

FIRST AGILITY JUDGES SKYPE MEETING,
18th July 2013.

Present: Nick Chester, Karen de Wit, Rebecca Roper, Roy Thorndycroft, Martin Trimble.

Topics discussed.

1. The new rules around Course times.

These were outlined. The judges determines the maxi/midi QCT for Senior and Jumpers A. Jumpers A – add 5% to get the mini/micro QCT (or unsplit QCT) and add 15% to get the SCT. For Senior add add 7.5% to get the mini/micro QCT (or unsplit QCT) and add 20% to get the SCT. For Starters, Novice, Intermediate and Jumpers B and C the judge determines the SCT based on the regulations.

Nick had recently judged a ribbon trial under the new rules and outlined his preparation for this. He emphasised that Judges need to ensure they are familiar with the new rules as Club management may not be. It would be a good idea for Judges to double check their numbers for the first few times.

Martin mentioned a Smart phone app that he uses – called “Agility course calc”. It is USA based but you can modify it to NZ conditions.

Measuring both sides of a course – experience suggests that some courses are very similar when measured both sides and yet others differ by many metres – it should ensure more accurate Course lengths, and fairer course times.

2. Setting QCTs – not just using the middle number! How do Judges practically apply the rate of travel to courses? When should we be using the faster and slower ends of the spectrum? How do weather and ground conditions impact on this?

There was discussion about how judges ensure the course time set is appropriate for their course. Some judges use m/sec and others use a more complex formula based on obstacles in the course. Consideration needs to be given to:-

- grounds conditions – ideal, long grass, muddy, wet and slippery, no grass, hard and slippery.
- Weather conditions – heat, wind, rain, frost etc
- number of contacts - require extra time to negotiate
- number of weaves - require extra time to negotiate
- the number of tight turns - - require extra time to negotiate, may go wide and make the course length longer.

All of these will affect how fast dogs can go.

If Judges use the lowest rate, then they don't have any movement when weather conditions are poor etc. It was suggested that the fastest rates could be used at National events.

Another issue relates to Jumpers C where the rate of travel set could affect graduation to Jumpers B on 25 crcs.

A reminder that there is a minimum ROT for Starters, Novice and intermediate classes.

3. Dealing with Criticism.

It was agreed that Judges do need to deal with criticism. Sometimes criticism is well-founded.

- Judges should be on hand when their courses are being walked to deal with issues that arise at that time.
- If the issue relates to safety then the Judges should look at it carefully.
- Judges should check the numbers are in the correct place before course is walked, as these can move or be incorrectly placed off plans.
- Where there is an issue non-officiating judges esp Senior and Mentor judges should not just stand by. They should approach the other judge quietly and privately to voice concerns of

competitors. When approached you should not just dismiss the criticism, but should consider it first.

Judges should not take criticism to heart - Competitors do not realise that voices travel into the ring, and often make comments in the heat of the moment.

Judges should ensure that by their course design and their actions in the ring, they are less open to criticism. This includes:-

Designing courses that are easy to judge

Design course so that the judges view of contacts is better than those on the side of the ring

Make sure you can clearly see all tunnel entries (exits)

Move around the course to clearly see the contacts, weave and tunnels

Probationary judges – They should receive as much support as possible. The overseeing judge is responsible for ensuring the course is appropriate and able to be judged. Competitors have a right to run courses appropriate for the level, and that are judged well. Where another judge sees something that they think might assist the probationary judge, and may not be noticed by the person overseeing them, they should make that comment to the AC.

4. General comments.

- a. CONTACTS – judges are reminded to watch the whole contact as some dogs jump off high but touch the bottom of the contact area.
- b. COMMUNICATION with JUDGES. The various methods in use were outlined – infoletters, website, email groups, Facebook. All participants agreed that the Skype meeting has been most beneficial of other methods.