

# General Judging Standards & Course Design for UKI

## Submitting courses for approval

- Please submit your courses at least 2 weeks before the show directly to Laura [laura@ukagility.com](mailto:laura@ukagility.com)
- **Send courses using Clean Run Course Designer. Version 3 or 4 is fine.**
- Save each course with the number of the order the class will be run. For example if Beginner & Novice Agility will be the third class run on the day – save as 03-BegNovAgility
- Please also copy in the tentative running order/ Schedule in your email.
- Please show your judging route on the course.
- Please DO NOT send obstacle coordinates on your courses for approval.
- Please DO NOT send dog's path on your courses for approval.
- The majority of courses that are not approved are due to wrong equipment or not enough obstacles for the level, bad contact approaches and not meeting minimum distance between obstacles. Please be familiar with the rules for each class and level.

## Communicating with the Trial Manager

- If you have not already, please get in touch with your trial manager who should let you know whether or not you will be having Beginners and Novice running on the same courses and Senior and Champ running on the same courses.
- If combining courses, please make your Beginner/Novice courses with a minimum of 16 obstacles as the Novice classes require a minimum of 16 obstacles.
- If not combining courses, you will be designing courses for the four separate levels.
- Please discuss with the trial manager the best way to run the rings – if you have spread jumps or long jumps that need to be switched out for Select heights, this should be considered when creating the ring plan for the trial. Discuss this with the trial manager.
- Find out whether you will be working out of one or two rings: for example all contact classes in one class and jumping classes in another?
- Discuss what equipment is available for you to use for your courses.

## General Design Guidelines

- Please read the design guidelines thoroughly. The biggest reason for complaints regarding courses, or courses not being approved is because these have not been read. (2016 rule book)
- Please design your courses on a ring map template provided from the trial manager. This ensures you have the correct ring dimensions and any obstructions are clearly marked in addition to the entrances & exits.
- Be sure that both the start jump and finish jumps allow for plenty of approach and landing space. Start jumps should allow any size dog to take at least 2 comfortable strides to lift off and Finish jumps should allow for any size dog to jump in extension without having to collect/shorten their stride before taking the finish jump.
- Start and Finish jumps should not be the same jump. Ideally the Start and Finish obstacles are at opposite areas of the ring so that dog's are able to move out onto the line without interfering with the dog currently running.
- If reusing the start or finish jump within a course, be sure the dog has to take the jump on the same side as the timing gates and without any tight turns to approach this jump.
- Ensure approaches to contacts are straight forward regardless of which direction the dog turns at the obstacle before the contact obstacle.
- When designing your courses keep in mind your judging path. Are you able to get to each contact easily? Please do not judge contacts from a distance and with other obstacles between you and the contact. You should also be sure you are able view the contact point without the handler getting in the way of your view. Also be sure you are able to see all areas of the course for refusal calls? As already mentioned, please show your judging path on the courses you submit for approval.
- Please do not design courses that force the dog to exit a tunnel situated under the A-frame and then scramble up the A-frame.
- The majority of regular jumps should be winged jumps. All backside approaches to jumps must be winged jumps.
- Be aware of the required equipment and what equipment is not allowed in particular classes. i.e. Only regular jumps & tunnels are allowed in Speedstakes.
- Please note that UKI no longer allows the chute/flat tunnel in any course. Other equipment not allowed in UKI: triple jump, S shaped tunnels and the use of dummy (non numbered) obstacles.
- Your day will go a lot smoother and quicker if you design courses with little to no equipment movement, except for numbers. Therefore please try to not move pegged down or the big equipment throughout the different course changes unless necessary for safety and approaches.
- Sometimes what you design on paper does not work on the ground. There may be ground conditions, ring conditions, weather conditions or spacing that does not allow for the exact transfer from paper to ground. Do not sacrifice the safety of handler and or dog for the sake of maintaining the exact course you designed on paper. Angles onto contacts are extremely important to maintain safety.

- Courses should not be designed with YOUR dog in mind, nor should they be designed to 'catch out' a particular trained skill or handling method. You should always be able to describe your challenges on course and be sure it would be possible and safe for all dogs from the slower steady dog and handler to the blazing fast dog, regardless of size.
- Being a good judge is about designing safe, doable, yet challenging courses that are designed to showcase the handler canine partnership. It should not be the goal to try to make handlers fail or to be so tricky that only a dog that is walking could get through the course.

