

**MINUTES OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL MEETING HELD
AT THE KENNEL CLUB ON 15 FEBRUARY 2006 AT 10.30 AM.**

PRESENT:

Mr D Ray	Midlands
Mrs J Gardner	Midlands
Mr I Mallabar	North East
Mrs J Nero	North East
Mrs P Baltes	North West
Mr M Hallam	North West
Mr D Duncan	Northern Ireland
Dr V Marrian	Scotland
Mr T Felstead	South East and East Anglia
Mr J Gilbert	South East and East Anglia
Ms L Olden	South and South West
Mr M Shaw	Wales

IN ATTENDANCE:

Miss D Deuchar Senior Administrator - WTOA

IN THE CHAIR: MR D RAY

1. Mr Ray welcomed the new Council representatives to their first meeting, Mrs Jackie Gardner representing the Midlands area, Mrs Janet Nero representing the North East, Mr Mike Hallam representing the North West area and Mr Mike Shaw, the Welsh representative. The previous Council members were all thanked for their hard work and support whilst they had served on the Agility Liaison Council.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr T Griffin who was due to have surgery later that week. The Council wished him a speedy recovery.

ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

3. The Chairman signed the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 July 2005 as an accurate record.

ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Kennel Club International Agility Festival. The Chairman informed the Council that the schedule had been published and requested assistance from all the Council members to help run the show. The majority of representatives confirmed they would be attending and able to assist in various ways.
5. The wording in the schedule of the Novice and Starter Cup classes was queried. It was confirmed that a typing error had been made which would be amended. In the event of a tie for the cumulative results the highest place in agility will take the higher place.
6. Proposed Changes to Eligibility and Schedule of Classes. The Council discussed queries that had been raised at various area liaison meetings. It was confirmed that in a graded class a different course and course time could be used for each grade, at the judge's discretion, as each grade would have a separate result. This would be particularly relevant if a class needed to be split with different grades taking place in different rings. It was also confirmed that should entries warrant, a graded class must be split by grade in the first instance, then if necessary each grade could be split randomly. It was clarified that a combined class must be split randomly, in the same manner as classes are split currently. Show entry forms would also require amendment to include a box for the dog's grade to be stated.
7. Concern had been expressed from several areas that the introduction of progressing to the next grade within 10 days had not been pursued, as it was generally thought to be a good idea. It was confirmed that some research would be done concerning the numbers involved if this amendment was progressed, and the proposal would be brought back to the Council for further discussion at a later date. A couple of areas had also expressed concern that an experienced handler could no longer run a 'starter' dog. At present an experienced handler could run someone else's dog in a Novice class but this would not be possible under the proposed new system as a dog could only compete in its own grade. It was confirmed that this only related to graded classes and dogs that were eligible to compete in grade 1 (Elementary) or grade 2 (Starters).
8. It was agreed that some of the Regulation wording required amendment, to be more easily understood. Following a lengthy discussion, a vote took place with 10 being in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention, the Council **recommended** the following Regulation amendments for approval, with effect from 1 January 2007:

Regulation H(1)(A)

6. **Class Structure.** A Class may either be held as a Graded Class or a Combined Class. A Graded Class may be scheduled for one or more consecutive Grades with separate results and awards issued for each grade. A Combined Class may be scheduled for more than one consecutive grade with one overall set of results.

7. **Progression.** Progression from each Grade will require one Agility win or three Jumping wins at that grade, except that progression from Grade 6 will require 4 wins at Grade 6, two of which must be agility classes. Results from Combined classes will only count towards progression from the dog's current grade.

8. **Points Progression.** At the handler's discretion a dog may progress up to Grade 5 by winning 75 points at each grade, using the Agility Warrant points scheme, Regulation K.3.c refers, except that there is no requirement for a minimum number of agility points. If this method of progression is selected, the handler must ensure the dog's Agility Record Book is signed by the Show Secretary at the first show entered at the higher grade. There is no time limit on this progression, however, once a dog has progressed, it cannot return to a previous grade.

9. **STANDARD CLASSES**
Only first prizes and points gained in standard classes at Kennel Club licensed Agility Tests may be used for progression through the classes. (A dog is only eligible for one grade).
 - a. **Grade 1 (Elementary)**
For owners, handlers or dogs which have not gained a first place in an Agility Class or three first places in Jumping Classes at Kennel Club licensed Agility Tests. N.B. Owners, handlers or dogs previously qualified out of Grade 1, (Elementary) are not eligible for this class.

