

# **Dog Talk**

## **AKC Novice Obedience Articles**

by John Cox

### **NOVICE ARTICLES:**

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# Novice A Judge's Briefing

On June 1, 2005, the American Kennel Club added a new obedience regulation.

## Chapter 2, Section 1:

*"In the Novice A class, a 15-minute walk-through **prior to the start of the class**, will be allowed for handlers without their dogs. The judge must be available in the ring during this period to brief the handlers and answer any questions they might have."*

Every time you show in Novice A, you can expect a 15-minute walk-through.

**Remember to check your Judging Program so you know when the Novice A class starts so you won't miss the walk-through and the opportunity to ask the judge questions about scoring or procedures.**

## Today's Tidbits of Information

- 1) I have my heeling pattern posted outside the ring as a visual reference. You may walk the pattern in the ring during the briefing period. I will also have the steward walk the pattern right before the starting of the class. If you do walk the pattern, please be aware not to disturb the dogs and handlers in the adjacent rings.
- 2) I am assuming you have read the **AKC Obedience Regulations** that pertain to the Novice A class since you signed the entry form saying you have done so.
- 3) If there is a question you have, or an area you would like clarified, now is the time to ask. I am here to help make this a positive experience for you and your dog. I still show dogs too and, yes, I get anxious when showing in the ring. With that said, there are a few things I would like you to keep foremost in your mind today:
  - a. **In the world order of things, this is JUST a dog show** and there are more to come in the weeks ahead. Thank goodness, as it takes 3 qualifying scores for a CD title.
  - b. **Learn from today**, and if things need a little tweaking that is okay. Don't overlook the parts that were up to, or exceeded, your expectations. Remember, most of the dogs in the world can't even come close to what you are accomplishing with your dog today. Feel good about that, take your dog out to dinner and celebrate!
  - c. **Today is a day of memories in the making** so enjoy today's outing with your dog! With those thoughts in mind, plus good sportsmanship, you are entering into the wonderful sport of Obedience. Momentarily, you may feel it is like entering the Twilight Zone but that will pass!
- 4) After the class is over and the awards are presented, I encourage you to come back and discuss your performance. IF by chance you lost points from a perfect 200 score, it might benefit your future performances knowing where the points came off today. NEVER assume it is always the dog that lost the points. Obedience is a TEAM sport and you know who the other half of the team is!

*Good Luck at today's show and the ones that will follow!*

Judge: John Cox

## Take A Good Look At The Heeling Exercise Who Is Losing The Most Points?

by John Cox

Few would argue that heeling is the most difficult exercise in which to earn a perfect score. It is also a very "busy" exercise to judge and after a performance is over there are those handlers who want to know where their DOG may have lost points. Also, there will be times when spectators are watching a run-off and can't figure out why a Judge made the decision in favor of the dog that appeared to make MORE heeling errors.

When observing the heeling exercise there is a LOT more to concentrate on than just the Heel Position of the dog. In fact, there are many functions that take place during a heeling pattern; **when penalties occur, don't always point the finger to the DOG.** If the dog is not at fault, then who do we point to for the less than perfect score? No, the Judge is not the correct answer this time!

Let's first look at the Obedience Regulations as to the principal part of heeling to better understand the performance and scoring. Chapter 3 Section 5 reads:

"The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team."

Well, lookie there - this is a TEAM effort and BOTH the dog and handler are to be evaluated. Most of us know the five errors by the dog in heeling (forge, lag, crowd, wide, not straight in line with the direction of the handler). This article will concentrate on the handler during the heeling exercise and where THEY can error and lose some or all the points for the team.

So, what is a perfect handler? The Regulations mention under Purpose that all participants should be guided by the principles of good sportsmanship both in and outside the ring. Also, their performances in the ring must be accurate and correct and must conform to the requirements of the Regulations. Chapter 2, Section 2 (Standard of Perfection) states the Judge must carry a mental picture of the theoretically perfect performance in each exercise and score each dog and handler against this visualized standard. The HANDLER is to show NATURALNESS, GENTLENESS, and SMOOTHNESS in handling. The DOG is to show the utmost in willingness and enjoyment and precision in performing. Don't confuse the duties between the dog and handler.

The items listed below are some of the more common errors a HANDLER can make during the heeling exercise. The error might be ever so slight or it can be a major point buster for the team.

1. Position of hands
2. Loud commands, audible signals and preemptory commands
3. Starting the heeling pattern
4. Lack of briskness during heeling
5. Lack of briskness during the Figure Eight
6. Wide and narrow turns on the Figure Eight
7. Delay of, or anticipating, the Judge's order
8. Military turns, Wide turns
9. Hesitating on About turns
10. Not noticeably accelerating speed on the Fast
11. Not noticeably decelerating speed on the Slow
12. Additional commands or signals, touching the dog
13. Motions of the body that aid the dog
14. Carrying or offering food
15. Roughness in handling, military precision

I will go into a little more detail on each item listed above. The best way to avoid a penalty is to beware of actions that lead to that penalty.

## **1. POSITION OF THE HANDS DURING HEELING**

CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5: The leash may be held in either hand or in both hands, provided the hands are in a natural position. However, any tightening or jerking of the leash or any act, signal or command which in the Judge's opinion gives the dog assistance shall be penalized." Natural is defined in the Regulations Glossary of Terms as not artificial; free of affectation, and customarily expected in the home or public places."

CHAPTER 2, SECTION 19: "In all exercises in which the dog is required to 'heel free' one of the options below shall be followed: (1) the handler's arms and hands shall move naturally at the handler's side while in motion, and shall hang naturally at the handler's sides while not in motion; (2) the right hand and arm must move naturally, while the left hand shall be held against, and centered in the front of the body, in the area of the waist. The left forearm shall be carried, as much as possible, against the body. In either of the above situations the hands and arms may be adjusted during the Fast portion of an exercise, in order to maintain balance. There shall be a substantial deduction if the hands and arms are not carried in one of the positions stated above." A substantial is worth 3 or MORE points. The hands and arms are NOT required to SWING like a speed walker in a race, but they must MOVE NATURALLY at the side or sides while the handler is in motion. Remember the definition of natural as stated in the Glossary.

## **2. LOUD COMMANDS, AUDIBLE SIGNALS AND PEREMPTORY COMMANDS**

Loud commands, which in the Judge's opinion are excessively loud, will be SUBSTANTIALLY penalized. It might be wise to teach signals so if the noise level at the show is a bit intense you will have an option. You never know when a loud speaker might come on or a plane will fly over. If you choose to use a signal it MUST be inaudible and you CANNOT touch the dog while giving the signal. Any unusual noise or motion may be considered to be a signal. Give some thought to your clothing and jewelry to make sure they will remain quiet during the performance. While on the subject of signals keep the following in mind:

- A. Signaling a correction to a dog is forbidden and must be penalized.
- B. A signal MUST be a single gesture with one arm and hand only, and the arm must IMMEDIATELY be returned to a NATURAL position.

Peremptory commands are defined as expressing a command or dictatorial. Drill sergeants are best known for using this type of command. Keep in mind, during the "early" years of obedience there were quite a few ex-servicemen showing "retired war dogs" and this type of military-like command was not the impression the AKC wanted to leave with the public.

## **3. STARTING THE HEELING PATTERN**

Here is an interesting example where the handler makes the error and the dog is perceived as the one at fault. Picture the handler who gives the command or signal to heel AS the HANDLER steps out. By the time the dog has had a chance to respond promptly, the handler is the one who moved out of heel position. The error that actually occurred was the HANDLER lacked smoothness. Smoother handling would have been to give the command or signal and pause that split second giving the dog a chance to respond. Then BOTH dog and handler step out in perfect heel position. "Split second pause" are the key words. A pause too long could also be scored as an aid to the dog, which is another handler error. It takes practice to perfect the correct timing. This is a TEAM effort and BOTH members need to work TOGETHER.

