



Dog Talk



AKC Utility Obedience Articles

by John Cox

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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.

Novice Heel On Leash & Figure Eight (foundation exercise) Note: Other exercises will refer back to this exercise.

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

The orders are: 'Forward,' 'Halt,' 'Right turn,' 'Left turn,' 'About turn,' 'Slow,' 'Normal' and 'Fast'."

* There is *only one principal feature* to this exercise. *No non-principal features.* The exercise starts with the first Judge's order "Forward", and continues on to the completion of the exercise where the Judge orders "Exercise finished." The scoring section of this exercise gives details on what constitutes a qualifying score from a non-qualifying score.

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. 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 Signal Exercise Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

The Signal Exercise is quite a complex exercise to perform perfectly. When reading CHAPTER 5, SECTION 6 (Signal Exercise), the principal feature of the exercise sounds quite simple.

"The principal features of this exercise are the ability of dog and handler to work as a team while heeling, and the dog's correct responses to the signals to Stand, Stay, Drop, Sit and 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 Signal Exercise--by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is not an easy task.

One good way to understand the "perfect" Signal Exercise 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. HEELING
- B. STAND, STAY, DROP & SIT
- C. RECALL AND THE FINISH

Signal Exercise

- * This exercise starts with **principal scoring** and ends with **non-principal scoring**.
- * This is another example in an advanced class exercise in which a detailed description and scoring is not repeated, but refers the reader back to the foundation exercises, the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight for judging and scoring procedures in regards to the heeling portions. The added Recall in this heeling exercise brings in another foundation exercise for scoring--the Novice Recall.
- * The **Scoring** section states, "All applicable penalties listed under the Heel on Leash and the Novice Recall (after the dog has been signaled to come) exercises will apply."
- * Once the dog is within reach of the handler the Judge will order "Finish".
- * The **non-principal** feature of this exercise is the Finish.

Before we start, let's look and see just how a **signal** is defined by the Regulations. CH. 2, SEC. 20 states:

"When a signal is permitted and given, it must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only, and the arm must be immediately returned to a natural position."

"Signals must be inaudible and the handler must not touch the dog."

"Any unusual noise or motion may be considered to be a signal."

"Position of the arms and hands and movements of the body that aid the dog shall be considered additional signals except that a handler may bend the body and knees as far as necessary to bring his hand on a level with the dog's eyes in giving a signal to a dog in the Heel position.

"The [dog's] name shall not be used with any signal not given simultaneously with a verbal command."

"Signaling correction to a dog is forbidden and must be penalized."

Keep in mind how a signal is defined! Many points can be lost in not properly executing a correct signal. The dog may do the exercise perfectly but the handler is also a part of the team and is being scored as well.

A. HEELING

The scoring of this exercise is started when the Judge gives the first order to the handler, "Forward." A signal is usually given by the handler for the dog to Heel. Keep in mind, a signal to heel is an option per CH. 2, SEC. 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.")

Check my Novice Articles for a VERY DETAILED article on heeling and scoring. Remember, heeling is a major part of this exercise! Instead of repeating, please refer back.

Note: If a **verbal command** is given to heel during the Signal Exercise, a **substantial deduction** is taken. This action (in itself) does not constitute a failure. There are times when the savvy handler will give a verbal command to the dog if there is no response to the heel signal or if the heeling is "falling apart." Receiving a substantial deduction is a better choice than doing nothing and ending up with a non-qualifying score.

B. STAND, STAY, DROP & SIT

The next sequence is the dog and handler completing the heeling portion with the dog stopping and standing at **HEEL POSITION** on a signal from the handler. Check out CH. 2, SEC. 18 to know the EXACT definition of Heel Position - it applies to this exercise in regards to the Stand. A dog not in the correct Heel Position is subject to a penalty.

As the handler is giving the Stand, Stay, Drop, Sit, Come and Finish signals, on the Judge's orders, the Judge will be observing the following:

JUDGING THE HANDLER:

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

All the above is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 19, 20 and 21, and in CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 6 and 7. 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.

JUDGING THE DOG ON THE STAND, STAY, DROP AND SIT:

- a. In regards to all signals: Did the dog respond PROMPTLY to the handler's signals. Quoting from the Glossary of Terms, "prompt response -- without hesitation, immediate, quick"
- b. Did the dog respond without an additional signal
- c. Did the dog remain in place and position
- d. Did the dog move forward
- e. If there was forward movement was it to the point of non-qualifying
- f. Did the dog whine or bark
- g. Was the dog showing utmost in willingness and enjoyment

C. RECALL AND THE FINISH

Now let's take a look at what happens from the point of the dog sitting at the other end of the ring from the handler; the handler now gives the signal for the dog to Come. The following is now observed:

JUDGING THE DOG: (see Novice Recall CH. 3, SEC 10,11):

- a. a-d + f-g above applies
- b. Does the dog move at a brisk trot or gallop?
- c. Does the dog retain the trot or gallop **ALL THE WAY** into the handler?
- d. Did the dog come in close enough so that the handler could readily touch its head without stretching or moving forward?
- e. Did the dog sit in front of the handler?
- f. Was the sit prompt?
- g. Did the dog touch the handler?
- h. Did the dog sit between the handler's feet?
- i. Did the dog Finish?
- j. If so, did the dog go **SMARTLY** (quickly, vigorously) to the Heel position?
- k. Did the dog sit?
- l. Was the sit prompt?
- m. Did the dog sit straight?
- n.

Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2,3,20,21,24 and 25 and CHAPTER 3, SECTIONS 10 and 11, plus CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 6 & 7, to mention a few!

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 Signal Exercise 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 intent of this article was to point out some of the areas that the dog and handler lose points. With a good understanding of an exercise, points can be saved resulting in a better qualifying score.

Good Luck and Exercise Finished.

Scent Discrimination Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 5, SECTION 8 (Scent Discrimination), the principal features of the exercise sound quite simple.

“The principal features of these exercises are the selection of the handler’s article from among the other articles by scent alone and the prompt delivery of the correct article to the handler. In each of these two exercises, the dog must select and retrieve an article that has been handled by its handler. The dog must make this selection based on scent alone. The orders are: “Take an article,” “The taking of the article,” “Send your dog,” “Take it,” and “Finish.”

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 Scent Discrimination -- by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is a major achievement for the well-trained dog and its smooth handler. One good way to understand the "perfect" Scent Discrimination exercise 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. GETTING PAST THE RING GATE WITH THE CORRECT ARTICLES
- B. THE HANDLER'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE
- C. THE DOG'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE

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

Scent Discrimination

* **This exercise starts with non-principal scoring to principal scoring and then back to non-principal scoring.**

* After the Judge asks “Are you ready?” the Judge’s orders are “Take an article” “The taking of the article from the handler” “Send your dog” “Take it” and “Finish.”

* The **non-principal** feature and scoring of *this* exercise is at the beginning of the exercise where the handler leaves the dog to take an article and then returns to heel position for the scenting of the article.

* The **principal features** of this exercise starts with the Judge’s second order (a silent one), the taking of the article from the handler. The scoring of the **principal features** is now in effect until the dog has returned within reach of the handler.

