

Agility Rule Changes

Effective January 1, 2010

The UKC Dog Events Department has been working on updating the Agility Rulebook. The process started by sending requests to all UKC Agility Judges and clubs for suggestions and recommendations to correct and clarify the existing rules, and for ideas for updating the rules. Thanks to the many Agility Judges and Clubs who responded; excellent suggestions were received, and the updates to the agility rules are based upon those suggestions.

After the suggestions were received, each one was compared to the existing rules and the overall philosophy of UKC. Several good ideas had to be rejected because they would require significant changes to equipment, or place additional burdens on course-builders and trial secretaries. Several ideas, such as an additional event or "game", were reserved for further consideration. The updates that are being implemented will hopefully add clarity to the rules, provide more uniformity in judging, and also to recognize that the sport of dog agility, with the unique characteristics of the sport within UKC, is continually evolving from its origins in NCDA, while keeping the concepts initially developed by Charles "Bud" Kramer. Hopefully, exhibitors, judges and trial secretaries will appreciate the efforts by numerous contributors to help formulate these updates.

The updated rules may now be found on the UKC website and a rulebook is available. Since there is only a short time before these rules will be effective, everyone participating in UKC agility should make every effort to review the rules.

The following summary of the rule changes are not intended to replace, supplement, nor add interpretation of the updated rules, but only to assist the reader in locating many of the changes

Major Changes

- **A veteran division has been added.** The Handler may choose to run a dog seven (7) years or older as a veteran dog, still in the same class. All legs earned toward a title will continue to count. The handler must indicate on the entry form that the dog is a veteran dog. Veteran dogs will generally run at different hurdle and crawl tunnel heights. ACT for veteran dogs in Division 2 and 3 will be determined like ACT for Division 1 dogs: 5 seconds will be added to ACT, but if the veteran dog runs under the normal ACT, the normal ACT will be used to determine time and placements.
- **Dogs must be 12 months old** to compete. **Dogs under 8 weeks** are not permitted on the show grounds; other dogs not entered in the trial are allowed on grounds at discretion of club. Pregnant and lactating females are not allowed to compete.
- **A dog owned or co-owned by the judge**, or owned by family, may now exhibit before a back-up judge and qualify for legs, titles and All-Star points but not for placements and awards at the trial; dogs owned and/or handled by family, etc., of the back-up judge will still count toward placements and awards. The back-up judge must be designated in the club's application.
- **Collars are now optional.** If a collar is worn by the dog,

the existing rules will apply.

- **Course familiarization** is permitted for AGI B and AGII B dogs that do not have titles in that class, to allow judges and instructors to have a walk through with their "green" dogs.
- Clarification has been added that **judging, including briefing, familiarization and walk through occur after the advertised start time.** The trial secretary can delay the start time up to one hour, upon notification to all handlers at least two days in advance. The order of judging dogs has been modified to allow more flexibility.
- The **additional 5 seconds for Division 1 dogs** is now only if the dog does not run under the normal ACT. Giant dogs get 5 seconds, rather than 10.
- The **number of judges** has been changed to require only one judge for UACHX and GRACH titles. **GRACH title** requires 196 or higher in each of the classes (AGI, AGII, AGIII).
- Prohibition of cash awards now specifically excludes **gift cards**, etc., from being given.
- **No back-up timer** is required when using electronic timers, unless the judge requires. If there is a timer failure, either electronic or stopwatch, the handler may elect to run again for time, completing each obstacle or taking the required number of attempts for the obstacle, or take the normal ACT.
- **No point value** as such is assigned to the various obstacles, except that the total faults per obstacle cannot exceed 15 points for each obstacle.
- **16-17 Obstacles** are now permitted in AGII and AGIII, with the optional additional obstacle being a hurdle.
- **Trap obstacles.** Trap obstacles are allowed in AGIII. Rules are provided to clarify judging a trap obstacle to be the same as a run off and taking a wrong obstacle.
- The **maximum degree of turns** has been modified in describing course challenges. For example, a turn up to 150 degrees in AGI is allowed, provided that the turn is not a wrap.
- The contact on **upside of the A-Frame** is not judged.
- One or more feet on **the swing plank** is required, rather than the previous rule of four feet on the swing plank.
- **Fouling the ring** includes spitting up and vomiting. Fouling during familiarization is now a 10-point deduction (not an NQ).
- The **judge may rely** on the accuracy of the recording steward and trial secretary in completing trial reports and the Judge's Books.
- With **electronic timers**, the closed chute must not be used as the last obstacle of the course.
- In case of a **tie** for High In Trial or placement, the tie stands for reporting to UKC, but a run-off on an existing course may be conducted for awards or prizes.

Clarifications and Minor Changes

- Compatibility with UKC rules in other events has been updated.
- TL language has been changed to refer to the UKC website.
- **"Fixing the weaves"** has been clarified. Ideally, the poles are to be completed in one fluid motion. If a dog passes a correct space in the sequence, but the handler is able to bring the dog back to the correct space, only a minor fault is assessed. If the dog's head, however, pass-

es the last weave pole, a failed attempt has occurred.

- The **leash stays on** during familiarization.
- With **electronic timers**, the rule is clarified that when the dog runs around the first obstacle, **the time does not start**, but additional 5 seconds and fault are assessed.
- Various language about leaving the dog in a stationary position has been clarified to reflect that it is a **handler error**, not a failed attempt. The "**recall position**" is clarified to explain that it does not include a handler moving and turned away from the dog, and that "**breaking the plane**" of the jump is not itself a handler fault, although luring or coaxing a dog through the course must be penalized. ("Breaking the plane" applies to pause obstacles and contact obstacles).
- The delimiting box and now also "**delimiting line**" has been clarified to provide that no line is needed on a side near to a ring barrier or wall.
- **Intentionally stepping over the delimiting line** in AGII and in AGIII is an NQ.
- **Wings on hurdles** are allowed.
- **Double bar jumps** are allowed.
- **AGIII obstacles** have been clarified to provide the use of the tire as a non-hurdle obstacle.
- The preferred Teeter is now the 12-foot board, although the 8- and 10-foot teeters are "grandfathered" until

replaced.

- Nine-foot A-Frames are permitted, to be set at 63-inch height.
- Fabric on **closed chute** will be 6 feet to 10 feet.
- Surface on contacts now permits granulated chips or sand.
- The open tunnel length is now 15 feet to 20 feet.
- How quickly the teeter should drop is now provided: put a three-pound weight 12 inches back from the raised end, and the teeter should drop in less than 3 seconds.
- The platform jump can now be in the **warm-up** area.
- Intentionally touching a piece of equipment or the dog is an NQ. Sticking a hand in a tire or tunnel is a major fault.
- The **GRACH multiplier language**, which has been on the UKC website, is included in the rulebook.
- Sportsmanship, depth of chest, and withers definitions and how to measure deep chested have been added.
- Language from various judges' rules was brought into the rulebook, such as a judge is not to judge more than eight hours per day.

Hopefully, this summary will help you find the many changes that have been made to the agility rules, but only by taking the time to read the entire rules will provide an understanding of our truly enjoyable sport, which continues to be appreciated by handlers and dogs of all ages and capabilities. B