## **4. LACK OF BRISKNESS DURING HEELING**

Chapter 3, Sections 5 and 6 describe the requirements and penalties associated with heeling. Regardless of the obedience class, the description of heeling will always refer back to these sections. So let's look at just the part on briskness as it relates to the handler. Section 5 states the handler shall walk BRISKLY and in a NATURAL MANNER with his dog on a loose leash. The Glossary of Terms defines brisk/briskly as keenly alive, alert, energetic. The sharp Judge will be observing the HANDLER, along with the dog, from the first order of "Forward" to the last order, "Exercise Finished." As the handler moves about the ring the Judge will be watching to see if the handler maintains brisk heeling throughout the pattern. Remember, the Judge will match the performance of the handler with their theoretically perfect performance. As the handler is moving briskly they also must move in a NATURAL MANNER (defined in the Glossary), demonstrating smoothness and gentleness.

If the HANDLER fails to comply, Section 6 sets the course of action a Judge must take. If the HANDLER CONSTANTLY CONTROLS the performance by tugging on the leash or ADAPTS PACE TO THAT OF THE DOG, the dog MUST be scored NQ. Obviously, the dog is not under control and the handler is supplying aid. Also, substantial or minor deductions shall be made for failure to walk at a BRISK pace, occasional guidance with the leash or other imperfections.

If a handler is disabled, the Judge may modify the specific requirements for the handler to the extent necessary to permit physically challenged handlers to compete. According to Chapter 2, Section 14, "Dogs handled by such handlers shall be required to perform all parts of all exercises as described in these Regulations, and shall be penalized for failure to perform any part of an exercise."

#### **5. LACK OF BRISKNESS DURING THE FIGURE EIGHT**

The Figure Eight exercise reveals a great deal in regards to the TEAMWORK of a team. This section will address the handler moving at a brisk pace. The handler must also beware of the way they make the turns in the Figure Eight, and motions of their body that might be perceived as aiding the dog. I will cover these items later.

The handler must walk BRISKLY throughout the Figure Eight while exhibiting smoothness, naturalness and gentleness. Briskly (keenly alive, alert, energetic) does not mean the handler must speed walk or race around the posts. One will want to practice a pace that is smooth and natural while meeting the criteria of brisk. The brisk pace on the Figure Eight may differ from the brisk pace in the heeling pattern. The pace of the Figure Eight does not need to be the SAME SPEED as in the heeling pattern, but it still must be brisk. This brisk pace must be MAINTAINED throughout all parts of the Figure Eight. As the handler is moving at CONSTANT brisk pace, the DOG is the team member that does the work to maintain Heel Position. It is up to the DOG to accelerate on the outside turn and decelerate on the inside turn. If the HANDLER starts to adapt pace to that of the dog, the handler will be the one losing points. If the handler fails to move at a brisk pace the Judge will have to penalize as outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2 and Chapter 3, Section 6.

#### **6. WIDE AND NARROW TURNS ON THE FIGURE EIGHT**

The HANDLER must heel a "fine line" in order to perform THEIR PART of the perfect Figure Eight. The Regulations state the handler will start from a position about equidistant from the two Stewards and facing the Judge. They may choose to go in either direction and shall walk briskly twice completely around and between the two Stewards. The way in which a handler travels around the Figure Eight may be subject to a penalty. Let us see how this can occur.

First, the two Stewards are to stand eight feet apart for ALL breeds of dogs. (It is the Judge's responsibility to make sure the Stewards conform to this requirement.) The handler and dog start equidistant from the two Stewards and go around each Steward making the pattern of an eight. The handler who goes wide on the inside turn is defeating the purpose of the Figure Eight and is subject to a penalty. One reason a handler may go wide is because of the dog crowding, and the handler is moving out of its way. Two errors have occurred - the dog crowded and the handler went wide to aid the dog. The handler would have been better off maintaining the proper figure of eight and live with the crowding penalties applied to the dog.

At the other end of the Figure Eight the opposite can occur. A handler may cut close to a Steward to make a sharper turn thus giving aid to the dog. The aid the dog receives is that less ground is traveled, hence there is less of a chance for lagging or crowding. Also, a handler may go wide at the outside turn to "cover" the dog going wide.

The Figure Eight is a VERY difficult exercise for both the dog and handler to perform perfectly. It can be done, but it takes a TEAM effort to conform to the requirements of the Regulations and be accurate and correct.

## **7. DELAY OF, OR ANTICIPATING, THE JUDGE'S ORDER**

Chapter 2, Sections 20 and 24 point out the handler must be penalized for delay in following, or anticipating, a Judge's order. The exception would be if a delay is directed by the Judge because of some distraction or interference.

First, a Judge must be alert to their timing of an order so the handler will have time to respond and maintain a smooth performance. When the Judge gives an order there is a reasonable amount of time given for the handler's response. Putting this time element into words is a little difficult. Many Judges allow the handler a couple of steps. The experienced Judge will not bother "counting steps" but instinctively knows when too much time has elapsed. If in the Judge's opinion the handler is delaying the order a penalty is then assessed.

In many cases, a handler will delay or anticipate a Judge's order because the dog is not turning in a perfect performance. For example, on the Fast, handlers have been known to stop the Fast pace ON THEIR OWN before the "Normal" order is given. In this scenario the dog is usually lagging. There will also be times when a handler will anticipate a turn before the Judge gives the order to turn, and other times the handler may delay a Judge's order to turn. As the Judge is observing these situations it becomes obvious that the handler is aiding the teammate's errors of lagging or forging, or they are just not paying attention. Once again, the handler would be better off to live with the dog's error and not add to the points coming off by making handler errors.

## **8. MILITARY TURNS, WIDE TURNS**

A simple ninety-degree turn, or About turn, in a heeling pattern is not really all that simple or easy. When making a turn the handler has to concentrate on the following:

- A. Be prompt in response to the Judge's order
- B. Be smooth and natural in turning
- C. Avoid military turns
- D. Avoid wide turns
- E. Avoid motions of the body that aid the dog
- F. Avoid roughness in handling

Items A-B have been discussed earlier so let's focus on items C-D and see where the handler may error. Items E-F will be covered later.

C. Military turns are a "sharp" ninety-degree turn, peppered with body English. We have all seen this type of turn watching marching college bands or military troops in formation. This style of turn in the obedience ring is to be penalized per Chapter 2, Section 2 and the Purpose.

D. If a military turn is one extreme then a wide turn is at the other end of the scale. So, why do handlers sometimes widen their turns? Picture the dog which is forging or crowding as the handler is going into a turn. The handler then makes a wider turn to aid the dog; or, the dog is doing such an extreme case of forging or crowding the handler can't do anything else! Of course, both team members are making errors and both are penalized. It takes work to develop a smooth, natural Right or Left turn that is neither too sharp nor too wide.

## **9. HESITATION ON ABOUT TURNS**

The About turn is another fairly common area for a handler to lose points in the handling. Let us look at what is involved in making an About turn. As the handler is walking in a straight line they turn in place and walk in the opposite direction. Immediately after making the turn the handler must step out of the turn without hesitation. He who hesitates will subject himself to a penalty. Hesitation or "marking time" after the turn aids the dog. Let's face it, a handler who is slow in making the turn or stepping out of the turn is giving the dog a chance to catch up or maintain Heel Position. It is up to the DOG to accelerate while on the outside of the turn in order to maintain Heel Position.

Also keep in mind, a "U" turn is not an About turn! In fact, a "U" turn is the widening of an About turn and is subject to a penalty as discussed above. Finally, when making About turns in the obedience ring the handler MUST do a RIGHT About turn. Left About turns will cost the handler points (Chapter 3, Section 5).

If one is not thinking through their handling performance a multitude of errors can add up. Stop and think of all the turns in a heeling pattern.