* In addition to the detailed scoring of the Scent Discrimination noted in the **Scoring** section, it goes on to state, “All applicable penalties listed under the Heel Free, Novice Recall and the Retrieve on Flat will apply.” So we have the new element (scenting) defined in this section, plus referring back to three (3) other exercises for detailed **Descriptions** and **Scoring** and repeated here.

* Once the dog is within reach of the handler the Judge will order “Finish”.

* The second **non-principal** feature of this exercise is the Finish

A. GETTING PAST THE RING GATE WITH THE CORRECT ARTICLES

Chapter 5, Section 7 sets the criteria for the scent articles. It is up to the JUDGE to observe the articles and make sure they meet the following specifications:

1. Articles options are leather, metal or wood. The handler will choose what two (2) sets are to be used. Please just bring those two sets to the ring. ☺
2. Each set comprised of five **IDENTICAL** objects.
3. Articles are to be proportionate to the dog.
4. May be items of everyday use.

5. One set made entirely of rigid metal.
6. One set made of leather of such design that nothing but leather is visible except the minimum amount of thread or metal necessary to hold the objects together.
7. One set made of wood made of one or more solid pieces of wood.
8. Articles in **EACH** set **MUST** be **LEGIBLY** numbered each with a *different* number.

When choosing an article carrying case, it too must comply with the Regulations. Keep in mind Chapter 1, Section 10, Identification. This section states, "No visible means of identification (badges, ribbons, club jackets, etc.) may be worn or displayed by anyone exhibiting a dog in the ring." If a dog's or handler's name was **VISIBLE** (or other means of identifying who was going into the ring), the Judge must not allow the case in the ring. The key word is "visible." Name tags on a case where the name is **NOT** visible are acceptable.

B. THE HANDLER'S PERFORMANCE AND PROCEDURE DURING THE EXERCISE

Let's take a good look at the handler's performance from the time of spreading the articles up to the time of the **THIRD** Judge's order, "Send your dog."

JUDGING PROCEDURE:

The handler may choose to watch the articles being placed or turn away at any time. Once facing away the handler is to have the dog sit in heel position. The Judge will then ask, "Are you ready?" The judging of this exercise starts **with the Judge's *first order*, "Take your article", and scoring of the exercise will begin at that time.** The handler may tell the dog to Stay and proceed to choose an article for scenting, returning back to the dog. The handler must adhere to the following to avoid penalties:

1. Remain facing away from the articles until the Judge has taken the handler's scented article and given the order, "Send your dog." If the handler turns to watch before the Judge's order (Send your dog.) -- this is a fault. Remain facing away like the Regulations require and save points.
2. During the *scenting of the article*, the scent is to be imparted to the article with just the hands. The article must be held continuously in the handler's hands and remain in plain sight. The handler may talk (**only** while in Heel Position to the dog) but not touch the dog, such as petting, etc. Remember, the exercise is underway during the scenting of the article (different from the past).
3. At this time the handler may inform the Judge the procedure will be the same for both articles. If not informed the Judge will ask the question again for the next article.
4. From the time the Judge takes the scented article from the handler (**second order, the taking of the article**) until the time the Judge gives the **third order**, "Send your dog," the handler's arms and hands are to be in the natural position. The handler must relinquish the article immediately when ordered by the Judge. Remember, there is **no verbal** order here. The taking of the article (holding out the clip board) is the second order.
5. After the article is taken by the Judge, any giving of scent, talking or petting to the dog before the Judge's third order is subject to a penalty. This is the timeframe while the Judge is placing the article amongst the group of other articles.
6. On the Judge's third order, "Send your dog", is the timeframe for the handler to give scent *to the dog*. If the scent is given to the dog, it is with an open hand and while the dog and handler have their backs to the articles. The arm and hand must return to a natural position **before** handler and dog turn to face the articles. The handler must avoid any roughness in imparting their scent to the dog.
7. The handler is required to turn in place and avoid any excessive motions while turning to face the articles.
8. The handler shall give the Commands or Signals as per CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 & 21.

JUDGING THE HANDLER:

1. Did the handler pet or touch the dog after the Judge's first order, "Take an *article*."
2. Did the handler talk to their dog while away from the dog taking an article? The handler has to be back in heel position after taking the article before talking to the dog after the exercise starts.
3. Was the scent given to the dog with the palm of one **OPEN** hand gently touching the dog's nose (touching the dog's nose during the giving of the scent is not viewed as above.).
4. Was the handler giving their scent to the dog while their back was to the articles.

5. Was the hand returned to a natural position **BEFORE** the handler and dog turned to face the articles.
6. Did the handler stop taking to the dog after giving up the scented article to the judge.
7. Did the handler delay in giving the command **or** signal to the dog to heel, sending the dog, taking the article and Finish (no command or signal is required to Heel).
8. If the dog is being sent directly to the articles (without the dog halting and sitting at heel) did the handler make a **RIGHT turn in place** and **SIMULTANEOUSLY give** the command **or** signal to retrieve. This means the fetch command **or** signal is given at the start of the turn and during the turn, **not at the completion of the turn**. Remember, the Regulations now state if a direct send is chosen by the handler, the handler must make a **RIGHT** turn to face the articles. Turning **LEFT** and sending the dog directly to the articles **WITHOUT the dog sitting at heel** requires a non-qualifying score.
9. Were commands too loud.
10. Was the signal (if given) a single gesture with one arm and hand only.
11. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position.
12. Was the signal inaudible and did the handler touch the dog.
13. Did the handler error and give BOTH a signal and command.
14. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal (Example: excessive motion while turning).
15. Position of the arms and hands and movements of the body.
16. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted.
17. Did the handler use the dog's name and **ONLY** a signal.
18. Was an additional command or signal given to Heel, send, release the article or Finish
19. Did the handler turn in place (Glossary - "turning in the area that is occupied by the handler before the turn had started".)
20. Does the handler remain in the same spot until the Finish is completed.
21. Was the handler smooth, natural and gentle.

Judging the handler is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25 and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 8 and 9, to mention a few!

C. THE DOG'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE

JUDGING THE DOG:

1. Did the dog maintain a Sit position while the handler chose an article and scented the article.
2. Was there a delayed response to the command or signal to send the dog.
3. Did the dog maintain Heel Position while turning if the "after a sit." option was chosen.
4. Did the dog Sit in Heel Position.
5. Did the dog anticipate.
6. Did the dog leave the handler.
7. Did the dog leave on its name or the command **or** signal.
8. If the dog is being "Sent directly." (without halting and sitting at heel after the turn) did the dog delay before leaving the handler.
9. Did the dog **go away direct to the articles** or did it go wide as turning.
10. Did the dog go away briskly at a trot or gallop.
11. Was the dog showing willingness and enjoyment.
12. Did the dog display fear or nervousness.
13. Did the dog show uncontrolled behavior such as barking or snapping.
14. Did the dog stop working the articles.
15. Did the dog take MORE than a reasonable time to select the article.
16. Does the dog work continuously and smartly.
17. Is the dog slow and inattentive.
18. Did the dog drop an article.
19. Was the dog mouthing the article.
20. Did the dog select the correct article and **ONLY** bring it back.
21. Did the dog return at a brisk trot or gallop **ALL THE WAY INTO** the handler.

