would apply to all competitors, however, four separate sets of awards would be offered split by small, medium, standard, and giant dogs.

- Height-classified classes (with wins counting towards progression) may be scheduled up to and including Open Class 'C'. The qualification for Championship Class 'C' remains unchanged.
- Scheduling such classes would be optional, and clubs not wishing to do so would be free to continue to schedule classes with a single set of awards, as currently.
- Alternatively, clubs may choose to schedule some height-classified classes, for example Introductory, Pre-Beginner and Beginner, whilst scheduling other classes with a single set of awards.
- The height categories would be as follows:
 - Small: For dogs measuring 35 cm or under at the withers.
 - Medium: For dogs measuring over 35 cm and 43 cm or under at the withers.
 - Standard: For dogs which have not been measured, or measuring over 43 cm and 60 cm or under at the withers.
 - Giant: For dogs measuring over 60 cm at the withers.

The Working Party was of the view that its proposal would provide an opportunity for dogs to compete against others of similar height, and to make the classes very inclusive and would therefore achieve the objective of promoting obedience to a wide range of potential competitors. However, it would offer full flexibility to clubs in making the decision whether or not to schedule height-classified classes.



Subject to approval by the Council of the above proposal, the office would formulate necessary amendments to Regulations, with a view to the introduction of height classified classes from 1 July 2021.

ITEM 9. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

a. Phoenix Obedience Dog Club - Mr R Wakelin

Proposed amendment to Regulation G29(f)3. \

Phoenix Obedience Dog Club wishes to propose the following amendment:

Regulation G29.f(3)

TO:

Where a draw for the complete running order of Classes other than Championship Class C is not made, Show Managements must conduct a ballot to determine a running order for at least the first ~~40~~ **6** competitors/ dogs in these classes: ~~this may be reduced to 6 at shows with less than 200 dogs entered or where there are less than 25 dogs entered in a specific class.~~

Sub paragraph (3) does not apply to Limited Shows.

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold.)

Rationale

Societies are finding it difficult to complete the draw especially at smaller open shows where classes may just be over the 25 per class/200 competitor threshold. This makes it a time consuming and sometimes difficult job that could be made slightly easier. Those societies which are fortunate to get larger entries could still draw 10 competitors / dogs per open class should they wish to do, as the above regulation states 'at least the first 6' so does not preclude them from drawing a higher number.

b. Proposed amendments to Regulation G(A)13 Capped Classes - Mr B Luckock

Mr Luckock, an individual, wishes to propose an amendment to the above Regulation, with the primary aim of alleviating the splitting of classes at Championship Obedience shows:

Regulation G(A)13. Capped Classes.

TO:

a. Organisers of **Championship and** Open Obedience shows may set a capping level on the entries to be accepted in any standard or special class, and may decline entries received after the capping level has been reached. **This shall not apply to Championship Class C.**

b. Wins and places in standard classes capped in accordance with this Regulation will count towards progression at **Championship or** Open shows and for Obedience Warrant points.

c. **Notwithstanding the requirements for Championship Class C, the** ~~The~~ capping level must be set at a minimum of 35 entries received. ~~There~~ **Other than for Championship Class C, there** is no maximum level at which a cap may be set. Capped classes may be split into two or more divisions in accordance with Regulation G29.b.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

Rationale

Ostensibly under the existing Regulation, Championship Class C is capped at 60 dogs that are allowed to work. There is no real advantage to excluding the capping of classes at Championship shows.

It is anticipated that allowing the capping of classes will assist show societies in potentially reducing the number of judges that may be required for the other classes which only hold the same status as at Open Obedience Shows.

At some smaller championship shows classes can be split for just two or three dogs, for example an entry of 63 must be split into two classes. This may not be viable for two main reasons:

- Trying to find sufficient judges and stewards when the shows are situated in areas distant from major conurbations (eg. Scotland, West Wales etc.)
- The cost per class: quite often it is not financially viable because costs for judges and stewards travelling for 'out of the way' shows are quite high.