#### **10. NOT NOTICEABLY ACCELERATING SPEED ON THE FAST**

Next time at an obedience trial sit outside the ring and just watch the handlers doing a Fast. It will become apparent that there is a wide variety in the actions of JUST the HANDLERS. This "leg" of the heeling pattern is a tough one to get perfect. The handler's performance during the Fast should have the following characteristics:

- A. Prompt response to the Judge's orders "Fast" and "Normal"
- B. Smooth and natural in RUNNING
- C. Handler RUNNING at a noticeably accelerated speed forward
- D. Avoiding motions of the body that aid the dog
- E. Avoiding roughness in handling

Item C is the one we will look at in detail. (Items A-B have been covered. Items D-E will be covered later.) According to Chapter 3, Section 5, **"Fast" signifies that the handler must run, handler and dog moving forward at noticeably accelerated speed.** Section 6 calls for a SUBSTANTIAL deduction for failure of dog or HANDLER to noticeably accelerate speed forward during the Fast. Remember, a substantial is THREE or MORE points, per the Glossary of Terms. There are several reasons why a handler fails to perform a correct and accurate Fast:

- A. The handler may be disabled and cannot do a correct Fast
- B. The handler does not have a clue as to what RUNNING on the Fast involves to meet the criteria in the Regulations
- C. The handler is aiding the dog

Whatever the reason, the Judge MUST penalize the handler as mentioned in Chapter 2, Sections 2, 14, 20, 21, 24, and Chapter 3, Section 6 to mention a few!

#### **11. NOT NOTICEABLY DECELERATING SPEED ON THE SLOW**

A handler performing a Slow will need to keep the same items in mind as mentioned for the Fast. Of course, the only difference is the handler is moving at a Slow pace. The penalties for a poor Slow are the same as for a poor Fast and the Chapters and Sections above will apply.

When a handler goes into a Slow they must NOTICEABLY DECELERATE speed and MAINTAIN that decelerated speed. **As the order comes for "Normal" the handler then must ACCELERATE back to a BRISK pace.** Common areas for errors are handlers who don't NOTICEABLY slow and then fail to change pace after the "Normal" order. This handler then continues on to the next turn in their less-than-brisk pace.

#### **12. ADDITIONAL COMMANDS OR SIGNALS, TOUCHING THE DOG**

If a handler were to give an additional command or signal, a substantial penalty will be applied to the score. There may be times when a handler will want to give an extra command or signal and lose points as a result. For example, if the DOG "quits" heeling the handler then gives an extra command or signal; this action might bring the dog's attention back into focus. Three or more points will be deducted but the exercise may be "saved" as the end result. The handler should keep this in mind and know where and when to apply the extra command or signal if needed. Be cautioned that if more than one extra command or signal is given the Judge will start to question if the dog and handler are working as a team. The Judge could also perceive that the handler is TRAINING the dog and EXCUSE the team. The PRINCIPAL part of the heeling exercise is teamwork!

Additional signals may sneak up on the handler so beware of:

- A. Any unusual noise or motion may be considered a signal
- B. Position of arms and hands and movements of the body that aid the dog shall be considered additional signals
- C. A signal must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only and the arm and hand must IMMEDIATELY be returned to a NATURAL position

A handler MUST NOT touch the dog when giving a signal or at any other time during heeling. According to Chapter 2, Section 20, "Moving forward at the heel without any command or signal other than the natural forward movement of the handler's body shall not be considered as anticipation." A handler could move about the heeling pattern without giving ANY signal or command to the dog. Better make sure the dog understands this before it is tried!

### **13. MOTIONS OF THE BODY THAT AID THE DOG**

Chapter 2, Section 20 of the Obedience Regulations states that any unusual noise or motion may be considered to be a signal, plus any movements of the body that aid the dog shall be considered additional signals. Handlers need to keep this regulation in mind during ANY exercise, but let's look at just the motions of the body that aid the dog during the heeling. A few typical areas where errors in handling occur are during the:

- A. Straight line heeling: Adapting pace to the dog is an aid to the dog. Other motions such as turning back to look at the dog, or maintaining constant eye contact, may be perceived by some Judges as an aid. Other Judges may not consider this natural.
- B. Turns: A handler who goes into a turn and makes quick upper torso movements or excessive head movements, to cue the dog, is considered as giving aid to the dog. Hesitating while going into or out of a turn aids the dog. This action shows up most on About turns.
- C. Fast or Slow: Handlers who use excessive up and down motions of the feet and legs, do not accelerate or decelerate, look back towards the dog, and use excessive torso movements forward and backwards are motions subject to a penalty.
- D. Figure Eight: Straight line heeling errors can also be spotted on the Figure Eight. Hesitating on the turns and excessive shoulder motions while turning are common errors in this portion of the heeling.
- E. Halts: Handlers stepping towards (into) the dog while coming to a halt, or the handler who stares at the dog that is not sitting, could be perceived as giving aid to the dog.
- F. Chewing: Motions of the handler's mouth, such as chewing, may be scored as an aid, or the handler may be excused for carrying food in the ring. The smart thing is not to chew gum or have anything in your mouth while in the ring, thus avoiding a chance for such an error.

The Judge is the one who is doing the perceiving, or determining what is excessive and what constitutes aiding the dog. He/she is looking for smoothness, naturalness and gentleness and these images are based on the Judge's view of their standard of perfection. From the Judge's standpoint, every infraction from perfection (providing it is at least worth one-half point) should be scored. If the handler before you makes a minor or substantial error and it is NOT scored, is this fair to YOU when YOU perform it perfectly? In theory, you would both be receiving the same score for different quality of work.

### **14. CARRYING OR OFFERING FOOD**

Carrying food in the ring will lead to a penalty, and that penalty could be as much as 200 points! Chapter 2, Section 3 is very clear when it comes to carrying and/or offering food in the ring. A handler who carries and/or offers food, according to this section, must NEVER be awarded a qualifying score. Also, offering food could be called training the dog and the Judge may excuse the handler.

#### **Food for Thought**

A handler who stands outside the ring gate awaiting their turn and "spits" or offers food to the dog may create suspicion. Those observing will wonder if such a handler still has food when entering the ring. Why a handler would put himself or herself in such a light is beyond me. It might be best, if you plan to "pop" food, to consider doing it away from the obedience rings.

## **15. ROUGHNESS IN HANDLING, MILITARY PRECISION**

Gentleness in handling being ideal, then roughness in handling or military precision in a performance needs to be avoided. Roughness may be viewed as a handler who gives "sharp" sounding commands or observing a handler's physical manner in their way of going about the heeling pattern.

Earlier, military turns were mentioned but "marching" around the ring with military precision is also penalized per Chapter 2, Section 2. To review, Chapter 2, Section 2 states a theoretically perfect performance will include the HANDLER demonstrating SMOOTHNESS, NATURALNESS and GENTLENESS.

### WHAT JUDGES SHOULD LOOK FOR IN THEIR HEELING PATTERNS

Heeling is in every AKC obedience class with the possible exception of Versatility (depending on what exercises the handler draws). In choosing a pattern that works for you, also consider the handler and dog. You must give ALL handlers and dogs an EQUAL opportunity to do the principal part of heeling -- working as a team.

Teamwork is best performed when a heeling pattern is smooth. One way to accomplish this objective is to have only one heeling function for each leg of the pattern. This provides ALL teams a chance for a smooth performance. As a Judge, your orders are "Forward," "Halt," "Right turn," "Left turn," "About turn," "Slow," "Normal" and "Fast." The orders may be given in any sequence and may be repeated. When two heeling functions are on one leg of a pattern it becomes choppy and the teamwork starts to suffer. For example, a Fast, Normal and Halt on one leg would be choppy. Picture an Irish Wolfhound doing this pattern smoothly. Another example: Heeling down the center of the ring and making a Right or Left turn and then Slow, using half the ring, before turning again. The choppy pattern will unfairly affect the performance of the larger and/or faster breeds. There is just less room and time to respond if too much is going on during one leg of the heeling pattern. Remember, you are going to be judging these actions. The faults you observe MAY have been caused by YOU not giving thought to the heeling pattern. The small breeds will start to gain an advantage and you, as a Judge, will find your goals of fairness and consistency going down the tubes. A pattern does not have to be long to achieve the smooth objective. The simple "L" pattern lends itself to a smooth performance if you give some thought to where different heeling functions will take place.