22. Did the dog **return directly** in and sit straight, centered immediately in front of the handler's feet, close enough that the handler could readily touch its head without moving either foot or having to stretch forward.
23. Did the dog touch the handler or sit between his/her feet.
24. Did the dog release the article.
25. On order from the handler to Finish, did the dog respond promptly to the command or signal, and go **SMARTLY** (quickly, vigorously) to the Heel position and Sit straight.

The same CHAPTERS and SECTIONS apply as noted above under JUDGING THE HANDLER.

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 Scent Discrimination 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 at least worth 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 handler should be aware of all the above items. Since there are two scent discrimination exercises, avoid making errors twice and being penalized twice!

The intent of this article was to point out some of the areas where the dog and handler lose points. With a good understanding of an exercise, points can be saved resulting in a better qualifying score.

Good Luck and Exercise Finished.

What to do with the first article? There are a couple of procedural options:

1. Handler hands the first article to the judge and the judge puts it on the chair while the handler and dog set up for the second article.
2. Handler puts the first article on the chair and then sets up for the second article.
3. Handler keeps the first article while they set up for the second article, still be allowed to pet and praise their dog without penalty, sets down the first article when ordered to "Take an article" for the second.

A tidbit of advice for what it is worth.

LEARN the words in the Regulations on what you are going to tell the judge when asked "What method will you be using to send your dog?" The handlers should respond with either--"**After a sit**" or "**Send directly**". It does NOT say Turn and send, Turn and sit, Flying send. **USE the words in the quotes.** *No, there is NO scoring if you choose the wrong word(s).*

So, why be soooooo fussy on words? You as a handler want to MAKE SURE the judge is understanding the method you ARE choosing to use. If we all use the same words (maybe that is why they are in quotes, don't you think?), we all understand each other with nothing left in doubt. This is the only place in the Regulations a handler's response is in quotes!

Remember, the Judge's order, "Take an article" is the first order and the exercise has begun (Chapter 2, Section 4).

The question, "Are you ready?" is merely that, a question. It is not the start of the exercise. If you are NOT ready, when asked, say "No." That is why we ask the question.

**The Scent Discrimination Exercise Has
Four Timelines
To Be Aware of During The Performance**



by John Cox

1. Two (2) sets of articles are used and the handler chooses which two sets to bring to the ring (wood, leather or metal).
2. **TIMELINE 1:** The handler may, or may not, choose to watch the articles being placed. This timeframe is between exercises and petting and praise are permitted, as between any other exercise.
3. After the handler turns, having their back to the group of articles, the dog is to be sitting in heel position.
4. The Judge will then ask, "Are you ready?" After receiving an affirmative answer, the Judge will give the first order, "Take an article." The exercise and scoring has now begun as this is *the FIRST order of the exercise*.
5. The handler then leaves the dog on a sit-stay to select an article and returns to heel position.
6. **TIMELINE 2:** During the time after the **1st order** until the "taking of the article" (**2nd order**), the handler may talk to their dog, but only while in Heel Position. No touching the dog is permitted; that would result in a scorable fault.
7. As the handler is scenting the article the Judge will ask, "What method will you be using to send your dog?" The handler states the method and if they also say, "Both times," or words to that effect, the judge will not repeat the question for the second article.
8. **TIMELINE 3:** After the handler is done scenting the article, taking the article is the **2nd order (silent)** and talking to the dog stops. Also, giving scent to the dog at this time may result in a scorable handler error. As a judge cannot judge the handler's giving of the scent to the dog while taking the scented article out to the group of articles.
9. **TIMELINE 4:** After the scented article is placed the Judge will give the **3rd order**, "Send your dog." Now would be the time to give the scent to the dog, if you choose to do so.
10. The rest of the exercise is performed as before. After "Exercise finished," praise and petting may be done, once again as between any other exercise.
11. With the completion of the first article, the handler will then face away from the group of articles (while holding on to the retrieved article) and line up the dog in heel position.
12. The second scent discrimination exercise is performed as above. The handler takes the second article; the first is placed on the chair.

The Directed Retrieve Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 5, SECTION 10 (Directed Retrieve), the principal features of the exercise sound quite simple.

"The principal features of the exercise are that the dog stay until directed to retrieve, that it go directly to the designated glove, and that it retrieve promptly."

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 Directed Retrieve -- by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is a major achievement for the well-trained dog and its smooth handler. One good way to understand the "perfect" Directed Retrieve exercise 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. GETTING PAST THE RING GATE WITH THE CORRECT GLOVES
- B. THE HANDLER'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE
- C. THE DOG'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE

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

Directed Retrieve

- * This exercise starts with the **principal scoring** and ends with **non-principal scoring**.
- * After the Judge asks "Are you ready?" the Judge's first order is "One, or Two, or Three." The **principal features** of this exercise starts. The chosen Judge's order depends on the designated glove for the class.
- * In addition to the detailed scoring of the Directed Retrieve noted in the **Scoring** section, it goes on to state, "All applicable penalties listed under the Heel Free, Novice Recall and the Retrieve on Flat will apply." Once again, the new elements (giving the direction) are defined in this section, plus referring back to three (3) other exercise description and scoring sections in prior chapters for more detailed information.
- * Once the dog is within reach of the handler the Judge will order "Finish".
- * The **non-principal** feature of this exercise is the Finish.

A. GETTING PAST THE RING GATE WITH THE CORRECT GLOVES

Chapter 5, Section 9 sets the criteria for the gloves. It is up to the JUDGE to observe the gloves and make sure they meet the following specifications:

1. Three PREDOMINANTLY WHITE (gloves that are so dirty that they are NOT predominantly WHITE might be rejected), *gloves* (the words "work" & "cotton" are no longer in the Regs).
2. Gloves MUST be open - save the Steward's time and have the gloves open, flat and ready

Gloves must also comply with Chapter 1, Section 10, Identification. This section states: No badges, club jackets, coats with kennel names thereon or ribbon prizes shall be worn or displayed, NOR OTHER VISIBLE MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION USED, by an individual when exhibiting a dog in the ring. If a dog's or handler's name was VISIBLE, (or other means of identification of who was going into the ring) the Judge must not allow the gloves in the ring. The key word is "visible." Like the Open dumbbell, an inconspicuous mark for identification is acceptable.

