



CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR
JUDGES



THE KENNEL CLUB

To all Judges

As part of its commitment to improving quality and standards across the board in all dog activities, the Kennel Club has now developed the enclosed Code of Best Practice for Judges. This covers all aspects of the role, behaviour and standing of Judges at all levels.

Much of the Code sets out what everyone would expect to find and I am sure that most of you will already be practising the principles contained within the document. So there should be no surprises. The Code does however bring together many issues which experienced exhibitors and competitors have said they would like to see demonstrated by all Judges. It should act as a reminder to those already judging, and as a guide to those new to the role - as to what is generally expected of them.

The emphasis is to improve judging generally and to provide an increased confidence by participants in the world of dogs. From the Kennel Club's point of view, complacency and resting on laurels are not viable options and I am sure that all of us who take our hobby seriously are dedicated to improving our performance and achieving the best we can.

The desired end for all of this, is that exhibitors and competitors should have renewed and strengthened trust and confidence in you, the Judges. This hopefully will mean that they will continue to enjoy entering shows, trials and other events. We hope that it may also help to ensure that newcomers too will be further attracted to one or other of the many varied activities the Kennel Club and its Clubs and Societies have to offer. The ultimate aim of course, is the continued development and improvement of all of our respective breeds and activities.

In our turn, we at the Kennel Club, remain open to receive your comments, views and feedback. We are after all, in this world of dogs together!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronnie', with a long, horizontal flourish underneath.

Ronnie Irving
Chairman
January 2004

Introduction

The overall and stated object 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, from Companion Dog Show to Championship Show/Trial, is to provide value for the time, training, effort and money, which the exhibitor/competitor puts into presenting their dog. Moreover, the decisions of Championship Judges in particular will ultimately affect the future development of a particular breed and/or respective discipline concerned.

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

1. Integrity

- 1.1 Judges should act honestly and impartially when undertaking an appointment.
- 1.2 A dog should be placed only on merit according to the Breed Standard or Competition Regulations. Judges should be prepared to provide a critique on placings (Field Trial Judges excepted).
- 1.3 Judges should conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the standing of a Judge at all times whilst at a show/trial and in any other capacity which might have a bearing on the interests of the canine world.
- 1.4 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;
 - 1.4.1 Criminal Convictions
 - 1.4.2 Threatening Behaviour
 - 1.4.3 Misrepresenting or abusing authority
 - 1.4.4 Not Judging in accordance with Kennel Club Rules and Regulations
 - 1.4.5 Not judging according to Breed Standards
 - 1.4.6 Harsh Handling
 - 1.4.7 Breach of Kennel Club Rules and Regulations
 - 1.4.8 Using the name of the Kennel Club in an unauthorised manner.

2. Age

- 2.1. No new judging appointments to award Challenge Certificates to a breed for the first time, Groups or BIS or an Obedience Certificate, Agility Certificate, Working Trials Certificate, Bloodhound Certificate or appointment to a Field Trial Panel for the first time will be considered once a Judge has attained the age of 75 years (at the time of fulfilling the appointment).

3. Health Guidelines

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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 fulfil the judging appointment.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 Judges must be capable of meeting the physical requirements of fulfilling the judging appointment.
- 3.5 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 may need to consider if he or she is capable of fulfilling a judging appointment in an adequate and satisfactory manner.
- 3.6 The Show/Trial Organisers shall try to find out that invited judges are able to fulfil their appointments.
- 3.7 As far as reasonably possible the Show/Trial Organisers are responsible for ensuring that the aims of the dog show/trial are fulfilled and that the exhibitors/competitors receive the quality of judging that they deserve.
- 3.8 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 Show/Trial Organiser and Judge.

