



## General Judging Guidelines

Consistent judging is critical. Judges are expected to have full understanding of all judging guidelines. As with any dog sport, there may be areas of interpretation, and judges are required to make those interpretations fairly and consistently.

Exhibitors are also expected to be familiar with judging guidelines. Judges may, but are not required to, discuss an exhibitor's scoring after the class has finished and the judge has signed the Trial Recap Sheet. Judges are not to enter into any discussions with an angry or argumentative exhibitor. If an exhibitor feels that their performance was not scored fairly, they may file a complaint with the trial secretary or directly with the CDSP Coordinator.

### **Qualifying Performance**

Each team enters the ring with a perfect score of 200. As errors are made, deductions are noted on the scoresheet. A final score of 170 or better is considered a qualifying performance, provided the team has scored at least 50% of the individual point values for each exercise. While this is a natural style of competitive obedience, half point deductions will be made and precision is important. Dogs who exhibit fear, aggressiveness, eliminate or become ill in the ring will not receive a qualifying score. Handlers who discipline their dogs while in the ring will be excused. A judge will not require a handler or dog to do anything not outlined in these Guidelines nor will a judge penalize a handler or dog for anything not outlined in these Guidelines.

### **Deductions**

- Minor deductions: ½ pt and 1 pt.
- Substantial/major deductions: 2 or more points
- Additional cues: 3 points
- When hand signals are used, either alone or in combination with a verbal cue, the hand must be returned to a natural position after giving the signal. If, in the Judge's opinion, the handler does not return her/his hand to a natural position within a reasonable time after giving the hand signal, minor to substantial deductions will be taken. If in the Judge's opinion, the hand signal is held and appears to be used as a lure, a non-qualifying score will be given for the exercise.
- 5 point deduction shall be used in those instances where the dog takes the jump, though not directed or intended to do so.
- Other deductions as described in Scoring the Exercise.

| **Bonus Points**: Bonus Points are no longer awarded to exhibitors.

### **Judge's Instructions**

- Before beginning each exercise, the Judge will ask the handler "Are You Ready?".



- Once the handler has indicated she/he is ready, the Judge will instruct the handler "Forward" for all exercises that begin with heeling. For other exercises, the Judge's first instructions are noted in the exercise description.
- Judging begins once the handler has indicated she/he is ready.
- When the team has completed all features of an exercise, the Judge will say "Exercise Finished" and judging for that exercise is complete.

### Stewards

- Judges must advise stewards that they are not to make eye contact with dogs during the distraction portion of the On-Leash Heeling Pattern or the Off-Leash Figure 8 Heeling Pattern.

### Jump Heights

- Jump height for the bar and high jumps will be based on 3/4 the dog's height at the shoulders and rounded to the nearest height divisible by 2, based on the following:
  - ⇒ for dogs under the age of seven, the jump height will be rounded up
  - ⇒ for dogs seven and older (veterans), the jump height will be rounded down
- The broad jump will be set at twice the dog's jump height.
- The minimum jump height will be 4 inches, maximum 22 inches.

### Jump Construction

- The bar jump will consist of a bar between 2 and 2 ½ inches square with the edges rounded to remove any sharpness. The bar will be painted or taped with alternating black and white "stripes" about three inches wide. The bar will be supported by two unconnected 4 foot upright posts approximately 4 - 5 feet apart. The posts must be adjustable for each two inches of height. For safety, the jump must be built so that the bar may be knocked over without affecting the uprights.
- The high jump will be four or five feet wide and painted white. The uprights of the high jump will be four feet high. It is suggested that the bottom board measure 4 inches from its top to the floor or ground. In addition, there must be a 2 inch board and a sufficient number of 8 inch boards to accommodate all possible jump height adjustments. The height of each board must be clearly marked in black numbers. The high jump may be made of wood or plastic.
- The broad jump must have four nesting hurdles. They must all be approximately 8 inches wide, 4 feet in length and must all be painted white. The broad jump may be made of wood or plastic.

### Interference and Double Handling

Exhibitors and spectators are not allowed to interfere or assist in any way with a team that is working in the ring. Instances of interference and/or double handling will result in the working team's performance being judged as non-



qualifying if the assistance is perceived to assist the team or the judge may decide to ask the team to repeat their performance if the situation appears to be intended to adversely effect the working team. Exhibitors who are found to be interfering with a working team's performance will be asked to leave the grounds and receive a non-qualifying score for the day and any involved spectators will be asked to leave the grounds as well.

### **Unusual Conditions**

If during a team's performance in the ring, an unusual condition arises that could negatively affect the team's performance, the judge may have the team perform that portion of an exercise again.