B. THE HANDLER'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE

Handlers need to keep in mind the requirement that they must face away from the gloves and REMAIN facing away from the time of the Judge's order "One," "Two" or "Three." The exercise begins with the first

order, hence the handler who turns their head and looks (**after the order** and before turning with the dog) could be viewed by the Judge as aiding the dog. Now let's look at the handler's performance after the Judge's order. The Judge will be observing the handler for the following:

JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. Did the handler delay in giving the command **or** signal to the dog to heel, send the dog, take the glove and Finish (no command **or** signal is required to Heel)
- b. Was the signal (for heel, taking the glove or Finish) a single gesture with one arm and hand only
- c. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position
- d. Was the signal inaudible and did the handler touch the dog
- e. Did the handler error and give BOTH a signal and command
- f. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal (Example: excessive motion while turning)
- g. Position of the arms and hands and movements of the body
- h. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted (NQ - for commands or signals, **AFTER** turning, to the dog to face the designated glove)
- i. Did the handler use the dog's name and **ONLY** a signal
- j. Did the handler turn in place (Glossary - "turning in the area that is occupied by the handler before the turn had started")
- k. Did the handler **OVER** or **UNDER** turn to face the designated glove
- l. Was the dog touched to get it into position
- m. Was the dog repositioned
- n. Was the **DIRECTION** to the dog given with a single motion of his/her left hand and arm
- o. Was the direction given along the right side of the dog
- p. Was a **COMMAND** given to retrieve (**A COMMAND IS REQUIRED** - Be sure the Judge can hear it!)
- q. Was the **VERBAL COMMAND** to retrieve either simultaneously or immediately following the giving of the **direction**
- r. Were commands **TOO** loud (remember to be loud enough as the Judge is **behind** you!)
- s. If the handler bent their knees to the extent necessary in giving the direction to the dog, did the handler then return and stand erect in a natural position with their arms at their sides
- t. Does the handler remain in the same spot until the Finish is completed
- u. Was the handler smooth, natural and gentle

Judging the handler is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25 and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 10 and 11 to mention a few!

C. THE DOG'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE EXERCISE

JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. Was there a delayed response to the command or signal to Heel
- b. Did the dog maintain Heel Position while turning
- c. Did the dog Sit in Heel Position
- d. Did the dog anticipate - dog must wait for the **VERBAL** command
- e. Did the dog leave the handler
- f. Did the dog go away **DIRECTLY** to the **DESIGNATED** glove
- g. Did the dog go away briskly at a trot or gallop
- h. Was the dog showing willingness and enjoyment
- i. Did the dog display fear or nervousness
- j. Did the dog show uncontrolled behavior such as barking or snapping
- k. Did the dog retrieve promptly
- l. Did the dog drop the glove
- m. Was the dog mouthing the glove
- n. Did the dog select the designated glove and return to the handler with just that one glove
- o. Did the dog return at a brisk trot or gallop **ALL THE WAY INTO** the handler

- p. Did the dog come **DIRECTLY** in and sit straight, centered immediately in front of the handler's feet, close enough that the handler could readily touch its head without moving either foot or having to stretch forward
- q. Did the dog touch the handler or sit between his/her feet
- r. On order from the handler to Finish, did the dog respond promptly to the command **or** signal, and go **SMARTLY** (quickly, vigorously) to the Heel position and Sit straight

The same CHAPTERS and SECTIONS apply as noted above under Judging The Handler.

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 Directed Retrieve 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 at least worth 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 intent of this article was to point out some of the areas that the dog and handler lose points. With a good understanding of an exercise, points can be saved resulting in a better qualifying score.

Good Luck and Exercise Finished.

The Moving Stand And Examination Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 5, SECTION 12 (Moving Stand and Examination) the principal features of the exercise sound quite simple.

"The principal features of the exercise are that the dog heel, stand and stay on command by the moving handler, accept the examination without shyness or resentment and, on command, return to the handler."

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 Moving Stand and Examination, by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is a major achievement for the well-trained dog and its smooth handler. One good way to understand the "perfect" Moving Stand and Examination is to break it down and look at the individual parts that make up the whole exercise. I will break the exercise into four parts.

- I. HEELING THE FIRST 10 FEET
- II. STAND AND STAY ON COMMAND BY THE MOVING HANDLER
- III. ACCEPT EXAMINATION
- IV. RETURN TO THE HANDLER

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

Moving Stand and Examination

- * This exercise starts with the **principal scoring** and ends with **non-principal scoring**.
- * After the Judge asks "Are you ready?" the Judge's first order is "Forward"; the handler *may* command or signal the dog to heel. The **principal features** of this exercise starts.
- * In addition to the detailed scoring of the Moving Stand and Examination noted in the **Scoring** section, "All applicable penalties of the Novice Heel Free, Stand for Examination and Recall exercises will apply."
- * In a nutshell, this exercise is three (3) exercises in one; Heeling, Standing for Examination and the Recall, all referring back to those exercises in prior chapters to fill in the reader on the complete procedures and scoring for this exercise.
- * The principal features of scoring are in effect until the dog is within reach of the handler when going to finish.
- * The **non-principal** feature of this exercise is the Finish

Part I--HEELING THE FIRST 10 FEET

The exercise starts when the Judge orders the handler to "Forward." At this point the handler may give a command or signal for the dog to heel and the handler must walk **briskly** at a normal pace. After the handler has proceeded about 10 feet the Judge orders, "Stand your dog." Now let's look in detail at the judging that takes place during this segment. The Judge will be observing and scoring the following:

1. JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. Did the handler delay in giving the command or signal to the dog?
- b. If a command was used, was it loud?
- c. If a signal was used, was it a single gesture with one arm and hand only?
- d. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position per Chapter 2, Section 19 (Hands)?
- e. Was the signal inaudible and did the handler touch the dog?
- f. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal?
- g. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted?
- h. Did the handler use the dog's name and **ONLY** a signal?

- i. Did the handler walk at a brisk pace and in a natural manner?

All the above are covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 19, 20 and 21, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 9 (also see SECTIONS 4 and 5) and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 12 and 13. The Judge will be looking for perfection and any deviation 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 to substantial deduction.

2. JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. Did the dog respond promptly to the command or signal, if given?
- b. Did the dog lag, forge, swing wide, crowd, interfere with the handler's freedom of motion and did the dog heel straight in line with the direction of the handler?

Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 20, 21, 24 and 25, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 9 (also see SECTIONS 4 and 5) and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 12 and 13.

Part II -- STAND AND STAY COMMAND AND/OR SIGNAL BY THE MOVING HANDLER

Now let's take a look at what happens when the dog and handler arrive at the 10-foot spot and the Judge gives the order to "Stand your dog." After the order is given the handler will, WITHOUT PAUSING, command **and/or** signal the dog to stand, continue forward 10-12 feet and turn around and stand facing the dog. The Judge will be observing and scoring the following:

1. JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. (a-i) as noted in Part I, item 1 applies again to the handler keeping in mind that **both** a command and signal may now be given.
- b. If a command and signal were given, were they given simultaneously?
- c. Did the handler change the manner of walking?
- d. Did the handler hesitate or pause while giving the command **and/or** signal? (Remember, the name of the exercise is the MOVING Stand and Examination -- he who hesitates will lose points! This is one MAJOR area where points are busted in the exercise.)
- e. Did the handler continue FORWARD 10-12 feet? Did the handler stop short or go too far before turning to face the dog?
- f. Did the handler turn and then back up?

Additional scoring for items b-f are found in CHAPTER 5, SECTION 13.

2. JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. (a-b) as noted in Part I, item 2 applies again to the dog. There are times when a dog will not stay straight in line with the direction of the handler as the signal is given to stay. The dog should be in heel position as the command **and/or** signal is given. It is a scorable fault if the dog is not straight in line with the handler or goes wide as a reaction to a signal. If you don't score it, what are you going to do when the next dog performs the exercise to perfection?
- b. Did the dog respond promptly to the command **and/or** signal?
- c. Did the dog remain standing?
- d. Did the dog remain standing at the spot in which the command **and/or** signal were given?
- e. If the dog did move, is it to be penalized a minor or substantial deduction, or a zero?

Additional scoring for items c-e is found in CHAPTER 5, SECTION 13.

Part III--ACCEPT EXAMINATION

Now let's look at the examination itself, with the dog standing and the handler 10-12' in front of and facing the dog.

1. JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. Is the handler standing in a natural manner?
- b. Is there any unusual noise or motion which may be considered to be a signal?

- c. Is there any position of the arms and hands or movements of the body that could be considered additional signals or an aid to the dog to stay?

Scoring of the above items is found in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 and 21.

2. JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. Does the dog display fear or resentment?
- b. Did the dog move from the place where it was left?
- c. Did the dog sit or lie down?
- d. Was there a growl or snap?
- e. Was there repeated barking or whining?
- f. Did the dog not accept the Judge's examination? (If the answer is "Yes" then the dog must be scored zero.)
- g. Was there any repeated movement of the feet while remaining in place?

Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 20, 21, 24 and 25, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 8 (where appropriate) and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 12 and 13.

Part IV -- RETURN TO THE HANDLER

The examination has now been completed and the Judge orders the handler to "Call your dog to heel." At this point the Judge will observe the following:

1. JUDGING THE HANDLER:

1. Did the handler delay in giving the command **and/or** signal to the dog?
2. If a command was used, was it loud?
3. If a signal was used, was it a single gesture with one arm and hand only?
4. If a command and signal were given, were they given simultaneously?
5. Did the arm immediately return to a natural position per Chapter 2, Section 19 (Hands)? (It should be noted that since the dog is not coming to sit in front of the handler, the hands are NOT required to be at the handler's side. The dog is going to **heel** position.)
6. Was the signal inaudible?
7. Was there any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal?
8. Does the handler use any additional commands or signals not permitted?
9. Did the handler use the dog's name and **ONLY** a signal?

All the above are covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 19, 20 and 21 and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 12 and 13.

2. JUDGING THE DOG:

The dog is now being judged as in the Recall so the Judge will be observing the following:

- a. Did the dog respond promptly to the command **and/or** signal?
- b. Did the dog Come on the first command or signal?
- c. 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"
- d. Does the dog move **directly** to the handler? (A dog that makes a wide arc to Finish is **NOT** moving directly to the handler and must be penalized to be fair to the other dogs that perform this part perfectly.)
- e. Does the dog move at a brisk trot or gallop?
- f. Did the dog come in close enough to the handler?
- g. Does the dog **retain** the trot or gallop to the point where it is going into the Finish?
- h. Did the dog go **SMARTLY** (quickly, vigorously) to the heel position?
- i. Did the dog touch the handler?
- j. Did the dog sit promptly?
- k. Is the dog in Heel position when it sits?

Directed Jumping Where Are The Points Lost?

by John Cox

When reading CHAPTER 5, SECTION 14 (Directed Jumping) the principal features of the exercise sound quite simple.

"The principal features of this exercise are that the dog go away from the handler in the direction indicated, stop when commanded, jump as directed and return as in the Recall."

So why is this one of the most difficult Obedience exercises in which to earn a perfect score? One simple answer might be that Directed Jumping is a two-part exercise, but the complete answer is far more complex. There are many functions that take place during the execution of the Directed Jumping--by the dog and handler. Obtaining a perfect score in this exercise is a major achievement for the well-trained dog and its smooth handler. One good way to understand the "perfect" Directed Jumping is to break it down and look at the individual parts that make up the whole exercise. Knowing what is required by the dog and handler will help show how the exercise is judged and where points can be lost.

Directed Jumping

- * This exercise starts with the **principal scoring** and ends with **non-principal scoring**.
- * After the Judge asks "Are you ready?" the Judge's first order is "Send your dog." The **principal features** of this exercise starts. The handler will command or signal the dog to go forward about 20 feet past the jumps.
- * In addition to the detailed scoring of the Directed Jumping noted in the **Scoring** section, "All applicable penalties of the Novice Recall exercises will apply."
- * *Since there are jumps in this exercise the Retrieve Over High Jump exercise goes into the needed details on how the jump(s) and jumping are to be performed by the dog.*
- * Once the dog is within reach of the handler the Judge will order "Finish".
- * The **non-principal** features of this exercise is the Finish

To quote the Regulations, the exercise is started when "The handler, from a position on the center line of the ring and about 20 feet from the line of the jumps, shall stand with his dog sitting in the Heel position and on order from the Judge shall command **and/or** signal his dog to go forward at a brisk trot or gallop **to a point about 20 feet beyond the jumps** (this is NOT at the end of the ring) and in the approximate center. When the dog has reached this point the handler shall give a **command** to Sit; the dog must stop and sit with his attention on the handler but need not sit squarely." Now examine just this part of the exercise. All that has occurred at this point is that the handler gave a command **and/or** signal to the dog and dog goes out and sit. The Judge will be observing and scoring the following:

1. 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 were used, were they given simultaneously
- g. Any unusual noise or motion that may be considered a signal
- h. Position of the arms and hands and 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. Did the handler **give the command to Sit at about 20' beyond the jumps** or did the handler error and send the dog to the end of the ring before giving the command to Sit
- l. Was a **COMMAND** (not a signal) given to the dog to Sit

- m. Was there any delay between the dog's name and command to Sit. If so, did the dog react to its name or the command (CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20).

All the above is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20, 21, and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 14 and 15. The Judge will be looking for perfection and any deviation should be scored. Also, CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3 and 24 (I will let you look these up) comes 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.

2. JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. Was there a delayed response to the command **and/or** signal to leave the handler
- b. Did the dog leave the handler
- c. Did the dog leave on its name or the command **and/or** signal
- d. Did the dog go away in the direction indicated
- e. Did the dog go away briskly
- f. Did the dog go out between the jumps
- g. Did the dog go back the minimum of 10' beyond the jumps
- h. Where did the dog stop in relation to the approximate center
- i. What distance did the dog travel before turning to Sit
- j. Was there any sniffing at the floor or ring barrier
- k. Did the dog immediately respond (to **Sit** and not its **name**) and Sit promptly on the handler's command
- l. Did the dog Sit with his attention on the handler
- m. Was the dog showing willingness and enjoyment
- n. Did the dog display fear or nervousness
- o. Did the dog show uncontrolled behavior such as barking or snapping

Judging the dog is covered in CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 2, 3, 20, 21, 24, 25 and CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 14 and 15.

