



THE KENNEL CLUB

Making a difference for dogs

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The Revised Kennel Club Breed Standards

21st February 2013

Re: Judges and Judging

This is the third of what has become an annual mailing to all Challenge Certificate Judges to provide you with an update on new initiatives and a reminder of the various resources which are available to you as a KC approved judge.

Fit for Function, Fit for Life – Canine Health and Welfare

The Kennel Club, Breed Clubs, Breeders, Exhibitors and Judges are all working hard to improve and maintain the health of pedigree dogs. It is important to recognise that as a Championship Show judge you strongly influence the future development of the breed(s) you judge. Given the fact that one of the most significant functions of a dog show is to identify stock from which to breed; it is essential that you take into account the well-being of the dogs you judge and by implication the stock that will be bred from these dogs. Over recent years the Kennel Club has provided you with the regulations needed to focus on this aspect of your judging and a summary of these decisions is given below;

- **Breed Standards (www.thekennelclub.org.uk/breedstandards)**

All Breed Standards now carry a uniform introductory paragraph pointing out the importance of avoiding obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of each breed.

- **Code of Best Practice for Judges (www.thekennelclub.org.uk/download/488/guidejudges.pdf)**

The most recent edition of this Code (2012) now includes a chapter on Canine Health and Welfare. This chapter explains in more detail the principal responsibilities of the judge in the show ring including the fact that judges should never award prizes to dogs which are visibly suffering from any condition which would adversely affect their health or welfare. The Code goes on to explain what, in particular judges should look out for whilst judging.

- **Breed Watch (www.breedwatch.org.uk)**

The Breed Watch website is part of the Fit for Function, Fit for Life pages. Breed Watch was established to help judges and breed clubs to feedback any areas of concern that may arise that need to be monitored, and where appropriate, addressed. Particular points of concern would be emerging problems and/or undesirable trends. We would strongly recommend that as part of the preparation for a judging appointment judges not only review the relevant breed's Breed Standard but check to see whether the breed is featured on Breed Watch and whether there are any features to look out for. Individual breed pages can be printed out so that judges can take the page with them to shows.

- **Show Regulations (www.thekennelclub.org.uk/item/2966)**

There are quite a number of new show regulations which have been introduced to give judges the confidence and authority to make decisions in the show ring when presented with exhibits which they consider have a visible condition which adversely affects its health or welfare.

The Code of Best Practice for judges clearly states that judges must not award prizes to dogs which are visibly suffering – several examples of conditions which would adversely affect a dog's health or welfare are given in the code.

The Show Regulations also confirm that;

- Awarding a Best of Breed is no longer mandatory, as a judge you have discretion as to whether you make this award, this change is relevant to all types of licensed show.
- As a judge you may request or suggest to a handler that an exhibit be **withdrawn** from competition. This is particularly useful when a dog may not be going well or may have another visible problem and where you would prefer not to have to withhold an award. Remember a judge must not award prizes to dogs which are visibly suffering. Any withdrawal must be reported to the Show Secretary who will then forward the details to the Kennel Club after the show.
- Awards may be **withheld** due to lack of sufficient merit associated to either breed type or any health or welfare problem. You should mark your judging slips accordingly. Remember, if you withhold third in a class, you must withhold all subsequent awards in that class.
- A dog may be **excluded** from competition due to temperament, soundness or health and welfare issues. Any exclusion must be reported as soon as possible to the Show Secretary who will forward the details to the Kennel Club after the show. This is obviously the most extreme of the actions available to a judge and it is not anticipated that exclusions will happen on a regular basis. However the option is open to you as a judge.

NB: You should keep any explanation to the exhibitor to the minimum and should not offer an opinion on what might be the cause of the dog's problem in other words no veterinary diagnosis.

Judges Briefing Note (www.thekennelclub.org.uk/item/272)

It is appreciated that the responsibilities of judges at Kennel Club dog shows has, over recent years increased and that it is not always easy to keep up to date with regulation changes and other news. Therefore all of the information included above has been summarised in a document call the **Briefing Note for Judges at Kennel Club Dog Shows**. The document can be printed out from the website and we recommend that you take it with you to shows as an aide memoire. A copy of the briefing note is reproduced with this letter.

Critiques & Breed Health Monitoring Forms

The importance of providing critiques cannot be stressed enough. Exhibitors are very keen to read critiques on their dogs. Judges at Championship and Open Breed Club shows are required to produce written critiques on the first two placings in each class. Some judges like to include an introduction giving their thoughts on the state of the breed. Provided there is a large representative entry, if one virtue or fault is common then the introduction is a useful way to bringing it to the attention of breeders, exhibitors and fellow judges. A comprehensive guide to writing a critique is included in the Code of Best Practice for Judges.

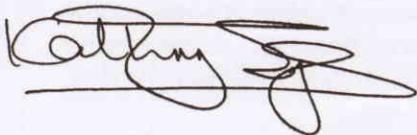
When expected to do so judges must submit a completed **breed health monitoring form** and critique to the Kennel Club within 21 days of the show. These forms are essential in gathering up to date information on the status of a breed, particularly the high profile breeds.

Directory of Championship Show Judges (www.the-kennel-club.org.uk/services/public/judge)

The Directory is available on the Kennel Club website and it has proved to be an extremely useful tool for championship show secretaries in helping them locate available judges. The Directory provides an alphabetical listing of all judges, by surname together with their contact details and confirms the breed/s each judge has previously been approved to judge with Challenge Certificates, Groups and Best in Show. It is therefore important that your contact details are correct and up to date. If you wish your Kennel Club record to be updated please contact the Judges Section preferably by email at cat@thekennelclub.org.uk or telephone 020 7518 1059.

As a judge, you are eligible to receive exclusive offers on some of the Kennel Club publications including a discount on 'The Code of Best Practice for Judging', offered at just £1.50. Please see overleaf for more exclusive offers.

Yours sincerely,



Kathryn Symms

Executive-Canine Activities