### FIGURE EIGHT

When planning the area for the Figure Eight think about the ring barriers and, in Open, also consider the jumps. You want to provide ALL dogs the opportunity to go around the outside post and not have to concern themselves with the possibility of running into an object. Figure Eight posts that are in the corners of a ring or too close to a jump jeopardize the performance of the larger breeds. This type of set-up is also too restrictive for some disabled handlers and their dogs. If you are judging indoors and using mats on slick floors, use THREE mats if possible. Large breeds should have mats under them at all times during the Figure Eight if that is the case for the smaller breeds. If the Superintendent provides the equipment they are REQUIRED to provide at least seven mats for each obedience ring.

As you set up for the heeling exercise ask yourself, "Is this exercise going to be fair to ALL breeds and handlers when they enter my ring?" Another point to keep in mind is the disabled handlers and their space requirements. Make a mental picture of an Irish Wolfhound being handled by a person in a wheelchair. With this in mind you should have no problem in setting up a ring that is fair to all who enter.

### **SUMMARY**

If one is aware of the areas where points may be lost, then one can take appropriate action to avoid losing such points. So, if the score in your next heeling performance is a bit of a disappointment, don't be too quick to point the finger at the dog or Judge. Your dog and/or the Judge may just put a mirror in front of YOUR finger showing YOU who was responsible for the errors!

If perfection, or a way to shore up some points, is what you are trying to achieve, keep in mind the fifteen items covered:

1. Position of hands
2. Loud commands, audible signals and peremptory commands
3. Starting the heeling pattern
4. Lack of briskness during heeling
5. Lack of briskness during the Figure Eight
6. Wide and narrow turns on the Figure Eight
7. Delay of, or anticipating, the Judge's order
8. Military turns, Wide turns
9. Hesitating on About turns
10. Not noticeably accelerating speed on the Fast
11. Not noticeably decelerating speed on the Slow
12. Additional commands or signals, touching the dog
13. Motions of the body that aid the dog
14. Carrying or offering food
15. Roughness in handling, Military precision

# The Novice Stand For Examination Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 3, SECTION 7 (Stand For Examination) the principal features of the exercise sound quite simple (and they are for the dog) but the handler has a lot to concentrate on for their performance.

"The principal features of the exercise are that the DOG stand in position before and during the examination and that it not display resentment."

There are not many functions that take place during the execution of the Stand For Examination, by the dog and handler, but obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is NOT a given. One good way to understand the "perfect" Stand For Examination is to break it down and look at the individual parts that make up the whole exercise. I will break the exercise into three parts.

- A. STANDING AND LEAVING THE DOG FOR EXAMINATION
- B. EXAMINATION OF THE DOG
- C. HANDLER RETURNING TO THE DOG

Knowing what is required by the dog and handler will help show how the exercise is judged and where points can be lost.

## **A. STANDING AND LEAVING THE DOG FOR EXAMINATION**

The Judge will order the handler to "Stand your dog and leave when ready." The dog does NOT have to be sitting for the exercise to begin. The SCORING of the exercise does NOT begin at this point, BUT keep in mind the JUDGING of an exercise starts with the Judge's order. The Judge will be observing how the dog and handler are getting ready for the exercise to begin. Scoring WILL take place for such things as rough treatment of the dog by its handler or active resistance by the dog to its handler's attempts to make it stand. The SCORING OF THE EXERCISE STARTS as the handler gives the command and/or signal to Stay. The Regulations state "The handler will stand and/or pose his dog off leash by the method of his choice, taking any reasonable time if he chooses to pose the dog as in the show ring. When he is ready, the handler will stand with the dog in the heel position, and give his command **and/or** signal to the dog to Stay, walk forward about six feet in front of the dog, turn around and stand facing the dog." Now let's stop at this point in time and take a look at what the Judge will be observing in respect to the handler.

### JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. Did the handler delay in following the Judge's order to stand the dog
- b. Did the handler display smoothness, naturalness, and gentleness in getting the dog to stand in position and stay
- c. If a command was used, was it loud
- d. If a signal was used, was it a single gesture with one arm and hand only
- e. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position
- f. Was the signal inaudible and did the handler touch the dog in the process of giving the signal
- g. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal
- h. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted
- i. Did the handler use the dog's name and ONLY a signal
- j. Was the handler standing in HEEL POSITION when giving the command and/or signal to Stay. Check CH. 2, SEC 18 to know just what exactly is meant by Heel Position
- k. Did the handler walk FORWARD about SIX feet in front of the dog and turn facing the dog. If a handler turns and backs up this action is subject to a penalty, even to the point of NQ.
- l. Are there any movements of the handler's body that might be considered as an aid to the dog

The Judge shall approach the dog from the front, and shall touch only the dog's head, body and hindquarters, using the fingers and palm of one hand only.

**B. EXAMINATION OF THE DOG - JUDGING THE DOG AFTER THE STAY COMMAND AND/OR SIGNAL IS GIVEN:**

- a. Did the dog respond to the command and/or signal
- b. Did the dog sit or lay down **before or during** the examination? If so, a score of NQ is required
- c. Did the dog stay in the place where it was left before and **during the examination**. If the dog moves away from the area left, a NQ is also required.
- d. Did the dog display resentment, growl or snap at ANY time = Non-qualifying
- e. Minor or substantial deductions, depending on the circumstance, shall be made for a dog that moves its feet at ANY time, or sits or moves away **after the examination** has been completed
- f. A dog that displays shyness (varying with the extent) will be scored from a minor deduction to even a non-qualifying score

Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 20, 21, 24 and 25, plus CHAPTER 3, SECTIONS 7 and 8.

**C. HANDLER RETURNING TO THE DOG**

After the examination is over the Judge will order the handler "Back to your dog." At this time the handler shall walk around BEHIND his dog and return to the Heel position. Again, check out CH 2, SEC. 18 to be SURE you know what standing in Heel position requires. **If a handler does not leave or return to Heel position a penalty is applied - and you can't blame the dog or Judge!**

As you can see, there is NOT a lot going on during this exercise for the dog. **The HANDLER has a lot to keep in mind as he/she is doing most of the work in this exercise.** To earn a perfect score in Novice Stand for Examination takes training of both the dog and handler as it is a team effort. From the Judge's standpoint, every infraction from perfection (providing it is worth at least one-half point) should be scored. This may sound like nit picking but consider the following. If the dog and handler before you make a minor or substantial error and it is not scored, is this fair to you and your dog when you perform it perfectly? In theory, you would both be receiving the same score for different quality of work.

# The Novice Recall Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 3, SECTION 10 (Recall), the principal feature of the exercise sounds quite simple.

"The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left until called by its handler, and that the dog respond promptly to the handler's command or signal to 'Come.'"

So why is this another obedience exercise in which it is difficult to earn a perfect score? There are many functions that take place during the execution of the Recall -- by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is not so easy. Another item to keep in mind when reading the majority of the other obedience exercises are the scoring sections which refer back to the Novice Recall by stating:

"All other applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall shall apply." The Recall is referred to as a foundation exercise for all the following exercises:

- A. Drop on Recall
- B. Retrieve on the Flat
- C. Retrieve Over High Jump
- D. Broad Jump
- E. Signal Exercise
- F. Scent Discrimination
- G. Directed Retrieve
- H. Moving Stand and Examination
- I. Directed Jumping

One good way to understand the "perfect" Recall is to break it down and look at the individual parts that make up the whole exercise. I will break the exercise into three parts.

- A. HANDLER LEAVING THE DOG AT THE STAY AND THEN CALLING THE DOG
- B. DOG DOING THE RECALL
- C. HANDLER AND DOG DURING THE FINISH

## **A. HANDLER LEAVING THE DOG AT THE STAY AND THEN CALLING THE DOG**

The exercise is started when the Judge orders the handler to "Leave your dog." At this point the handler may give a command and/or signal for the dog to Stay in the Sit position while the handler walks forward to the other end of the ring, where he/she shall turn and stand in a natural manner facing the dog. Now let's look in detail at the judging that takes place to just this point. The Judge will be observing and scoring the following:

### **JUDGING THE HANDLER:**

- a. Did the handler delay in giving the command and/or signal to the dog
- b. Was the command too loud
- c. Was the signal a single gesture with one arm and hand only
- d. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position
- e. Was the signal inaudible and did the handler touch the dog
- f. If both signal and command to Stay were used, were they given simultaneously
- g. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal
- h. Was the dog aided by incorrect position of the arms and hands or movements of the body
- i. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted
- j. Did the handler use the dog's name and ONLY a signal
- k. Was an additional command or signal given to Stay
- l. Did the handler show smoothness, naturalness and gentleness

- m. Are the handler's arms and hands hanging naturally at his/her sides while the dog is coming in and did they stay there until the dog sat in front

All the above is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 19, 20 and 21, CHAPTER 3, SECTIONS 10 and 11. The Judge will be looking for perfection and any deviation, providing it's worth at least one-half point, should be scored. Also, CHAPTER 2 SECTIONS 2, 3 and 24 (I will let you look these up) come into play during all exercises. Depending on the actions of the handler, points off will range from a minor deduction to a non-qualifying score.