Now let's take a look at what happens from the point of the dog sitting beyond the jumps. The Regulations state, "The Judge will designate which jump is to be taken first by the dog and shall order either 'High' or 'Bar' when designating either the High or Bar Jump. The handler shall command **and/or** signal the dog to return to him over the designated jump. While the dog is in **midair** the handler **may turn** so as to be facing the dog as it returns. The dog shall sit in front of the handler and, on order from the Judge, Finish as in the Novice Recall. The Judge will say 'Exercised Finished' after the dog has returned to the Heel position. Again, the Judge will be observing and scoring the following:

3. JUDGING THE HANDLER:

- a. a-j as noted in #1 applies again to the handler during this portion of the exercise (*pay attention to item h. Movements of the body that aid the dog are to be scored. **The movement of the handler's head AS A SIGNAL AND/OR COMMAND IS BEING GIVEN is an aid and is a scorable fault. AFTER the signal and/or command is given and the arm returned to a natural position one can then turn their head to watch their dog.***)
- b. If the handler chooses to turn as the dog is coming in, was it while the dog was in **MIDAIR** over the jump
- c. If the handler turned, did he/she do it to face the dog as it returns
- d. On order from the Judge to Finish, a-j as noted in #1 applies

The same CHAPTERS and SECTIONS (+ CHAPTER 2, SECTION 19 Hands) apply as noted above under Judging The Handler.

4. JUDGING THE DOG:

- a. a,c,d,e,m,n,o, as noted in #2 applies again to the dog during this portion of the exercise.
- b. Did the dog go over the designated jump
- c. Did the dog display any hesitation or reluctance to jump
- d. Did the Bar get knocked off

- e. Did the dog climb or use the top of the Jump for aid in going over
- f. Did the dog touch the jump
- g. From the point of the Sit beyond the jumps, the dog is also judged as in the Novice Recall, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 10 AND 11. The following would now apply:
- h. Did the dog stay where told to Sit
- i. Did the dog remain in a Sit position
- j. Did the dog come **directly in** (after jumping) at a brisk trot or gallop **ALL the way in** and sit straight, centered immediately in front of the handler's feet, close enough that the handler could readily touch its head without moving either foot or having to stretch forward
- k. Did the dog touch the handler or sit between his/her feet
- l. On order from the handler to Finish, did the dog respond promptly to the command **or** signal, and go **SMARTLY** (quickly, vigorously) to the Heel position and Sit straight.

Now at this point the handler and dog have just finished Part One. They are now being judged under CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 22 (Praise), 23 (Handling Between Exercises) and 25 (Misbehavior) until the Judge gives the order to "Send your dog" for Part Two. All of the above (1-4) is then repeated! If **YOU** repeat the handler errors *again on part 2* of the exercise, points off are made all over again!

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 Directed Jumping 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 at least worth 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 intent of this article was to point out some of the areas that the dog and handler lose points. With a good understanding of an exercise, points can be saved resulting in a better qualifying score.

Good Luck and Exercise Finished.

Pop Quiz #14

Utility 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 SIGNAL EXERCISE - A VERBAL command to Heel is non-qualifying.
2. T F An audible SIGNAL for the Stand, Drop, Sit, Stay or Come is a substantial deduction.
3. T F The handler can talk to or praise the dog, and/or give the scent while the Judge is taking the scented article to the "pile," without losing any points.
4. T F The Scent Discrimination scoring starts when the Judge asks "Are you ready?"
5. T F Dogs are REQUIRED to jump their full height at the withers, or the handler may choose to jump the dog higher.
6. T F 50 Utility dogs is a full class for one Judge to judge in eight hours.
7. T F A handler who has shown a prior dog to O.T.CH. may still handle a new dog in Utility A unless he/she is a Judge.
8. T F Directed Retrieve - A handler can just give the direction to the dog for the retrieve of the glove.
9. T F Directed Jumping - As the Judge is asking the handler "Are you ready?" the dog does a go-out. The dog should receive a non-qualifying score for anticipation.
10. T F Directed Jumping - A handler who gives JUST a VERBAL command (no signal) for the dog to jump, fails the exercise because no DIRECTION was given to the dog.
11. T F Scent articles that are seven inches, or longer, in length for giant breeds are okay as long as they are in proportion to the size of the dog.
12. T F Not turning in place or not turning to face the designated glove can result in a non-qualifying score.

ANSWERS

1. (F) A verbal command to Heel during the Signal Exercise is not an action for non-qualifying. A substantial penalty will be applied. More than one verbal command to Heel may result in a non-qualifying score as the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team may be in question.
2. (F) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 7 and CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20
3. (F) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 4: "The judging of an exercise will begin when the Judge gives the **first order**, not before.
4. (F) "Are you ready?" is **JUST a question to the handler**. The scoring begins with the first order. "**Are you ready?**" is **NOT a Judge's order**. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 4.
5. (F) **ONLY** certain breeds are required to jump at least their height at the withers. Other breeds jump 3/4 their height at the withers. Dogs under 7 ½ inches jump the minimum of 4 inches. CHAPTER 4, SECTION 11. In Preferred Open & Preferred Utility only ½ the height of the withers is the minimum requirement.
6. (F) 56 Utility dogs in 8 hours (7 dogs per hour), CHAPTER 1, SECTION 26.
7. (F) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 1
8. (F) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 10. A **VERBAL** command is **REQUIRED**. Remember, your back is to the Judge so speak in such a manner so the Judge can hear the command. If the command is not heard a non-qualifying score will result.
9. (F) Remember above, "Are you ready?" is **NOT** an order for the exercise to begin. The dog that leaves on the Judge's **QUESTION** will be scored below the line for Misbehavior.
10. (F) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 14: The handler has the option of giving a command **ONLY** or a signal **ONLY**, **OR** both.
11. (T) CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 8: Scent articles requirements have been changed so they now can be in proportion to the size of the dog. The old maximum length of 6" no longer exists. **YEA** for the giant breeds!!
12. (T) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 11

Pop Quiz #15

Utility 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.

1. If a dog is in the ring for judging and is picked up or carried the following action will be taken by the Judge:
 - a. Disqualify the dog
 - b. Non-qualify the dog
 - c. Excuse the dog and handler
 - d. Substantial penalty
 - e. Minor penalty
2. SIGNAL EXERCISE - The Judge gives the handler the order to "Stand your dog" while the dog and handler are:
 - a. Halting
 - b. Walking at heel
 - c. After making a left turn and halting
 - d. After making a right turn and halting
 - e. After making an about turn and halting
3. The Judge's orders during the Signal exercise to Heel can be:
 - a. In any sequence the Judge chooses
 - b. In the sequence defined for the Utility class
 - c. Repeated as necessary
4. The Scent Discrimination exercise begins (and scoring starts) with the following order from the Judge:
 - a. "Are you ready?"
 - b. The taking of the scented article from the handler
 - c. "Send your dog."
 - d. "Take an article."
5. The scent articles must be:
 - a. Approved by the Judge
 - b. Approved by the Steward (if the Judge chooses not to look at them)
 - c. Each set has to be of five IDENTICAL objects
 - d. Each article has to have a NUMBER
 - e. EACH SET of articles has to have a legible and different number
 - f. EACH article cannot be more than SIX inches long
 - g. ALL of the above
6. If a dog is abused in the ring, when will the Judge report it?
 - a. Immediately following the class while turning in the Judge's Book
 - b. Stop judging and report it immediately
7. During the Scent Discrimination and Directed Retrieve, applicable penalties listed under the following will apply:
 - a. Novice Recall
 - b. Retrieve on Flat
 - c. All of the above
8. An extra command or signal in a non-principal part of an exercise:
 - a. Does not, in itself, constitute a failing score or NQ
 - b. Constitutes a failing score or NQ