### **Ties**

In the case of a tie for placements in the Novice class, each team will again perform the Heel On Leash exercise. In the Open class, each team will again perform the Off Leash Heeling exercise. In the Utility class, each team will perform an off leash heeling pattern.

In the Utility class only, the judge will walk the heeling pattern before calling it for the tied teams.

The original scores will not be changed.

### **Scoresheets and Trial Score Report Sheets**

The judge will determine the number of points deducted from each team's performance immediately after the team completes their performance and before the next dog enters the ring. The judge will then give the scoresheet to the Desk Steward, who will calculate the score and note it on the scoresheet and enter it on the Trial Score Log Sheets. Before determining placements, the judge must double check to insure scores were calculated properly. The judge must initial the scoresheet and sign the Trial Score Report Sheets at the end of the trial. In the Novice class, the Judge must calculate the deductions up to the Honor Exercise. The Honor Steward will score the Honor Exercise and will give the scoresheet to the Desk Steward. The Judge must double check the calculations.

- Scoresheets may not be given to exhibitors at the end of a trial, nor may copies of the scoresheet be made and given to the exhibitors.
- Exhibitors may review their scoresheets at the Desk Steward's table AFTER the judge has signed the Trial Recap sheets, and awards have been given.
- Exhibitor scores shall not be posted. Scores will be announced by the judge at the end of the class.

### **Physically Challenged Handlers and Dogs**

Dogs and/or handlers with disabilities are allowed to compete, provided the dog does not appear to be in pain. The judge has the right to refuse entry



into the ring if a dog appears to be in pain. The judge will excuse from the ring any dog that becomes lame during any of the exercises.

Handlers may submit Exercise Modification Forms if they require an exercise to be modified to accommodate their or the dog's disability. The Exercise Modification Form must be submitted to the judge for approval before the class begins and if approved, is to be attached to the team's scoresheet. Judges have full discretion to approve or deny any exercise modification request. Judges may deny an exercise modification request if, in the judge's opinion, the modification does not reflect the principal feature(s) of an exercise.

### Change of Handler

Only the handler listed on the entry form as submitted to the trial host may show the dog at a specific trial. There is no 'swapping of handlers'.

### Entering the Wrong Class

If a handler has entered the incorrect class, it cannot be changed on the day of trial and trial scores will be null and void.

### Move-Ups

In instances where a trial host is offering a two (or more) day trial, exhibitors may move into the next class under the following guidelines:

- The move may not be made into a higher level class on the same day that an exhibitor believes he/she has earned their third qualifying score in the lower level class. The move into a higher level class may only be made for the next day. *For example: Exhibitor A believes she has finished her Novice title at the conclusion of a Saturday morning trial. Exhibitor A may move into the Open class for the Sunday trial but may not move into the Open class for the Saturday afternoon trial.*
- The Trial Representative, Trial Host and exhibitor must complete the Class Move Up form.
- A copy of the completed and signed form must be included with post trial paperwork sent to the CDSP Coordinator.
- The Trial Host must include the dog's registration number, registered name, handler's name and score on the Trial Score Log Sheet.
- The exhibitor must initial the information on the Trial Score Log Sheet.
- In the event an exhibitor has entered a future trial in a lower level class and wishes to change their entry to a higher level class, the exhibitor has two options:
  1. The exhibitor may notify the Trial Secretary in advance and may change their entry according to the Trial Host's policy OR
  2. The exhibitor may notify the Trial Secretary on the day of trial, no later than 30 minutes before the class is scheduled to be judged. If the Trial Host will accept the move up, the Class Move Up form must be completed as above.



Information on the Class Move Up form must be legible and complete. If information is illegible and/or incomplete, the Trial Host is not permitted to honor the request and/or process the form.

In the event the exhibitor is mistaken in believing that they are eligible to move into the next higher level class (they have not earned the lower level title required), all scores for the higher level class will be considered invalid.

### **Judging Order**

Dogs should be judged in entry (or catalog) order if it does not hold up judging of the entire class. It is recommended that entry order be arranged according to the dog's jump height. Judges are not required to delay judging for any dog that is not ready at ring side at their turn. If there is a conflict with an entry in another class, the handler may request, before the class begins, to be judged in an order other than their entry order. If no request is made, the judge must mark as absent any dog who is not ready to be judged in entry/catalog order. Absent dogs will not be judged after the class is completed nor will entry fees be refunded in this instance.

### **Leash**

All dogs must be kept on leash except when in the obedience ring, warm-up or exercise area. Dogs must be on leash when brought into the ring and when leaving the ring. The leash must be made of fabric or leather and be no longer than 6 ft. long. The leash must be long enough to provide adequate slack when held.

