

Notes from Skype Meeting, July 23rd.

Present: Karen de Wit, Carole Logan, Sharon Wagener, Meredith Evans.

Topics discussed.

1. New timing rules. Sharon has already used the new rules. Measuring a course on both sides takes a bit of getting used to. It appears to be of benefit for some courses, as much as 20m difference has been recorded. The tables are useful, however there are some rounding differences with the computer system.
2. Where to set your QCT. This group tends to set their QCTs at the lower end though esp in big classes as the fast dogs will come out on top anyway. A tighter QCT might be appropriate if numbers are low.
Jumpers B → Jumpers C.
There was some discussion about people going up to Jumpers B and then going down to Jumpers C – this isn't allowable. Once you have gone up you have to stay up, so its worth thinking about it (if you have 25 crcs, 2 wins and you must go up).
Exception:- Currently people who went up under the old 25 crcs rule can apply to go back down to Jumpers C and this will be granted under certain criteria. There will be a time limit put on this.
How can you tell if people are in the right class? No method currently.
3. Dealing with criticism.
Safety – where there is a perceived safety concern the Judge should seriously look at the course/obstacle. Judges need to be nearby when competitors are walking the course and making comments.
It's a good idea if unsure of a call to read the regs again.
If a problems develops half way through a course you cant really change it – unless a piece of equipment can be swapped for one the same, or change at a height split.
Contacts often get questioned. Important to have a good view of them, better than spectators!! Also judge the WHOLE contact area as some dogs hit the very bottom (you can often hear them!)
What if the judge didn't see something, and someone else did? Such as a hurdle knocked down.
Sometimes ring staff are very efficient so the judge wont see the bar on the ground. In these cases another judge could point that out to the official judge.
Feedback should really be – a quiet word.
Which side will you be on? (judging the contact) Some competitors will ask this – you don't need to answer it, although it might means they wont run that side and bang into you!
Have confidence in yourself, because you know the rules, your course is appropriate and easy to judge.
4. Other items discussed.
 - a. Changing your course time. This was discussed. Sometimes after the first few dogs the Judge might feel the time is too tight, and want to adjust it. If using the lowest values you cant change it. Agreed you should really stick to your original time, and definitely no support for changing the time at the END of the class.
 - b. Dogs that are frightened – sometimes you might be told that their dog is scared of “judges” but you should really judge everyone the same.
 - c. Startlines. Discussed when it was appropriate to penalise a person and when you should leave it. Agreed that going back to the dog and touching it/placing it was a handling fault, but not if they don't touch it. If a dog breaks the start and runs towards the first jump, then is called back and restarted, you could give a refusal, but not if the dog is just creeping. If a dog takes an obstacle on the way to the start it is a E/D.
 - d. Contact/tunnel combos – it is a good idea to make sure you can see the contact from your judging position as some tunnels are quite large and some judges are not very tall!
 - e. Forms of communication – agreement that the Skype meeting is a good idea. Suggestion that there be one official site and that having so many other communication avenues might be confusing. The official site is the Agility Website, Face-book and email lists are additional to that, and are not run by AC.
 - f. New maxi jump height – judges expressed a preference for all the jumps in a ring to be the same height - if they are different in another ring that is Ok. Good idea to ask Clubs what hurdles they will have so you can design courses appropriately.