9. During the ten feet of heeling in the Moving Stand And Examination exercise, the dog and handler are scored on the following:
 - a. Lack of briskness on the part of the handler
 - b. Dog not moving straight in line with direction of handler
 - c. Dog going wide
 - d. Dog lagging
 - e. Dog forging
 - f. Dog crowding
 - g. All of the above
10. During the Directed Jumping exercise the handler must stand on the center line of the ring and about how many feet from the line of the jumps:
 - a. 15 feet
 - b. 20 feet
 - c. 25 feet
11. DIRECTED JUMPING – Minor to Substantial deductions shall be made for:
 - a. Dog not going out at a brisk trot
 - b. Not stopping on command
 - c. Not stopping in the approximate center of the ring
 - d. Not stopping about 20 feet beyond the jumps
 - e. A second command or signal to Sit after the go-out—providing the dog then stops
 - f. Any other substantial deductions under the Novice Recall
 - g. All of the above
 - h. None of the above

ANSWERS

1. (d) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 22: Substantial penalty
2. (b) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 6: While walking at heel
3. (a & c) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 6: Any sequence & may be repeated
4. (d) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 8: "Take an article" is the FIRST order
5. (a,c,d,e,) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 8
6. (b) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 28
7. (c) CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 9 & 11
8. (a) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20
9. (g) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 13
10. (b) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 14
11. (g) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 15

Pop Quiz #11

Utility 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 During the Signal Exercise, the handler gives a verbal command to heel.
2. NP M S NQ During the Signal Exercise, the next handler in the ring gives a double signal to heel.
3. NP M S NQ As the Judge is taking the scented article to the other articles, she notices the handler has his head turned and is watching the article being placed.
4. NP M S NQ The dog trots out to the articles, picks up the correct article and then puts it down. The dog then scents the other articles, goes back to the correct article and finishes the exercise in perfect fashion.
5. NP M S NQ The next dog in the ring goes out to the scent articles and in the course of scenting steps on one of the metal articles (jar rings) causing it to catch on the edge of the correct scented leather "dumbbell." The dog retrieves the correct leather, which also happens to have the jar ring attached over the end of the leather article.
6. NP M S NQ After the Directed Jumping is completed, the handler takes the dog gently by the collar and walks to the Judge's table to get the leash.
7. NP M S NQ The handler gives a signal only to retrieve the scent article. The dog retrieves the correct article.
8. NP M S NQ The handler gives a direction only to retrieve the designated glove. The dog retrieves the correct glove.
9. NP M S NQ In Utility A the handler lines up to start the Signal Exercise and she tells the dog to sit. The dog does not respond, but circles the handler, comes back to heel position and still does not sit. The handler again commands the dog "Sit" and the dog sits in heel position ready to start the exercise. Keep in mind that these actions took place before the exercise started.
10. NP M S NQ As the handler commands and signals the dog to take the Bar Jump, the handler's head is also turning slowly along with the arm/hand signal in a synchronized and choreographed manner. The dog promptly responds to the command and signal and takes the Bar, completing the exercise in perfect fashion.
11. NP M S NQ As the handler commands AND signals the dog to "Stay" during the Moving Stand and Examination, the dog reacts to the signal given in front of his face and side-steps to the left about one foot, does a perfect stop and stay as the handler walks forward and turns to face the dog.
12. NP M S NQ The handler sends his dog back during the Directed Jumping exercise and in the course of going back, the dog takes the High Jump. The dog responds promptly to the command "Sit" at about 21 feet from the jumps, centered between the jumps, at the end of the ring with its attention on the handler. Do you score anything up to this point?

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|---|
| 13. | NP M S NQ | The next dog does a straight Go-Out all the way to the end of the ring and sniffs the ring barrier. The handler commands the dog to sit and the dog turns and sits with his attention on the handler. Do you score anything up to this point? |
| 14. | NP M S NQ | The Judge orders the handler to send his dog over the High Jump during Directed Jumping and the handler proceeds to give ONLY a signal (no verbal command) towards the Bar Jump. The dog goes over the High Jump and performs the exercise perfectly. |
| 15. | NP M S NQ | As the dog is in midair over the jump during Directed Jumping, the handler does NOT turn to face her dog as it comes in for the Front. |

ANSWERS

1. (S) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 7: "A substantial deduction shall be made for any audible command during the **Heeling or Finish** portions of the exercise."
2. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20: "An extra command **and/or** signal in any non-principal part of an exercise does not, in itself, constitute a failing score or NQ."
CHAPTER 5, SECTION 6: "The principal features of this exercise are the ability of dog and handler to work as a team while heeling, and the dog's correct responses to the signals to Stand, Stay, Drop, Sit and Come."
An extra signal to heel in this exercise is scored but not to the point of non-qualifying. Extra signals to Stand, Stay, Drop, Sit and Come **would be non-qualifying.**
3. (M) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 8: "Handler and dog shall turn around after watching the Judge or Steward spread the articles, and **shall remain facing away from those articles until** the Judge has taken the handler's scented article and given the order, 'Send your dog.'" If you don't score this fault, you will not be fair to the other handlers who remain facing away.
4. (M-S) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 9 states deductions shall be the same as in the Novice Recall and the Retrieve on Flat. In looking at CHAPTER 4, SECTION 9 (Retrieve on Flat, Scoring) "Minor to Substantial deductions...for mouthing or playing with or dropping the dumbbell..."
5. (NQ) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 9: "...a dog that fails to go out to the group of articles, or retrieves a wrong article, or fails to bring the right article to the handler, must be scored as non-qualifying for the particular exercise." This subject was discussed at an AKC Obedience Judging seminar in Seattle. Even though the correct article was retrieved, so was a wrong article resulting in a NQ. A tough decision, so be careful with the articles you choose for scent discrimination. Choose ones that are less likely to tangle!
6. (S) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23: "In the Open and Utility Classes there shall be a substantial penalty for any dog that is physically guided at any time or that is not readily controllable."