The Judge will order the handler to "Call your dog." The handler will then give a signal OR command (not both) for the dog to come. Items (a-e & g-m) as noted in Item 1 apply again to the handler during this portion of the exercise. The same CHAPTERS and SECTIONS apply.

#### **B. DOG DOING THE RECALL**

- a. Did the dog stay without an additional command
- b. Did the dog remain in the place where left
- c. Did the dog remain in the Sit position  
Now let's take a look at what happens from the point of the dog sitting 35 feet from the handler; the handler now gives the command **OR** signal for the dog to Come. The following is now observed:
- d. Did the dog Come on the first command or signal
- e. Did the dog respond PROMPTLY to the handler's command or signal to Come. Quoting from the Glossary of Terms, "prompt response -- without hesitation, immediate, quick"
- f. Does the dog move directly to the handler
- g. Does the dog move at a brisk trot or gallop
- h. Does the dog retain the trot or gallop **ALL THE WAY** into the handler
- i. Did the dog come in close enough so that the handler could readily touch its head without stretching or moving forward
- j. Did the dog sit in front of the handler
- k. Was the sit prompt
- l. Did the dog touch the handler
- m. Did the dog sit between the handler's feet

A non-qualifying score is required if the answer is no to items a,b, d and i. Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2,3,20,21,24 and 25 and CHAPTER 3, SECTIONS 10 and 11.

#### **C. HANDLER AND DOG DURING THE FINISH**

JUDGING THE HANDLER: The Judge will order the handler to "Finish." The handler will then give a signal **OR** command (not both) for the dog to Finish. Items (a-e & g-m) as noted in Item A (#2) apply again to the handler during this portion of the exercises. The same CHAPTERS and SECTIONS apply.

JUDGING THE DOG - On command or signal from the handler to Finish:

- a. Did the dog respond promptly to the command or signal
- b. Did the dog Finish
- c. If so, did the dog go SMARTLY (quickly, vigorously) to the Heel position
- d. Did the dog sit
- e. Was the sit prompt
- f. Did the dog sit straight

As you can see, there is a lot going on during this exercise for the dog, handler and Judge. To earn a perfect score in the Recall takes considerable training of both the dog and handler as it is a team effort. From the Judge's standpoint, every infraction from perfection (providing it is worth at least one-half point) should be scored. This may sound like nit picking but consider the following. If the dog and handler before you make a minor or substantial error and it is not scored, is this fair to you and your dog when you perform it perfectly? In theory, you would both be receiving the same score for different quality of work.

# The Group Exercises Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

All the judging decisions that are made by an Obedience Judge are not always made inside the ring. In fact, your first decisions in judging might start when the judging program arrives a week before the trial. Case-in-point: the Group Exercises. Depending on the entry, some thought can be given to the Group Exercises and how you may wish to handle them. Let's take a close look at the Groups -- with you being the Judge.

The day has arrived and you are off to the Saint Bernard National to judge four classes--Novice A, Novice B, Open A and Graduate Novice. The judging program shows your entry and time schedule starting with 3 Novice A, 10 Novice B, followed by 5 Open A and 3 Graduate Novice. The other Obedience Judge has an entry of 5 Open B, plus the Utility classes and Brace. The entries were less than anticipated so just one Obedience ring is to be used and you are the first to start judging.

Arriving at the site, you find the Conformation and Obedience rings in the middle of a huge lawn with just shade trees and no building or solid barriers within 100 yards of the rings. In regards to the Group Exercises, how would you answer the following:

1. In relation to the site, what should you be considering?
2. If changes are needed, whom do you contact?
3. Do you combine your Novice A and B classes to make two fairly even Groups of 6 and 7?
4. Since there are only 5 in Open A, do you combine your Open A and bring in the Graduate Novice class for the Long Down and make one Group of 8?
5. Since there are only 5 in Open A and 5 in Open B, do you wait and combine your Open A class with the other Judge's Open B dogs, making a Group of 10 Open dogs?

Now let's look at the Regulations and see what actions the Judge should take.

1. The Open and Graduate Novice classes require the handlers to leave their dogs and go out of sight to a place designated by the Judge. BEFORE you start judging the class, a place needs to be determined. One hundred yards is too far for the handlers to walk to go behind a building. The trees will not work, as the handlers will be in sight of the dogs. So, you will need to take action and get a place set up, and approve of this place, before judging begins.
2. The Club and Superintendent (or Show Secretary) is responsible for providing an appropriate place for the handlers to go completely out of sight of the dogs. This place has to meet with your approval. If it does not, have the Club and/or Superintendent change it to suit your needs. If the conditions are unable to meet your approval then such undesirable ring conditions need to be reported to The American Kennel Club. This is accomplished by writing a brief report in the Judge's Book. Items 1 and 2 are covered in the Regulations in CHAPTER 1, SECTIONS 31 and 33.
3. The requirements for the Group sizes are defined in CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12. "When the same Judge does both Novice A and Novice B, the two classes may be combined provided there are not more than 12 dogs competing in the combined classes." You have 3 in Novice A and 10 in Novice B--totaling 13 dogs. If your entire Novice A dogs are present, you will have to do a Group for each class. You may not be able to determine the number of dogs competing in Novice B while judging Novice A, so you should complete the Novice A class if all three are present for the Group. If one dog was absent (or excused during the individual exercises) in Novice A, you would then be able to combine the two Novice classes since there would be 12. If a Novice B handler reported their dog absent while you were judging Novice A, you would then know the two classes could be combined.
4. The Open A class of 5 would be judged by itself. After the Open A class is completed, you would then judge the Graduate Novice class with its own separate Group. CHAPTER 1, SECTION 26 - Judging Program - "If any Non-regular class is to be judged in the same ring as any Regular

class, the Non-regular class must be judged after the Regular class." The Regulations for the Open Groups are defined in CHAPTER 4, SECTION 15. The size limits for the Open Groups are the same as for the Novice Groups, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12.

5. The Open A class of 5 would be judged by itself. The Open or Novice classes may only be combined if judged by the SAME Judge -- CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12.

### GETTING READY TO JUDGE THE GROUPS

The first Group you will be judging is the Novice dogs. You have excused a bitch in season in the Novice A class and, therefore, combined the Novice B class of 10--making a Group of 12 Saint Bernards. I know the thought of 12 "Saints" sitting in a row is breathtaking, but it is time to judge. **BUT WAIT!** The new Regulation as of October 1, 2000 requires dogs be spaced four feet per dog. Will 12 Saint Bernards fit on the long side of the ring and still meet the space regulation for each dog. If the answer is no, you will have to have to judge two groups.

How would you handle the following situations:

1. Your Steward is lining up the dogs outside the ring for the Long Sit. Handler #3, before the judging of the class started, mentioned she may have a conflict and now she cannot be found.
2. One of the Novice B handlers is showing another dog in Conformation and asks you if a friend can handle his Obedience dog in the Group.
3. One of the Novice A handlers is also showing another dog in Conformation and would like to have her husband show their only Novice A dog in the Group.
4. With the above situations solved, your Steward hands you the Group score sheet. The dogs are listed on the sheet in the order they came into the ring for the individual exercises. This differs from catalog order. Does this matter as long as the dogs come into the ring in the order written on the Group score sheet?
5. What instructions are you going to give the Stewards for the Groups?