 - b. **Grade 2 (Starters)**
For owners, handlers or dogs which have qualified out of Grade 1 but have not gained a first place in an Agility Class or three first places in Jumping Classes at Grade 2, or elected to progress on points from Grade 1. N.B. Owners, handlers or dogs previously qualified out of Grade 2 (Starters) are not eligible for this class.

 - c. **Grade 3 (Graduate)**
Open to dogs which are not eligible for Grade 1 or 2 or have elected to progress on points from Grade 2 and dogs which are not eligible for Grade 4, 5, 6 or 7.

 - d. **Grade 4 (Novice)**
Open to dogs which have gained a first place in an Agility Class or three first places in Jumping Classes at Grade 3 or elected to progress on points from Grade 3 at Kennel Club licensed Agility Tests and are not eligible for Grade 3, 5, 6 or 7.

e. **Grade 5 (Intermediate)**

Open to dogs which have gained a first place in an Agility Class or three first places in Jumping Classes at Grade 4 or elected to progress on points from Grade 4 at Kennel Club licensed Agility Tests and are not eligible for Grade 3, 4, 6 or 7.

f. **Grade 6 (Senior)**

Open to dogs which have gained a first place in an Agility Class or three first places in Jumping Classes at Grade 5 at Kennel Club licensed Agility Tests and are not eligible for Grade 3, 4, 5 or 7.

g. **Grade 7 (Advanced)**

Open to dogs which have gained a minimum of 4 first places at Grade 6 at Kennel Club Licensed Agility Test, 2 first places must be gained in Agility (not Jumping) Classes.

h. **Championship Class.**

Open to dogs having qualified to compete in Grade 7. To consist of 2 qualifying rounds of Standard Kennel Club Classes, 1 Agility Class and 1 Jumping Class and a final round of Agility to be held at the same Show.

(Amendments underlined).

9. First Prizes. The Council agreed the principle that a first place to count towards progression must be a clear round, although rosettes and prizes could be awarded. It was agreed that the proposed wording could be misleading and some Societies may be unsure whether they could award the rosettes. An amended wording, to clarify this point, was suggested by Mr Felstead and seconded by Mr Hallam. Following a unanimous vote, the Council **recommended** an amendment to Regulation H(1)(A).2 as follows:

FROM:

In the following definitions of classes First Prizes or other prize wins are those gained in standard classes at any Kennel Club licensed Open Agility Tests (i.e. Limited Agility Tests, special classes and invitation events excepted).

TO:

In the following definitions of classes First Prizes or other prize wins are those gained in standard classes at any Kennel Club licensed Open Agility Tests (i.e. Limited Agility Tests, special classes and invitation events excepted).

Only a first place with a clear round will count towards grade progression.

(Amendment underlined).

10. Agility Warrant. The Council agreed the suggestion for three levels of certificate, with a cumulative number of points being required of 200 points for Bronze, 400 points for Silver and 800 points for Gold. The Council

recommended approval of this initiative, although it was not unanimously supported. It was queried whether a Regulation amendment would be required before this initiative could be processed.

Afternote: A Regulation amendment would be required and this would be prepared by the office.

11. Championship Qualification. The Council agreed the principle of requiring a qualification for Championship classes but stated it was too soon to introduce this. It was agreed there were currently not enough advanced classes to ensure dogs could qualify, using the proposed method, and this would restrict the Championship class entry further.
12. Wishing Well. The Council noted the drawings of the proposed dimensions but was concerned that the small and medium wishing wells would still not be stable. There was also concern that the overall height would be the same size for all dogs with only the base and pole being lowered for the small and medium dogs, which would not be aesthetically pleasing. It was accepted that if the roof was lower for these dogs it may be hazardous to handlers. Concern was also expressed that the height of the base had not been lowered with the new jump heights for large dogs, but the distance between the base and the pole had been reduced.
13. Dr Marrian and Mr Ray agreed to arrange for amended plans to be prepared for the next meeting, when the proposals would be further discussed. It was suggested that the words 'lych-gate' should also be removed from the Regulation. It was appreciated that the large dog wishing well was cumbersome to transport but if a judge requested it, one should be made available. The Council reiterated that as there were no Regulations for Small or Medium Wishing Wells they could not be used in competition.
14. Championship for Medium Dogs. The Council noted the list of Societies approved to hold Medium Dog Agility Championship Classes from 2006 and that Wilton Agility Club had also been approved.
15. Dog Agility Measurers. The Council agreed that more measurers were required for many areas and **recommended** individuals for approval. It was reiterated that measuring sessions should be held away from shows wherever possible, to ensure a relaxed atmosphere for the dogs.