Slip leads (leashes with choke collar as part of the leash) are not permitted, nor are conformation-type slip leads.

### **Collars**

Collars may be flat, buckle type collars or limited slip martingale type collars. No choke collars, head collars, prong collars, electronic collars. Body harnesses may be allowed if the dog is required to wear one due to medical reasons. In this case, the handler must furnish a veterinarian's note stating this. Collars must be properly fitted and while they may have tags on them, the tags must not interfere with a dog's movement. Dogs may not have decorative items around their neck nor on their collars.

### **Heel Position**

The dog should be at the handler's left side and straight in line with the direction the handler is facing. The dog should be close to the handler but should not be so close as to crowd the handler and prevent the handler from moving naturally. The area from the dog's head to its shoulder should be in line with the handler's left hip. Heel position applies to instances where the dog is sitting, lying down, standing or moving next to the handler.



## Hands

Hands and arms must be held in a natural position at all time. In the event a handler chooses to give a hand signal, the hand must be returned to a natural position after giving the signal. At no time may it appear that the handler is using their hands/arms to pretend to lure the dog, as with food.

## Cues

Handlers may use hand and verbal cues simultaneously for all exercises, with the exception of the Signals Exercise in Utility. Only hand cues may be used during this exercise. Once a cue has been given; either hand, verbal or hand/verbal, additional cues will be penalized with a three point deduction, regardless of the type of additional cue given. The dog's name may be used preceding any cue without penalty and may be used as a cue in and of itself. Loud verbal cues are to be penalized. Once an error has been made that results in a non-qualifying score, handlers may not give additional cues to perform that portion of an exercise again.

## Praise and Encouragement

Handlers are allowed to praise and encourage their dogs during an exercise. The praise and encouragement must be calm, quiet and pleasant. Repeating a verbal cue given to perform an exercise is not considered praise or encouragement and will be penalized as an additional cue. Overly exuberant, loud and/or unpleasant praise and encouragement will be penalized. Handlers may not tap their legs or clap their hands as encouragement.

## Food Rewards

Handlers are allowed to reward their dog with a food treat at the completion of all features of an exercise after the judge has said "Exercise Finished" if they so choose. This must be done before the team begins to move forward to the next exercise as directed by the judge.

- Handlers who choose to use food rewards must indicate this on their entry form and will exhibit at the end of the entry order.
- Handlers may not change from non-food to food or food to non-food once an entry has been submitted to the trial host.
- Handlers may not lure a dog with food, nor pretend to have food in their hand. Food rewards are to be kept hidden in the handler's pocket only. No bait bags, fanny pouches, etc are allowed and handlers may not have food in their mouths.
- Handlers must use food that can easily and quickly be swallowed by the dog and may not use food rewards that might create crumbs while the dog is swallowing it.
- A 5-point deduction will be taken in the event the handler drops the food on the ring surface.
- Handlers who lure or appear to lure a dog will receive a non-qualifying score.
- Handlers may not enter the ring with food in their hand. This should be



considered luring, and the team will receive a non-qualifying score.

### **Handling between Exercises**

In the Novice class, the handler may gently take the dog by the collar and guide the dog to the place indicated by the judge for the next exercise. This is not allowed in the Open or Utility classes and deductions at the judge's discretion will be taken for physical guidance in-between exercises, as it is expected the dog be under verbal control in these classes. Dogs who are not under verbal control between exercises in Open or Utility will receive score deductions.

### **Misbehavior**

Any dog who exhibits fear, nervousness or timidity or any uncontrolled behavior such as snapping, barking or running away from the handler will be penalized, to the maximum penalty of receiving a non-qualifying score. This applies in-between exercises as well as during exercises. If a dog leaves the ring during the transition from one exercise to another and the handler is successful in calling the dog back, a substantial/major deduction must be taken. If a dog leaves the ring during the performance of an exercise, a penalty must be taken to the maximum penalty of receiving a non-qualifying score. A dog that eliminates or becomes ill in the ring will receive a non-qualifying score and be excused from the ring.

The Host Organization and the Representative are required to file reports with the trial paperwork for the following types of incidents:

- A dog that threatens the handler, judge or any spectators will receive a non-qualifying score and be excused from the ring.
- Any dog who attempts to bite/attack or bites/attacks another dog or a person, inside and/or outside the ring will be removed from the show grounds immediately and will be permanently banned from all sanctioned CDSP events.
- Handlers who deliver harsh corrections inside and/or outside the ring will be excused from the day's events and asked to leave the grounds.

*CDSP reserves the right to investigate all incident reports and determine additional penalties.*

### **Exhibitor Requests to be Excused**

The judge should honor any exhibitor's request to be excused from the ring and should note this on the scoresheet.