Before you bring your Novice Group into the ring to be judged, let's look at situations 1 through 5.

1. All your Novice dogs are lined up ready to go, except handler and dog #3 who can't be located. Your responsibility is to each handler ready with his or her dog at ringside. When one is entered in more than one class at a dog show, conflicts are likely to occur. **That is the chance a handler takes.** It is unfair to make the whole class wait so you call the dogs and handlers present into the ring to be judged. In this case you mark your Judge's Book "Absent-conflict" in #3's column. Had #3 not mentioned a possible conflict and just did not show up, you then mark your book "Absent-no reason given." CHAPTER 2, SECTION 15
2. If the Novice B handler only had one dog entered in this class he must handle his dog in the Groups. The **ONLY** time another handler can be brought in to assist is when more than one dog (entered by the owner or another person) is in the **SAME** Group. **A conflict is when a DOG is entered in more than one class, not the HANDLER needing to handle another dog.** CHAPTER 3, SECTION 2
3. The Novice A handler would have to handle her dog in the Group since she showed the dog in the individual exercises. The SAME person MUST handle the same dog in ALL exercises. Had this Novice A handler known she might be in another ring, she should have had her husband show the dog in the individual exercises. Then he would be required to show the dog in the Group. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 1
4. Dogs **MUST** be brought into the ring in catalog order, regardless of the order they were judged during the individual exercises. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 15. It would be advisable to have the Steward make up another Group score sheet and list the dogs in catalog order.
5. Each Judge has different items they cover with the Stewards. A few might be:
  - a. Where to position the dogs and handlers in the ring.
  - b. Where to stand during the exercises.
  - c. What to do if a dog were to break or go over to another dog.

You have finished judging the individual exercises in Novice A and B. The classes have been combined and you ask your Steward to bring in the dogs for the Group Exercises. Listed below are a few incidents that arise. What judging decisions are you going to make and how will you score them?

1. "The Saints come marching in" following the Steward. As the handlers are walking to the area in the ring for the Group, one handler gives several strong jerks on the leash, along with commanding the dog to "Heel" to get his dog up into heel position. I know this is purely hypothetical, a Saint Bernard being out of heel position, but let's pretend. Do you take any action or score this since the exercises have not started?
2. The dogs are now lined up for the Group and the handlers are placing armbands behind their dogs. Handler #5 places the dog into a sit by gently pushing on the rear of the dog. Do you score this action?
3. Handler #6 is repeatedly thumping his dog on the chest and softly repeatedly telling it to "Stay." What are you going to do? The exercise has not started yet.
4. Handler #10 reaches for the collar on her dog and yanks the dog's head up off the ground. She then tells the dog repeatedly "No sniff!" Do you score this? Do you consider the fact that a Saint Bernard is a rescue breed and maybe the dog has digressed, thinking he was in the Swiss Alps on a mission? Do you give bonus points to the girl being strong enough to lift the head?
5. Dog #12 is watching the Conformation dogs running around the ring and will not sit. The dog resists the handler's repeated attempts to sit. How do you solve this situation so the Group can be started?
6. Where should you be standing to judge the Group of "Saints"?

Before you give the order to "Leave your dogs" for the one-minute Sit; let's take a look at items 1 through 6.

1. The dog and handler should be excused right now. This is training and disciplining in the ring. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 27. You mark your Judge's Book "Excused (Dog Disciplined)."
2. You should have scored a minor to substantial penalty. No physical guidance, such as placing the dog in position with the hands, is permitted (CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23). Since this is between exercises, place the penalty in the Misbehavior column in the Judge's Book.
3. How this action is viewed is in the eye of the beholder. You could interpret this as training in the ring and excuse the dog and handler under CHAPTER 2, SECTION 27. Or it could be considered as not complying with CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23, "Handling between Exercises." You might also want to consider if this meets with your "standard of perfection" as described in CHAPTER 2, SECTION 2. Certainly, in the eyes of some Judges, this action might be construed as "Abuse of Dog," CHAPTER 2, SECTION 28.
4. Again, this action is in the eye of the beholder. All the actions in answer #3 could apply.
5. The dog should be excused, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 13.
6. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 13: "During these exercises the Judge shall stand in such position that all the dogs are in his line of vision, and where he can see all the handlers in the ring without having to turn around."

With the handlers and dogs lined up you order "Leave your dogs" and the Long Sit exercise is started. How are you going to deal with the following:

1. Presuming you did not excuse handler #10 (incident #4 above), she commands and signals the dog to "Stay," but just before stepping away, again tells the dog "No sniff!" Do you do anything? Remember, the exercise has started.
2. All the handlers step off in line with each other except handler #13. He waits two or three seconds and then steps off and leaves his dog. Is there any penalty for this action?
3. Dog #13 breaks the Sit and runs to his handler. Dog thought handler needed rescuing!
4. Dog #15 starts to lie down, gets halfway down and decides this is not a good idea, then returns to his original position.
5. Dog #6 leans way over (still remaining in the Sit) and gives dog #7 a lick on the muzzle. Since there is nothing in the Regulations about "kissing," do you fault this action?

One minute is up and you order "Back to your dogs." The handlers return and the exercise is finished.

**The Regulations address the above in the following areas:**

1. Several options are open to you and this becomes a decision you will have to make. First consider CHAPTER 2, SECTION 2, "Standard of Perfection." Does telling the dog not to sniff, after the exercise is started, constitute a perfect performance? If the answer is "No," you are going to have to penalize the performance. Second, consider CHAPTER 2, SECTION 3, "Qualifying Performance." Also, a third option would be CHAPTER 2, SECTION 27, "Training and Disciplining in the Ring"; the dog and handler could be excused from further competition.
2. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12 states, "On further order from the Judge to leave their dogs, the handlers shall give a command and/or signal to Stay and immediately leave their dogs." This handler did not immediately leave his dog, as the Regulations require so he is subject to a penalty. **If you don't fault this handler, you will not be fair in your judgement of those handlers that performed the exercise perfectly.** Also, CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20 mentions, "Delay in following a Judge's order to give a command or signal must be penalized..."
3. The dog fails the exercise and should be excused from the ring. **The GUIDELINES address a dog that goes over to another dog, roams or follows its handler during the Long Sit. "Should this occur during the Long Sit, the Judge in all fairness to the other exhibitors should excuse the dog from the Long Down and so mark his Judge's Book."**
4. The dog still remained in the Sit position but should be penalized under CHAPTER 2, SECTION 2, "Standard of Perfection." **Not taking any deduction would not be fair to the dogs that sat perfectly.**
5. There is nothing in the Regulations about "kissing," but it does address a dog that moves to interfere with another dog during the Sit or Down. You should promptly instruct the handler (#6) to take the dog out of the ring or to keep it away from the other dogs. As in item #3, the GUIDELINES suggest you excuse the dog from the Long Down.

The Long Down exercise is picture-perfect (this is to be expected with Saint Bernards) and after three minutes you order the handlers to return. The following happens:

1. Handler #15 returns to his dog. As he is behind the dog and moving up into heel position, the dog sits. How do you, or do you, score this action?
2. Handler #14 observes dog #15 sit up so she stops and stands by her dog's right hip and awaits your order of "Exercise finished." The dog remains in the down position. Is this to be penalized? If so, how many points will you deduct?
3. You order "Exercise finished" and the last exercise is completed. Handler #11 is so excited his six-month-old puppy has passed that he picks up the front of the dog and gives it a big hug. After putting the dog back down, the dog gets real excited and starts to do "wheelies" around the ring. Since all the exercises are finished, do you do anything?