### **Class and Level considerations**

- Keep in mind that the Beginners classes should not entail major traps like contact/ tunnel discriminations, multiple crosses – especially on a line, difficult weave pole entrances, and should always give safe and easy contact approach angles.
- Please remember Beginners are not faulted for refusals, including in the Games classes. So if running Beginners and Novice on the same courses, be sure the ring crew announces which dogs are Beginners and which are Novice. This way you know not to fault the Beginner dog for refusals.
- All other levels are judged for refusals: Please keep in mind the following with regard to refusals (runouts). The refusal line only becomes active (allowed to be faulted) once the judge deems the dog has begun to approach the obstacle. For example, if a dog lands on or past the refusal plane of the next obstacle because it simply took a larger stride, or the handler failed to give the dog adequate information to shorten its stride to land before the plane, the dog should not be faulted as the dog cannot be deemed to be approaching the obstacle in question. There are several examples in the 2016 Rule book edition as to what are refusals and what are not refusals.
- Speedstakes courses are meant to be fast and flowing. They should NOT be thought of as jumping without weaves. All levels should allow dogs to open up without as much handling as required in other classes.
- The purpose of the Nursery class is really for equipment experience, not handling of courses. Please try to make these as basic as possible.
- When judging Power & Speed, the speed section is the only section that is recorded for time on the scribe sheet, although the dog must complete and start the power section within the judge's time given for the power section. The power section may be hand timed and the electronic timing can be used for the Speed section only.
- Snooker – unless you can force safe approaches to the Dog Walk, it is suggested to not use this in a snooker course.

### **Briefings and Communication with Ring Party**

- Because shows have several runs a day, please limit the amount of time for walk throughs to a maximum of 15 minutes unless it is the first run of the day or a class is available for walking during lunch time.
- Please instruct the gate steward to clearly announce to the scribe and to you any NFC runs. You do not need to judge the NFC dog, simply watch to be sure they are being fair to the dog.
- Brief competitors that they will only be given course time for NFC runs and will need to leave the ring immediately upon time being up.
- Brief that if a handler who is doing NFC, is training start lines, the moment they begin to move back in to the dog to either reward or replace the dog once they are past the first obstacle, the time will be started.
- Please communicate with your scribe & gate stewards regarding hand signals and make sure there is good communication regarding jump height changes including Select height, where A-frame & spreads need changing.

### **Other Judging Considerations & Reminders**

- Remember, with any judging call, any doubt should weigh in favour of the dog and handler. If you did not see it...you cannot call it.
- After your course has been set for each class, please walk your judging path and be sure you are happy with being able to view contacts points and refusal lines. Adjust your path if necessary.
- Handlers should not be faulted if they choose to tug with their dogs using their leashes while they enter the ring, nor when the dog finishes the course.
- Remember, Collars WITHOUT tags or other dangly bits are allowed. (See rule book, for detailed description)
- Please be sure you understand the NFC rules. Absolutely no leashes allowed on the dogs and the handler may not ask you to leave the ring - especially because a dog is aggressive or fear aggressive. If this is the case, the dog must be dismissed as absolutely NO aggressive dogs are allowed to run at UKI.
- Please remember you are responsible for setting the location of the leashes for the end of the run. Please brief the ring crew to this position.
- Before you begin judging each course, be sure all the equipment is set appropriately and at the correct heights. A-frame height, jump heights, tire, long jump & spread widths etc...
- Remember to also keep in mind the differences in the A frame from Select heights to Regular heights as well as the removal of spread jumps.

- UKI does not allow video review on any decision you have made such as a refusal or contact fault. If a handler asks you to watch a video, please decline. However, if you have faulted something that is not a fault in UKI. i.e. –faulted a dog for a striding over the ‘up’ contact - the show manager can review this with you and if you did indeed fault this, then it should be revoked.
- It is important that UKI trials emit an air of good competition, yet a relaxed, social and friendly atmosphere. Please be the ambassador of great competition, yet remain approachable and helpful however, please remember you are not there to give training advice after every run.

### **Measuring the Course**

- Please be aware of how to measure a course in UKI, it is a lot different than other organizations as we do not use any form of dog’s path. Literally shortest possible lines. See Rule book for detailed description and example.
- We are currently re-evaluating our calculation of course times. During this interim time, we are allowing for some flexibility in calculating time ranges. We would like for you to use common sense when calculating the course times and if the times seem too tight and unrealistic, then please adjust the course time to a more achievable time. Please adjust only with the goal in mind that a smooth running dog without any hesitations or bobbles can easily make course times. But, for the dog who is either/or walking & trotting and/or erratic, spinning, running off, sniffing, major hesitations etc.. these dogs should find it difficult to make the course times.
- Please let us know if you felt you needed to adjust your times or had any issues with measuring by telling us in the adjacent Judges Review.