ITEM 4. PROPOSALS

16. Entry Form Regulations. The Council was advised that the proposal was not acceptable to the Kennel Club; any entry that was not submitted correctly should be returned. It was explained how internet entries were processed and that owners had to confirm they would abide by Kennel Club Regulations.
17. Amendment to Weaving Poles Regulation H(1)(B).3.k. The Council expressed its disappointment that no explanation had been submitted with the proposal. It was noted that the amendment had been proposed as the weaving poles were the only obstacle that could be different at each show. The proposal did not receive a seconder and was not supported.

ITEM 5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

18. Timing Failure. A discussion took place concerning the best course of action that should be taken if the timing failed. The Council noted that timing failure was often used as an excuse when it had not been operated correctly. Some areas felt there should be a Regulation to cover this eventuality, which would be more supportive to the judge. The suggestion would be that only clear rounds could have a re-run, for time and faults. A faulted round would only be permitted a re-run if a time was required for the placings, in which case the faults would be carried forward to the re-run. However, the majority of the Council agreed that the decision should be left to the judge's discretion, although what would happen should be stated in the briefing.
19. Crufts Agility Rules. The Council was advised that the 2006 rules had been published but would be reviewed for 2007, as other options for agility at Crufts were also being investigated. The Council requested that when these rules were reviewed they should be presented as rules rather than guidelines. Clarification was also sought about reserves and it was suggested that these should be stipulated on the entry forms. It was also noted that some teams had qualified for Crufts representing Societies that did not have an interest in agility and the Council requested this be reviewed, as it felt this should not be allowed to happen.
20. The 'note' should also be amended, to specify that qualified teams could compete in competitions where the entries had already closed, rather than stating 'entered', as some societies may enter the whole year's qualifiers at the beginning of the season. It was also suggested that instead of precluding all teams from a qualified Society, remaining teams should be allowed to compete in further qualifiers but not allowed to qualify.
21. The Council went on to offer suggestions for alternative competitions at Crufts and different methods of qualifying. It was observed that there were currently no qualifiers in the North West and regional qualifiers were therefore suggested. It was noted that there were no vacancies for qualifiers under the present system as they would not be taken away from existing shows. It was also noted that there would be a Medium Dog Championship Class at Crufts 2007 and the possibility of Small and Medium teams was being investigated,

although there was a limit on the number of events that could be held due to time constraints. It was acknowledged that some Societies were Kennel Club registered solely to allow them to qualify for the team event at Crufts, and it was agreed this should remain the case and individual groups of competitors should not be allowed to compete.

22. Running Orders for the Final Round of Championship Classes. It was noted that in some cases Societies had prepared the Championship running orders using different methods. Regulation H(1)(A).7.d. specified how to calculate the running order if there was a tie for the last place, but not for higher places. Mrs Baltes was thanked for preparing the clear formula for calculating running orders and this would be issued to Championship Societies as guidance, with a few minor amendments. It was agreed that if the above Regulation was amended by deleting the words 'for the last place' this would clarify how to calculate any equal place. Mrs Baltes agreed to prepare an amendment for the next meeting.
(Annex A refers)
23. Championship Agility Class Judges Criteria. The Council reiterated that the requirement was for a person to have judged at ten different shows. The Council was advised that the Working Trials, Obedience and Agility Sub-Committee would be discussing amending the Agility Regulations to specify Shows instead of Tests at its next meeting.