In order to encourage newcomers, some classes with relatively low entries, such as Pre-Beginners or Beginners, may be run at a loss, and it may be financially problematic if other classes have to be split, and additional judges and stewards appointed.



c. Ms R Aitken Mr J McIntosh
Proposed amendment to Regulation G(A)8.b.

Ms Aitken wishes the Council to consider the following proposed amendment:

Regulation G(A)8.b Novice

TO:

The detailed tests will be:

- (1) Heel on lead ~~20~~ **25** points
- (2) Heel free ~~25~~ **20** points.

ITEM 10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Ms M Knapp Mrs F Godfrey
Out of sight stays

Ms Knapp, an individual, wishes the Council to consider the matter of out of sight stays, noting that there are strong feelings within the Obedience community regarding mental as well as (potentially) physical welfare aspects. There are also concerns that some individuals no longer compete in obedience because of stays. The majority accept that it is their decision as to whether to work this exercise or not, but would be much happier doing so if they could be confident about the safety aspect. Some dogs, due to lack of handler experience of a show environment, are not trained to a sufficient standard prior to competing.

Ms Knapp wishes to suggest that in order to remove out of sight stays, there should be a constructive progression through the classes. Beginner stays should be conducted on lead in order to build confidence. In all classes, handlers should be in the ring at all times in order to ensure they can be responsible for their dog's actions.

Ms Knapp's suggestion is that stay exercises should be as follows:

Introductory: Sit OR Down, handler's choice, on lead, as part of the ring work, i.e. individually.

Pre-Beginners: No stays Beginners: 30 seconds, sit OR down, at judges discretion, on a loose lead

Novice: 30 seconds sit, on a loose lead, 1 minute down, on a loose lead.

Class A: 30 second sit, 1 minute down, both off lead with handler 2 steps away, side on

Class B: 1 minute sit, 2 minute down, off lead, handlers in the middle of the ring, side on

Class C: 2 minute sit, 3 minute down, off lead, handlers in the middle of the ring, backs to dogs

Ms Knapp is of the view that most errors in stays occur within the first 30-40 seconds of the exercise and that there is no point in extended stay times, therefore this does not represent any 'dumbing down' of the exercise.

b. Mrs A Henry Mrs C Patrick
Styles of finish

Mrs Henry, an individual, wishes the Council to discuss the issue of finishes, noting that some judges are not marking the dog going through the competitor's legs whereas others are. In the interests of clarity and consistency, Mrs Henry wishes to suggest that G Regulations for all relevant exercises be amended to specify that the finish should be either a Continental finish or an English finish and not through the legs, which is a current practice among some competitors.

c. Mr J McIntosh
Limit to number of wins in Open Class 'C'

Mr McIntosh wishes the Council to consider a suggestion that after 4 wins in Open Class 'C', a dog or bitch may only enter Championship Class 'C' Dog/Bitch classes. This would put Open Class 'C' in line with all other classes Introduction to Open C, and would also allow more people to be able to qualify for Championship classes.



With numbers being increased in the Championship classes they could use a system of points for the first 10 places. First 10 points - 10th 1 point, if numbers exceed 60 those with points are automatically in. Those with no points are balloted for remaining places if numbers reach great proportion then those with one point are balloted for remaining places.

d. Ms R Aitken Mr J McIntosh
Capping on number of wins

Ms Aitken wishes to suggest that a cap be placed on the number of wins in each class, except Open Class 'C' and Championship Class 'C'. This would allow more competitors to progress through the classes, while handlers having reached the cap could compete in the class until such time as the relevant closing dates have passed, but may not accept a win. This would be selfregulating as handlers usually know how many wins others have achieved, or the booking-in form could be marked in some way.

e. Winchester City Dog Training Club and Mr D Moxon
Progression on points

The Council is requested to discuss the possibility for an option for progression on points. There is precedent for this in Agility where progression on wins is mandatory, but competitors may elect to progress on points. The recommendation is to utilise the Obedience Excellent points scheme, rather than adopt something new, for the number of points required to progress.

The scale of the points would be as follows:

1. 10 points for a first prize.
2. 4 points for second prize.
3. 2 points for a third prize.
4. 1 point for a fourth prize.