7. (NP) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 8: "The handler shall then give the command **or** signal to retrieve."
8. (NQ) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 10 "The handler will then give his dog the direction to the designated glove with a single motion of his left hand and arm along the right side of the dog, **and will give a verbal command** to retrieve either simultaneously with or immediately following the giving of the direction."
A VERBAL command to retrieve is REQUIRED. Keep in mind that the handler's back is to the Judge, so it is the handler's responsibility to give the command in a manner that the Judge can hear. There is no need for a loud command, but if the command is spoken so softly that the Judge cannot hear it, they will leave no choice but to score the dog as having anticipated.
9. (M) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 23: "Minor penalties shall be imposed for a dog that does not respond promptly to its handler's commands or signals before or between exercises in the Open and Utility Classes."
10. (M-S) CHAPTER 2, SECTIONS 20 & 21 comes into play. The head movement (as described) is an aid to the dog and subject to be penalized, minor to substantial. Some may even look at the action as an extra signal and fail the team. Keep in mind that the handler may turn and face the dog as it returns - while the dog is in midair over the jump. The actions of the handler as described in this question took place as the signal was given and **before** the dog took off to jump.
11. (M) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 18; CHAPTER 3, SECTIONS 5, 7 & 8; CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS 12 & 13: All sections deal with Heel Position. As the dog reacted to the signal and stepped aside, it went out of "Straight in line with the direction of the handler." This is a fault in Heeling and needs to be scored. If you don't score it what about the next dog that does it perfectly? If the dog that performed the heeling perfectly was YOURS, how are you going to feel about the Judge that does not score the fault in the dog's before and after you?
12. (NQ) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 15: "A dog must receive a non-qualifying score for the following:...not going out **between** the jumps..."
13. (S) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 14: "...dog to go forward at a brisk trot or gallop to a point **about 20 feet** beyond the jumps and in the approximate center of the unobstructed this point the handler shall give a command to Sit; the dog must stop and sit with his attention on the handler but need not sit squarely." **The handler made an error** and let the dog go to the end of the ring before commanding the dog to sit. The Judge was unable to judge how the dog would have responded to the handler's command to sit. The handler is to give the command at about 20 feet beyond the jumps - not at the ring barrier. How does the handler gauge 20 feet beyond the jumps? Utility rings are 50 feet long with the jumps placed midway. This means there are 25 feet on each side of the jumps. If handlers command their dog to sit at about 5 feet before the end of the ring, the dog will be at about 20 feet beyond the jumps.

14. (NP) CHAPTER 2, SECTION 20: "When a **signal** is permitted and given, it must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only, and the arm must immediately be returned to a natural position." The fact that the handler signaled towards the Bar Jump has no bearing. The dog took the correct jump, following the handler's signal, as ordered by the Judge. The handler could have been signaling to the dog which direction NOT to go. **ANY type of signal** can be given as long as it conforms to the requirements of a signal as defined in the Regulations. A **signal** given in Directed Jumping is not the same as the **direction** given to the dog in the Directed Retrieve exercise. **A direction is a motion that stops. A signal is a continuous motion. This is a prime example of the difference between a signal and a direction as defined in the Regulations! The exercise may be called Directed Jumping but a signal is used not a direction!**
15. (NP) CHAPTER 5, SECTION 14: "While the dog is in **midair** the handler may turn so as to be facing the dog as it returns." The key words are "MAY turn" -- turning is NOT required.

>>>Directed Jumping "Sample" Scoring Grid<<<

3	2	1	0	1	2	3
4	3	2	1	2	3	4
5	4	3	2	3	4	5

AKC Obedience Jump Charts

(Chapter 4, Section 11)

by John Cox ©

Regular Classes + Approved Breeds for ¾ Jump Height & Preferred Classes --- ½ Jump Height
 Measured height nearest multiple of 2" to the height of the dog's withers.



Chart For Once the Height at the Withers

Height to be Jumped	Broad Jump Hurdles	High Jump Chart Board Combinations
4"	(8) 1	4" = 4
8"	(16) 2	8" = 8
10"	(20) 2	10" = 8 + 2
12"	(24) 2	12" = 8 + 4
14"	(28) 3	14" = 8 + 4 + 2
16"	(32) 3	16" = 8 + 8
18"	(36) 3	18" = 8 + 8 + 2
20"	(40) 3	20" = 8 + 8 + 4
22"	(44) 3	22" = 8 + 8 + 4 + 2
24"	(48) 4	24" = 8 + 8 + 8
26"	(52) 4	26" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 2
28"	(56) 4	28" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 4
30"	(60) 4	30" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 4 + 2
32"	(64) 4	32" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 8
34"	(68) 4	34" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 8 + 2
36"	(72) 4	36" = 8 + 8 + 8 + 8 + 4

Chart for ¾ the Height at the Withers

Measured Height	Height to Jump	Broad Jump
Less than 10"	4"	(8) 1
10 to less than 12 1/2"	8"	(16) 2
12 1/2 to less than 15"	10"	(20) 2
15 to less than 17 1/2"	12"	(24) 2
17 1/2 to less than 20"	14"	(28) 3
20 to less than 23"	16"	(32) 3
23 to less than 25 1/2"	18"	(36) 3
25 1/2 to less than 28"	20"	(40) 3
28 to less than 31"	22"	(44) 3
31 to less than 33 1/2"	24"	(48) 4
33 1/2 to less than 36"	26"	(52) 4
36 to less than 39"	28"	(56) 4

Chart for ½ the Height at the Withers (Preferred Open & Preferred Utility)

Measured Height	Height to Jump	Broad Jump
12" or less	4"	(8) 1
Greater than 12" up to 18"	8"	(16) 2
Greater than 18" up to 22"	10"	(20) 2
Greater than 22" up to 26"	12"	(24) 2
Greater than 26" up to 30"	14"	(28) 3
Greater than 30" up to 34"	16"	(32) 3
Greater than 34"	18"	(36) 3



Broad Jump: To cover a distance equal to TWICE the height of the High Jump

4 hurdles shall be used for a jump of 48" to 72"
 3 hurdles shall be used for a jump of 28" to 44"
 2 hurdles shall be used for a jump of 16" to 24"
 1 hurdle shall be used for a jump of 8"

When decreasing the number of hurdles in the Jump, the highest hurdle(s) shall be removed first.

51 Approved Breeds Jumping ¾ Their Height at the Withers --- Effective August 1, 2012

Akita	Dandie Dinmount Terrier	Newfoundland
Argentine Dogo	Dogue De Bordeaux	Norwich Terrier
Basset Hound	Estrela Mountain Dog	Otterhound
Bergamasco	French Bulldog	Pekingese
Bernese Mountain Dog	Glen of Imaal Terrier	Pembroke Welsh Corgi
Black Russian Terrier	Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen	Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen
Bloodhound	Great Dane	Portuguese Podengo
Bolognese	Great Pyrenees	Pugs
Borzo	Greater Swiss Mountain Dog	Saint Bernard
Bulldog	Irish Wolfhound	Scottish Terriers
Bullmastiff	Kishu Ken	Sealyham Terrier
Cardigan Welsh Corgi	Kooikerhondje	Shih Tzu
Caucasian Mountain Dog	Kuvaszok	Skye Terrier
Chinese Shar-Pei	Lagotto Romagnolo	Sussex Spaniel
Chow Chow	Leonberger	Swedish Vallhunds
Clumber Spaniel	Mastiff	Thai Ridgeback
Dachshund	Neopolitan Mastiff	West Highland White Terrier