



MEETING OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 10.00 AM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS - AGENDA

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 (copies previously distributed).

ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Proposed amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)3.m. See-Saw
The Board, at its meeting on 7 April 2020, approved the following amendment:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.m. See-Saw

TO:

This obstacle will consist of a plank firmly mounted on a central bracket. The length of the plank must be 3.66m. The width ~~should be 254mm~~ **must be 295mm minimum** and 305mm maximum. The height measured from the ground to the top of the plank at the central bracket ~~should be 610mm minimum and 685mm maximum~~ **must be 610mm. The maximum distance from the pivot point to the top of the plank should not be more than 100mm.** The last 914mm from each end should be a different colour to indicate the area with which the dog should make contact. The plank should have a non-slip surface with no slats. The See-Saw must start to tip and then touch the ground between 2–3 seconds after a weight of 1 kilogram has been placed in the middle of the down contact area.

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2021)

- b. Hartpury College and University

At the Council's previous meeting, it was agreed that Mr MacDonald would liaise with Dr Boyd to check what issues were currently being researched by Hartpury, with a view to suggestions being made as to other topics which may be suitable.

It is invited to note an update provided by Dr Wills, as follows:

No agility-specific research projects are currently under way. Due to the difficulties of carrying out practical data collection due to Covid-19 that where possible, students have been advised to use questionnaires or existing datasets, and as a result no new experimental agility projects were being undertaken.

- c. Eye testing

As suggested by the Council at its previous meeting, it is hoped that a facility for eye testing will be available at the International Agility Festival in August 2021 but is subject to confirmation.

- d. Measuring Panel

The Council is requested to consider a remit and rationale for a separate Measuring Panel, submitted by Mrs Gardner as agreed at its January meeting.

(Annex A refers – to follow)



e. Tolerances

At its January meeting, the Council agreed that a proposal should be submitted which would introduce set tolerances for the measurement of equipment. A proposal has been submitted by the Equipment Panel and is included on the agenda as item 5.a.

f. Ring sizes

At its previous meeting, the Council was generally in support of the principle of providing for a ring size for all venues (indoors or outdoors) to be of minimum length/width 20 metres x maximum width/length 40 metres, with the objective of providing show organisers with more flexibility. However it was of the view that a minimum length of 25m for one side of the ring be specified to ensure that rings were not unduly long and narrow.

It is invited to note that a proposal has been submitted by Mr Tait, which appears on the agenda under item 10.a.

ITEM 4. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

- a. The Council is invited to note a written report from Mr MacDonald following the Sub-Group's meeting on 14 September 2020.
(Annex B refers – to follow)
- b. As Mr MacDonald is no longer able to represent the Council on the Sub-Group, it is requested to nominate a new member to do so.

ITEM 5. REPORT FROM THE EQUIPMENT PANEL

a. Tolerances

As discussed at the Council's meeting in January 2020, the Panel wishes to add a tolerance to the obstacle measurements. Rather than add a new regulation, the Panel wishes to propose an amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)3. as follows:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.

TO:

3. Obstacles.—The following obstacles meet with the approval of the Board of the Kennel Club. Any changes to current obstacles (such as materials used, structure or style) or any other new obstacles must be submitted for approval by the Kennel Club before being made available for use at its licensed events. **All measurements under 1000mm may have a tolerance of plus or minus 5mm and measurements of over 1000mm may have a tolerance of plus or minus 10mm.**

(Insertion in bold)

Rationale

There are practical difficulties in manufacturing to precise sizes, and materials used may expand and contract in different weather conditions. Further, there are difficulties in making accurate measurements due to the environment in which agility competitions are held.

b. New long jump

The Panel has approved a new foam long jump submitted by Mr Martin Reid for use at Kennel Club shows.



ITEM 6. REPORT FROM THE AGILITY GOVERNANCE PANEL

The Council is requested to consider a report from the Agility Governance Panel and to discuss any issues arising.

(Annex C refers)

ITEM 7. REPORT FROM THE JUDGING PANEL AND OTHER JUDGING ISSUES

- a. The Council is requested to consider a report from the Judging Panel and to discuss any issues arising from it.
(Annex D refers – to follow)
- b. It is also invited to note a written report following the meeting of the Activities Judges Sub-Group which took place on 18 November 2020.
(Annex E refers – to follow)

ITEM 8. INTERNATIONAL AGILITY FESTIVAL

To note a written report on the arrangements for The Kennel Club International Agility Festival, due to be held on 12-15 August 2021.

(Annex F refers)

ITEM 9. AGILITY TEAM GB

The Council is invited to note a report on the activities of Agility Team GB.

(Annex G refers)

ITEM 10. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

- a. Mr M Tait
Proposed amendment to Regulation H(1)9.a.
Mr Tait wishes the Council to consider a proposed amendment to the following Regulation in respect of ring sizes:

Regulation H(1)9.a.

TO:

- a. Test area shall have a suitable surface and measure a minimum of ~~32m x 32m~~ **960 square metres** for outdoor venues **and 450 square metres for indoor venues.** ~~Indoor venues may be smaller but must be appropriate to the size of the test.~~ **One side of the arena for both indoor and outdoor rings must measure a minimum of 25 metres. A maximum of 1600 square metres shall apply to both outdoor and indoor venues. The ring area includes space for officials, including the judge, scime, and ring party, but where possible the ring tent should be outside the ring area.**

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold)

Rationale

The proposed amendment would allow greater flexibility for show organisers. For example, a minimum-sized indoor ring would be 25m x 18m but could be 30m x 15m. Both sizes, and any variations in between, would comply with the proposed Regulation. Similarly for outdoor rings, a



range of sizes would be acceptable. This would also ensure better value for money for competitors.

b. Ms E Wrench

Mr M Tait

Proposed amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)3.j.