**Let's look at the Regulations and see how you did.**

1. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 13--"A non qualifying score is required for the following... or staying on the spot where it was left but not remaining in whichever position is required by the particular exercise until the handler has returned to Heel position..." Heel position is defined in CHAPTER 2, SECTION 18.
2. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 13--the handler is required to return to Heel position. Since the handler did not, this is a handler error and subject to a penalty. The dog did the exercise correctly and would have qualified. The amount of penalty is a judgement call. Since you are judging the handler on Heel position, you might use the criteria that you use in CHAPTER 2, SECTION 18, "Heel Position," and CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5, "Heel on Leash and Figure Eight."
3. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 22--"There shall be a substantial penalty for any dog that is picked up or carried at any time in the obedience ring." Also, the dog would be subject to another penalty under this section "...points must be deducted from the total score for a dog that is not under reasonable control while being praised." The dogs are under judgement, even though the last exercise is finished, **until they leave the ring. If you do not penalize this dog and handler, no**

**matter how cute it is, you are doing a disservice to the handlers and dogs that performed the exercise without error.**

Did you do a good job? Were you fair and consistent to all dogs and handlers? Hope you had a good time at the Saint Bernard Club of America's National Specialty and Obedience Trial. And, you thought proper judging attire would be a rain coat and shower cap. It is just a rumor that "Saints" disburse lots of "Holy Water" from their jowls. You should be so lucky!

## Pop Quiz #5

### Novice True or False by John Cox

For the following questions, circle whether the statement is TRUE or FALSE according to the Obedience Regulations and Guidelines for Obedience Judges.

1. T F New Judges who are not well known may write letters to clubs at which they would like to judge informing them of their availability.
2. T F You are judging the Novice A class with three dogs competing, and the Novice B class with 13 dogs competing. You may combine them for the Group exercises, eight in each Group.
3. T F When a dog appears nervous in your ring, you must penalize him according to the degree to which he exhibits nervous behavior.
4. T F Provisional Judges may not judge Non-Regular classes, such as Versatility.
5. T F In examining the dog on the Stand For Examination, the Judge may use one or both hands as in the breed ring.
6. T F In order to vacate the ring for the next class and a different Judge, a Judge may total only the qualifying scores, award the trophies and prizes, and total the non-qualifying scores outside the ring.
7. T F It is degrading to the sport to see a Judge refer to the Obedience Regulations while in the ring judging.
8. T F The Novice Group exercises and the Open Group exercises are exactly the same as for the orders given by the Judge and the scoring.
9. T F Your steward may smoke in the ring during the Groups.
10. T F Dog #78, a Scottish Terrier, comes into the ring on a plain, woven cotton leash, about four feet long. You may let him use it.
11. T F Provision is made for NON-purebred dogs to compete in Obedience Trials by granting of an ILP number.
12. T F It is important that the completed Judge's Book be turned in immediately to the Superintendent or Trial Secretary by the Judge or one of his/her stewards.
13. T F There is no principal part of the Heel on Leash exercise.
14. T F A handler who gives an extra "Heel" command during the Heel on Leash exercise may still qualify.
15. T F An Obedience Judge may feel free to enter any Non-Regular class when exhibiting his own dogs.
16. T F Only qualifying scores may be called back into the ring for awards in a Regular class.
17. T F Owners may handle only one dog in Novice A.
18. T F A Judge must penalize a dog for lack of willingness or enjoyment in its performance.
19. T F A Judge may not walk with a cane in the ring. That is a regular cane and not a white one!
20. T F The dog of a physically challenged must heel on the left side.

## ANSWERS

1. (F) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Soliciting Assignments
2. (F) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12
3. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 25
4. (F) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Assignment Limitation
5. (F) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 7
6. (F) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 11
7. (F) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Obedience Regulations
8. (F) CHAPTER 4, SECTION 15
9. (F) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Appearance
10. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 16
11. (F) CHAPTER 1, SECTIONS 12 & 13
12. (F) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Marking the Judge's Book
13. (F) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5
14. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 & 21; CHAPTER 3, SECTION 6
15. (T) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Exhibiting
16. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 11
17. (F) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 1
18. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 2
19. (T) GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Just Cause for Absence From Assignment
20. (T) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 14

## Pop Quiz #6

### Novice Multiple Choice by John Cox

On the following multiple choice questions, indicate the one choice which best fits the statement or solves the problem. Several answers may be possible but only one will be the best possible choice.

1. As a dog starts the Heel Free exercise, you notice that it appears to limp. The best thing for you to do is:
  - a. Stop the exercise and suggest that the handler return when he has removed the cause of the limp.
  - b. Verify that the dog is slightly crippled from an old accident and may compete.
  - c. Excuse the dog from the ring.
  - d. Call for the veterinarian.
  - e. Verify that the dog is in no pain and doing itself no harm, and that it may therefore compete.
2. A dog at an outdoor trial, enroute from the Stand For Examination exercise to the spot where the Heel Free exercise begins, casually lifts his leg against one of the stakes holding the ropes around the ring. Later, enroute from the Heel Free exercise to the spot where the Recall exercise begins, a second dog casually lifts his leg against the same stake.
  - a. Neither dog should be penalized -- it is between exercises.
  - b. Penalize the first dog but not the second -- the fouled stake unfairly tempted the second.
  - c. Both dogs must receive a non-qualifying score.
  - d. Only the first dog should receive a non-qualifying score.
  - e. None of the above.
3. You have been approved to judge Novice A and the Graduate Novice class at an Obedience Trial. The Trial Secretary calls to say that your Novice A class has 25 entries and the Graduate Novice has 42 entries. The Trial Secretary:
  - a. May ask you if you would prefer that another Judge take one of your classes.
  - b. May split the Graduate Novice class, giving you half and another Judge half.
  - c. Must find another Judge to judge the smaller of the two classes.
  - d. Must find another Judge to judge the Graduate Novice class.
4. In the Group exercises, handler #47 bends to signal his Silky Terrier to the Down position and a piece of food falls out of his pocket. The Judge must:
  - a. Excuse the handler from the ring for conduct prejudicial to the best interests of purebred dogs.
  - b. Give the handler a non-qualifying score.
  - c. Give the handler a substantial deduction.
  - d. Report the incident to the Trial Committee for discipline.

5. You are judging a Novice class at an outdoor trial on a dark cloudy day. At 11:00 AM torrential rains and blustery winds make the continuation of your class virtually impossible. The Obedience Trial Committee opts to relocate the Trial into a small gymnasium nearby and indicates your new ring will be an area of 18 by 25 feet. You should:
  - a. Smile sympathetically and judge your class, noting the circumstances in your Judge's Book.
  - b. In a sympathetic manner point out to the Trial Secretary that the Obedience Regulations do not permit you to judge in an area that small.
  - c. Strongly urge the Trial Secretary to continue the Trial in its original location.
  - d. Insist on waiting until the one other indoor ring, of standard size, is available even though the Trial Secretary estimates that the time will be 10:30 PM.
6. Early in the Long Down exercise, a gopher sticks its head up about three feet in front of dog #245, a Cairn Terrier, then disappears down the hole. The Cairn Terrier creeps forward until his nose is one inch from the hole and finishes the exercise there perfectly. Dog #245 should be:
  - a. Given a substantial deduction; he did not get up or bother another dog so should not receive a less-than-qualifying score.
  - b. Given a substantial deduction; the dog has moved a substantial distance away.
  - c. Scored non-qualifying.
  - d. Rejudged on the Long Down. The distraction was an unfair test for a terrier.
  - e. Removed from the area by the Steward.
7. The veterinarian should be called to the ring when:
  - a. You suspect a bitch to be in season.
  - b. In the Heel on Leash the dog starts to move on only three legs.
  - c. The dog collapses in the ring.
  - d. All of the above.
  - e. None of the above.
8. On the Stand For Examination the Judge's examination shall consist of:
  - a. A light stroking from the dog's head to its hindquarters only.
  - b. A firm stroking from the dog's head to its hindquarters only.
  - c. Touching with the palm and fingers the dog's head, body and hindquarters.
  - d. A simulation of a breed ring examination.
9. Which of the following dogs are eligible to win the trophy for Highest Scoring Dog in the Toy Group?
  - a. An Italian Greyhound
  - b. A Toy Manchester Terrier
  - c. A Toy Poodle
  - d. All of the above
10. Your Steward informs you that the next dog in the ring is described in the catalog as being a Labrador Retriever. The dog is indeed somewhat shorthaired and black in color. However, it has prick ears, two large white spots on its back and a mustache-like feathering around its mouth. What do you, the Judge, do?
  - a. Refer the handler to the Trial Secretary.
  - b. Judge the dog without protest, but make an entry on the inside cover of the Judge's book that dog # \_\_\_\_\_ does not appear to be purebred.
  - c. Question the handler as to the dog's breeding.
  - d. Do nothing; the Trial Secretary whose responsibility it is to make such decisions has accepted the dog.
11. The dogs come into the ring for the Group exercises. Among the group of dogs is a Saint Bernard carrying a keg of brandy around his neck. The Judge should:
  - a. Give the Saint Bernard a NQ for trying to bribe the Judge.
  - b. Have the Saint Bernard pass the keg around among the handlers so they will be more relaxed during the Group exercises.
  - c. Have the Saint Bernard save the brandy until after the awards.
  - d. Excuse the Saint Bernard and offer to rejudge after the keg is removed.