The required points to achieve an excellent qualification are as follows:

1. 10 points required for Introductory
2. 10 points required for Pre-Beginners.
3. 20 points required for Beginners.
4. 20 points required for Novice.
5. 30 points required for Class A.
6. 30 points required for Class B.

In summary, for Beginners and Novice competitors must have a first and three places (two seconds and at least a third) or five second places. For A and B that becomes a combination of two firsts and three places, one first and five places, or at least eight places. Five second places to replace two firsts or eight for three seems a reasonable amount of activity to allow progression.

The objective is to allow competitors to progress and compete at the higher levels allowing more variety, rather remaining indefinitely in Novice, albeit continually in the places.

The intention would be to leave Championship Class C progression such that an excellent achievement is not a qualification for this class. For information currently 40 points are required for an Obedience Excellence award in Class C.

Obedience Warrant - Handlers would need to be careful on progression from Novice without the wins as that would stop them gaining an Obedience Warrant. Currently two wins are required. Likewise, two wins are required at A and B. If the points system is introduced it would be the intention to recommend that for the Obedience Warrant, it only has to be one win from Novice. Dogs would still need to progress and taking a Novice win out of the equation (at the front end) is not going to change the end standard for the Obedience Warrant title.

f. Ms H Holley Mrs K Allen
Maximum number of dogs

Ms Holley, an individual, wishes the Council to discuss the maximum number of dogs which may be judged in one day.



G Regulations state that the maximum number of dogs a person can judge on one day is 60, however after speaking to a number of people Ms Holley is of the view that this number is too high and in Class B & C should be reduced to 50.

In C especially there are quite a few exercises and the recommendation is 8 dogs per hour. Taking into account stays and lunch, this could take up to 9 hours should all competitors turn up and no-one keeps the judge waiting.

Whilst appreciating that some shows struggle to find judges, Ms Holley considers that this may be due to the high numbers in classes. It may also be possible to combine dog and bitch classes in order to reduce the numbers of judges required.

g. Obedience Excellence award

At present 10 points are required to claim an Obedience Excellent award in Pre-Beginners.

Noting that with effect from 1 January 2020, Regulation G(A)6.a will state that to compete in Pre-Beginners a handler or dog must not have won two first places in either Pre-Beginners or Beginners nor gained a third place or above in any other Obedience class (Introductory Class excepted), the Council is requested to consider whether it is necessary to make an amendment to the number of points required to claim the Obedience Excellent award in Pre-Beginners.

The current requirement states that 10 points are required to make such a claim.

ITEM 11. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY

Representatives are invited to propose further items to the Council's Five Year Strategic Plan.
(Annex E refers)

ITEM 12. OBEDIENCE INFORMATION STAND

The Council is invited to discuss arrangements for the Obedience Information Stand at Crufts.

ITEM 13. CHIEF STEWARDS AT OBEDIENCE SHOWS

At its meeting on 11 September 2019, the Activities Committee highlighted the necessity for individuals appointed as Chief Stewards at obedience shows to be suitably experienced and qualified for the role, in compliance with the provisions of Regulation G(E)1.a.

The Council is requested to consider a suggestion from the Committee that a list be drawn up of individuals who were able to fulfil the role of Chief Steward.

ITEM 14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Please give at least two weeks advance notice of matters to be raised under 'Any Other Business' as this assists the office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Chairman.

ITEM 15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on 23 July 2020. Any items for the agenda must be submitted by 24 April 2020.



Notes

1. The Kennel Club will reimburse standard rail fares to all representatives attending the meeting, from their addresses as recorded at the Kennel Club. Claim forms will be available at the meeting.
2. Those resident in Northern Ireland or Scotland may apply in advance for authority to substitute shuttle air travel for standard rail fare, although it is requested that tickets are booked well in advance to take advantage of any reduction in fares.
3. Please give advance notice of matters to be raised under Any Other Business. This assists the Office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Council Chairman.
4. Kennel Club Liaison Council Regulations state that the Kennel Club will bear the cost of all reasonable and externally incurred costs connected with a Council, if agreed in advance. Therefore, representatives should apply to the Kennel Club for approval of any costs they may wish to claim prior to the expense being incurred.