ITEM 6. JUDGES WORKING PARTY

24. The Chairman had prepared a written report which was tabled. It was explained that a new complaints procedure was being investigated, allowing complaints against a judge's performance instead of a Breach of Regulation. It was clarified that complaints such as a judge drinking in the ring or continuously talking to spectators at the ring side could then be investigated. There was a mixed response to this suggestion as judges were voluntary and should be encouraged, and have the support of the Kennel Club. There was some concern that complaints could be malicious and the Council agreed that the organising Society should be involved in any discussion about a complaint.
25. The Council was advised that the seminar on Course Building and Judging was nearly complete and the current Accredited Trainers would be attending a seminar training day at the Kennel Club shortly. The Council expressed concern that it had not seen the seminar paperwork and could therefore not discuss it. However, it was **recommended** that the seminar should be compulsory for new judges.
(Annex B refers for Council Representatives only)
26. The Chairman had requested the Council's views on a formal mentoring system for new Championship Judges at their first appointment. The Council felt this was already undertaken, albeit informally, by friends and colleagues. It was explained that if there was any concern about a judge's performance they could be assessed by a WTOA representative.

27. The Council **recommended** that more accredited trainers should be approved for the Regulations and Judging Procedure seminars, particularly in the Midlands and the North as it was proving difficult to arrange seminars. It was noted that the existing Accredited Trainers may not be approved for the practical seminar, as different skills could be required.

ITEM 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **Wednesday 12 July 2006**. Items for inclusion on the agenda should reach the office by **12 April 2006**.

ITEM 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

29. Measuring Large Dogs. It was queried whether a second measurement should be required for dogs that were obviously small or obviously large. It was confirmed that a Regulation amendment would be required to amend this procedure. It was also queried whether a dog that had competed in standard height classes during 2005 was required to be measured if it was a borderline medium. It was reiterated that there was now a minimum height for large dogs and it had been the Council's original intention that dogs could only compete in one height category. It was **recommended** that clarification would be sought from the WTOA Sub-Committee.
30. Reduction of Venues and Judges. Concern was expressed about the number of venues and judges being lost to Kennel Club licensed shows due to the number of unaffiliated shows being held. It was accepted that not much could be done about this, except ensure licensed shows were supported. It was queried whether individuals could be granted licences, charged a higher fee for them and for the cost of having a Field Officer present.
31. Week Numbers. The Council was extremely concerned about the inception of all agility shows being licensed by week numbers. It was agreed this was impractical for many reasons, as it was sometimes not possible to obtain the required venue on the specified date, shows were often held alongside Agricultural Shows and dates could not be chosen for these, in addition to shows held over bank holiday weeks, school holidays etc. The Council emphatically **recommended** that the inception of week numbers be rescinded and that a long term calendar should be published on the internet, indicating which shows had been applied for.
32. The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm.

D.RAY
Acting Chairman

Running Orders for the Final Round of Championship Classes

Below is the procedure to follow for providing a uniform method for calculating the points to obtain a running order for the Final Round of a Championship Class.

Carry out the following procedure|:-

1. Prepare a list in ring number sequence for the whole class.
2. On completion of part 1, and after the score tickets have been sorted into placing order, transfer the results of this class to a master score sheet. Allocating points for the placings as follows:-

1st place 1 point, 2nd place 2 points, 3rd place 3 points etc
3. On completion of the second part of the class carry out the same procedure as above allocating points for the placings and clear rounds.
4. Total the 2 sets of points gained from each part of the class together, rejecting the scores of any dogs who are eliminated in either section.
5. The top 50% of the class entry, up to a maximum of 20 dogs, with the lowest scores will be eligible for the final round.
6. When the points are added together there could be an occasion when more than one dog has the same number of points. To enable the correct dogs to be selected for the final part and enable allocation of the running order for the final, it is then necessary to have a uniform method of placing these dogs as follows:-

Dog 11 – 32 points, Dog 9 - 32 points, Dog 25 – 32 points

7 Look at the individual dogs' results:

Ring no	F	Time	Place Jumping	F	Time	Place	Points	Combined time Jumping & Agility		Final running Order
011	5	24.11	18	0	30.26	14	32*	54.37	5 faults	16 th
009	0	23.07	12	5	30.51	20	32*	53.58	5 faults	15 th
025	0	24.05	16	0	30.28	16	32*	54.33	Clear	14 th

8 Add the time of dog 11
 $24.11 + 30.26 = 54.37$ total time, with 5 faults.

Dog 25 - 24.05 jumping + 30.28 agility = 54.33 combined time, clear rounds no faults.

9. The dog with the least faults should be allocated a higher place in the running order.

10. Therefore dog 25 would be selected before dogs 9 and 11 based on least faults. Hence in the example above the placings for the final round would be: dog 025 14th place, dog 009 15th place and dog 011 16th place.