Ms Wrench requests the Council to consider the following proposal to amend the Regulation relating to weaving poles:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.j.

TO:

Weaving Poles—The ~~minimum~~ number of poles should be ~~five~~ **either six or twelve** and the ~~maximum number 12~~. They should be in a continuous line, as straight as possible and should be 600mm apart (between the poles). The poles must be of rigid construction and with a minimum height of 762mm and a diameter between 32mm and 38mm. The base must have support bars at the bottom of each pole and they must be positioned away from the side a dog would normally negotiate each pole. **The maximum number of weaves a dog should be asked to complete on any course is 18.**

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold)

Rationale

The amendment is proposed with the objective of allowing competitors to have a better understanding as to what they can expect at competitions. No other obstacle has eight variations as to how it may be completed. It will also be beneficial to the welfare of the dogs by ensuring that they are not required to over-perform a repetitive task.

ITEM 11. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Mr R Worner

Retention of older handlers in the discipline

Mr Worner requests the Council to consider concerns that many handlers in higher age groups are no longer competing, and that the discipline is no longer as inclusive as was once the case. He is of the view that some handlers can no longer achieve the course times imposed by the length/time tables, and that there is a growing trend towards less technical courses. As a result such handlers are often unable to achieve the satisfaction even of a clear round, which may have discouraged some from competing.

Mr Worner wishes the Council to consider the following suggestions:

- That the current course time matrix be adhered to, but that judges are given more latitude to add time above whatever the table indicates. This will not alter the result of any event since the fastest clear dog and handler will always win. The only downside to this simplistic solution being that it could be seen to be dropping standards since placings could be gained with slower times.
- That dual times are set for each course, the lower time being set using the current time matrix, and being a 'Qualifying' time with results being eligible for progression and those between the lower and upper time being for Clear Rounds only.
- Instigation of a Veteran Handlers element within each of the grades and heights within the current grading system. This would remove the need to run extra events for such a grade.

Mr Worner's full letter is provided.

(Annex H refers)



b. Mr N Ellis
Long Jump

Mr M Cavill

The current regulation for the long jump is one of the only regulations for a piece of equipment that now has a range of units and dimensions that often leads to mistakes and inconsistent use of the obstacle by judges. There is no consistent method of applying the regulations of the obstacle to each height, with the possibility of a different number of units being used, with varying heights of units for the same height of dog. Within the current regulations this is seen across all heights but is more problematic within large and intermediate height whereby a larger length can be set with only a minimal (3) number of units which visually can have an impact on how the dog approaches and takes on the obstacle and could lead to potential injury.

The discussion seeks to clarify two elements specifically relating to the long jump:

1. Number of units per height and;
2. Maximum length of obstacle for each height.

The aim is to provide a more consistent approach to the use of the obstacle for agility judges with simplified and up to date guidance that better represent *what* the obstacle is aiming to test.

With other pieces of agility equipment, particularly the rising spread jump, there is a progression in height and length as the height of the dog increases. With this in mind and for the simplicity of application, it would be sensible for the long jump to reflect this progressive nature of height and length. With the introduction of the intermediate height from January 2020, this also provides an opportunity to apply rules that reflect the number of long jump units we have with no change to the equipment specifications. Below, the number of units per heights are proposed;

Small dogs – 2 units (Units 1 & 2) - length 400-500mm
Medium Dogs – 3 units (Units 1, 2 & 3) - length 700-900mm
Intermediate Dogs – 4 Units (Units 1, 2, 3 & 4) - length 1.0-1.3m
Large Dogs – 5 Units (Units 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5) - length 1.2-1.5m

The maximum height of each unit remains as the current regulation but also clarifies the height of the second unit which currently is unstated

Unit 1 -127mm
Unit 2 - 153mm
Unit 3 - 229mm
Unit 4 - 305mm
Unit 5 - 381mm

All other dimensions for the minimum length of each unit remain at 1.219m and the marker poles are minimum height of 1.2m.

ITEM 12. REVIEW TIMETABLE

The Council is invited to note the current review timetable which provides a three-year rolling programme of reviews and proposal timeframes from each of the Panels.

(Annex I refers)



ITEM 13. 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 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council's next meeting will take place on 8 July 2021. Any items for the agenda must be submitted by 9 April 2021.

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.

THE KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

'The Kennel Club is the national body which exists to promote the general improvement, health and well-being of all dogs through responsible breeding and ownership' *This is to be achieved through:-*

- Promoting The Kennel Club as the leading national organisation for referral and advice regarding all canine related matters.
- Encouraging the responsible breeding of pedigree dogs.
- Encourage the responsible ownership of dogs.
- Facilitating the breeding of healthy dogs
- Promoting the positive benefits of dogs in society.
- Promoting and regulating canine activities and competitions.
- Providing opportunities for education and training through Kennel Club led initiatives.
- Investing in canine health and welfare.
- Engaging with the wider dog owning audience/fraternity.