4. During Judging

Judges should observe the following formalities when judging:

- 4.1 Treat and handle all competing dogs in a confident, careful and consistent manner. Judges must not harshly handle, maltreat, or penalise unfairly any dog.
- 4.2 Conduct themselves in a courteous manner to all and concentrate fully on the dogs. It is inadvisable for judges to call any exhibitor/competitor by their name, initiate or engage in a conversation initiated by an exhibitor/competitor whilst judging is in progress.
- 4.3 Dress in a conventional and acceptable fashion precluding them from being the centre of attention, or from causing any distress to the dog being exhibited or its owner:
- 4.4 Try to avoid sunglasses or light reflective/reactive glasses when judging breeds at conformation shows as this could inhibit the ability to determine shades and colours of a dog's coat, eyes etc.
- 4.5 Judges should not smoke, consume alcoholic drinks or use or activate a mobile phone whilst in the Ring or when judging.

5. General

The following are general requirements for Judges;

- 5.1 Absolute integrity in order to judge honestly and impartially, and to place dogs solely on their merit.
- 5.2 A suitable temperament and sufficient stamina to cope with what can be a physically and mentally demanding task.
- 5.3 To judge in a customary fashion acceptable to the exhibitor/competitor and the breed of dog.

6. Conformation Shows

Judges should have;

- 6.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the breed to be judged and its Kennel Club Breed Standard.
- 6.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation F paragraph 8.
- 6.3 The following minimum criteria before being considered to award Challenge Certificates for the first time.

Breed Specialist

- 6.3.1 Minimum of 7 years judging experience in the breed as well as having attended the following mandatory seminars:
 - 6.3.2 To have attended a seminar given by a Kennel Club Accredited Trainer and passed the relevant examination on Kennel Club Regulations and Judging Procedures.
 - 6.3.3 To have attended a seminar given by a Kennel Club Accredited Trainer on Conformation and Movement.
 - 6.3.4 To have attended at least one breed specific judging seminar run in accordance with the relevant Kennel Club Code of Best Practice and passed an examination and/or assessment where applicable.
 - 6.3.5 To have bred and/or owned a minimum of 3 dogs when they obtained their 1st entry in the Kennel Club Stud Book (save in exceptional circumstances).
 - 6.3.6 To have stewarded at 12 shows.

Non Breed Specialist

- 6.3.7 Minimum of 7 years judging experience in any one breed (to include 5 years in the relevant breed).
- 6.3.8 To have awarded Challenge Certificates to at least one other breed.
- 6.4 Eligibility to judge at Open Shows, Regulation F(1) paragraph 21 refers.

7. Obedience Shows

Judges should have;

- 7.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the sport to be judged and its regulations.
- 7.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation G paragraph 32(a).
- 7.3 The following qualifications to judge at Open Shows, non-certificate classes at Championship Shows and for Championship Class C, Regulation G paragraph 31 refers.

8. Agility and Flyball Competitions

Judges should have;

- 8.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the sport to be judged and its regulations.
- 8.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation H paragraph 18(c).
- 8.3 The following qualifications to judge a Championship Agility Class, Regulation H paragraph 17 refers.

9. Working Trials

Judges should have;

- 9.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the sport to be judged and its regulations.
- 9.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation I paragraph 23
- 9.3 The following qualifications to judge at Championship and Open Working Trials, Regulation I paragraph 22 refers.

10. Bloodhound Trials

Judges should have;

- 10.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the sport to be judged and its regulations.
- 10.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation I (Annex D) paragraph 8.
- 10.3 The following qualifications to judge at Bloodhound Trials, Regulation I (Annex D) paragraph 7 refers.

11. Field Trials and Gundog Working Tests

Judges should have;

- 11.1 A comprehensive knowledge of the sport to be judged and its regulations.
- 11.2 An understanding of Kennel Club Regulation J (Annex B) paragraph 2(d).
- 11.3 The following qualifications for persons to be added to the Panels, Regulation J paragraph 5b refers.

12. Summary

- 12.1 Judges should have a comprehensive knowledge of the breed(s) to be judged and also the relevant Kennel Club Breed Standard. It is the responsibility of the Judges to keep abreast and up to date with developments in such matters.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 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 Breed, the competition and judging.
- 12.4 Judges should give value to the exhibitor/competitor and ultimately the Breed/Sport in question. Judges should act at all times with honesty and integrity and impartiality.

End

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