## **ANSWERS**

1. (c) CHAPTER 1, SECTION 17
2. (c) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 3 & 25
3. (d) CHAPTER 1, SECTIONS 26 & 28
4. (b) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 3 & 22
5. (a) CHAPTER 1, SECTION 32
6. (c) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 13 (d) mentions the test was unfair for a terrier. The breed is not to be considered as per CHAPTER 2, SECTION 6. ONLY the Cairn Terrier broke - the rest of the dogs stayed. REMEMBER, the name of this sport is OBEDIENCE. However, a Judge could rejudge the dog per CHAPTER 2, SECTION 8.
7. (c) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 16 & 17 & GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES - Veterinarians
8. (c) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 7
9. (a) CHAPTER 1, SECTION 21
10. (b) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 11
11. (d) CHAPTER 1, SECTION 17

## Pop Quiz #7

### Novice Circle The Penalty by John Cox

On the following questions, circle the penalty most likely directed or implied by the Regulations.

NP = No Penalty

M = Minor Penalty - 2 and one-half points or less

S = Substantial Penalty - 3 or more points

NQ = Non-Qualifying

1. NP M S NQ The handler of dog #68, a Maltese in the Novice B class, gently guides the dog by its collar while proceeding in a somewhat stooped fashion to the start of the Recall.
2. NP M S NQ Dog #85, a Saint Bernard, on the Recall exercise, stands up as its handler is halfway to the other end of the ring. The dog waits patiently for the command to "Come" and completes the exercise perfectly.
3. NP M S NQ Handler #93 unconsciously pats his left leg on a right turn in the Heel Free exercise; the dog is heeling perfectly.
4. NP M S NQ At the end of the Recall in the Novice A class, dog #87, a Toy Poodle, leaps into his handler's arms and is carried to the place where the Steward returns the leash; at this time the dog is replaced on the ground and the leash is secured to the collar.
5. NP M S NQ On the Recall, dog #59 does not sit in front but goes straight to heel and sits perfectly.
6. NP M S NQ The Saint Bernard, a rescue breed, does the Recall briskly but with his nose on the ground, sniffing all the way.
7. NP M S NQ Dog #84 does not sit straight when she finishes after a perfect Recall.
8. NP M S NQ Dog #92, on the Stand For Examination, is posed by its handler. After the "Stay" command and after the handler has stepped away, but before the Judge's examination, the dog repositions a foot forward about three inches.
9. NP M S NQ On the Stand For Examination, the Judge completes his examination, and has stepped away from the dog; at this point the dog sits.
10. NP M S NQ In the Heel Free exercise in the Novice A class, handler #49 gives a "Sit" command to his dog when the dog does not appear to be going to sit at a halt.
11. NP M S NQ On the Figure Eight, handler #57 heels his dog first around the post on his right (instead of the left), placing the dog on the outside turn first.
12. NP M S NQ In the Novice B class, dog #88 lags two feet behind the handler while moving from the Stand For Examination to the place for starting the Heel Free.
13. NP M S NQ In the Recall exercise, dog #83 does not respond to the command to finish. The command is repeated and the dog finishes perfectly.
14. NP M S NQ The handler calls her dog on the Recall, hands clasped behind her back.
15. NP M S NQ Before the Group Sit exercise starts, handler #45 gently places his dog in position with his hand.

## **ANSWERS**

1. (NP) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23
2. (S) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 11
3. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 & 21, & CHAPTER 3, SECTION 6
4. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 22
5. (S) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 11
6. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2 & 24
7. (M) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 11
8. (M-S) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 8
9. (S) CHAPTER 3, SECTION 8
10. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 & 21, & CHAPTER 3, SECTION 6
11. (NP) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 1 & 5 & CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5
12. (NP) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 1 & 5 Dogs are not being judged at this point EXCEPT for actions listed in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 22, 23, 25 & 27
13. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20 & 21 & CHAPTER 3, SECTION 11
14. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 19
15. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23

# AKC OBEDIENCE TRIAL EXCUSAL REFERENCE CHART

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JUDGE'S OBSERVATION	DISQUALIFY	EXCUSE	OPTION TO REJUDGE		CHAPTER	SECTION
			YES	NO		
Identification		X	X		1	10
Dog blind - W/O USEFUL vision	X			X	1	17
Dog deaf - W/O USEFUL hearing	X			X	1	17
Dog changed for <u>cosmetic</u> reasons	X			X	1	17
Dog <u>attempts</u> to attack a person in the ring	X			X	1 2	17 25
Dog attacks a person in the ring	X			X	1 2	17 25
Dog <u>attempts</u> to attack a dog in the ring		X		X	1 2	17 25
Dog attacks a dog in the ring		X		X	1 2	17 25
Dog <u>appears</u> dangerous in the ring		X		X	1 2	17 25
Lame - Irregularity of locomotion		X		X	1	17
Dog Taped/bandaged/medical attachments		X		X	1	17
Hair - Permitted: eyes, ears, beard... may be tied back with elastic bands or small plain barrettes		X	X		1	17
Hair - Not permitted: dyed/chalk/powder/protection/adornment		X	X		1	17
Bitches in season		X		X	1	18
Bitches attractive to males		X		X	1	18
Dog out of control		X		X	1 2	18 25
Handler willfully interferes		X		X	1	18
Handler abuses dog		X		X	1 2 2	18 3 28
Dog unfit to compete		X		X	1	18
Vet excusal in writing		X		X	1	25
Bench/trial committee excusal		X		X	1	24
Leash - fabric/leather/adequate length		X	X		2 2	16 26
Collars - properly fitted and approved by the judge. No special training collars.		X	X		2 2	17 26
Fear/nervousness - <u>may</u> be excused depending on the extent		X		X	2 2	3 25
Uncontrolled behavior - <u>may</u> be excused depending on the extent		X		X	2	25
Barking/snapping - <u>may</u> be excused depending on the extent		X		X	2	25
Running from handler - <u>may</u> be excused depending on the extent		X		X	2	25
Foul ring - <b>Judge's OPTION TO EXCUSE</b>		X		X	2 2	3 25
Training in ring - <b>Judge's OPTION TO EXCUSE</b>		X		X	2	27
Practicing in the ring - <b>Judge's OPTION TO EXCUSE</b>		X		X	2	27
Excessive verbal commands - <b>Judge's OPTION TO EXCUSE</b>		X		X	2	27

Disciplining in the ring		X		X	2 2	3 27
Abuse - report immediately.		X		X	1 2 2	17 3 28
Suspend for conduct prejudicial to the best interest of purebred dogs.		X		X	2	29
NQ score for carrying or offering food in the ring. Judge may excuse if he/she considers food being used as training.		X		X	2 2	3 22
Dog relieves itself while in the ring for judging. Judge's OPTION TO EXCUSE		X		X	2 2	3 25
Performance not meeting minimum requirements				X	2	3
<b>Equipment that Does not meet the requirements of the Obedience Regulations</b>						
		X	X			
<b>Novice Equipment for the Ring</b>						
Identification					1	10
Leash					2	16
Collar					2	17
<b>Open Equipment for the Ring</b>						
Identification, leash, collar same as in the Novice classes						
Dumbbell					4	9
<b>Utility Equipment for the Ring</b>						
Identification, leash, collar same as in the Novice classes						
Scent articles					5	8
Gloves					5	10

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