

DECEMBER 2020 EDITION

# OBEDIENCE

## NEWSLETTER



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Happy Holidays! We wanted to take this opportunity to discuss some of the new changes to the 2021 Obedience rules to familiarize you with those changes and help clarify some of the new exercises.

As you go through the new rulebook, you will see major changes from the current program presented as bold and italicized. New additions will just be italicized. Bolding may be used within the new additions to bring extra attention to that section if needed.

I have outlined the new exercises and changes below in this newsletter, but please be sure to take the time to read the in-depth explanations in the 2021 Obedience rulebook.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

## General Changes:

- The required ring size for obedience is now a minimum of 40 x 50 feet. Ring sizes can always be larger than this but can no longer be smaller. The Elite and Team classes will both require a larger ring size. Both classes are optional to hold and require a minimum 40 x 70 feet ring size. The Elite class may also be held as a stand-alone event.
- There are new equipment requirements for exhibitors, clubs and one for judges in the Elite class. The new equipment required for clubs are a send away box, pylons, cones, scent cloths, position cards, scent boxes, stopwatches, and a food distraction. Each of these are described in detail in the rulebook. Judges who are judging the Elite class will need personal scent cloths which are normal white, cotton washcloths no larger than 12 inches square. Judges will need at least three of these cloths.
- Collars can now be decorative (rhinestones, custom color, painted, etc.) but cannot have any spikes on them or anything hanging from the collar.
- Scent articles can now be metal, leather, or wood. An exhibitor can use 5 of any of these choices instead of just the customary metal ones. They still must all be identical and numbered for identification.
- Gloves for the Master class must be solid, dark colored, and made of cotton or leather.
- Personal Scent items for the Master class must fit into the provided box without any parts of that item showing over the top of the box. It cannot be an undergarment, a glove, and must not have any food in or on it.

**New Classes:** We have six new licensed titling classes and five new non-licensed classes. The new classes were originally called Optional Titling classes. However, the word "optional" created some confusion on how the classes were offered. The new classes are now called Additional Titling classes

The Additional Titling classes are Pre-Novice, Beginner Novice, Advanced Novice, Advanced Open, Master and Elite.

The new Non-Licensed classes are Veteran, Brace, Versatility, Precision Heeling, Pairs, Team.

Clubs must offer all the new Additional Titling classes (except Elite) as well as the previous licensed classes. Clubs have the option of offering the additional licensed Elite class and any of the non-licensed classes. Clubs can pick and choose which non-licensed classes, if any, they wish to hold. There are no A or B divisions in any of the Additional Titling Obedience classes or non-licensed classes. An exhibitor does not need to own the dog and can show two or more dogs in any of the additional titling classes.

## Licensed Class Eligibility and Restrictions:

- **Pre-Novice.** Dogs may not have earned a Novice (UCD) title or its equivalent to compete in this class.
- **Beginner Novice.** Dogs may not have earned an Open (UCDX) title or its equivalent to compete in this class.
- **Novice.** Three divisions, "A", "B", "C." The new addition to this class is that dogs may not have earned an Obedience Champion (UOCH) or its equivalent to compete in the Novice "C" class.
- **Advanced Novice.** Dogs may not have earned an Obedience Champion (UOCH) or its equivalent to compete in this class.
- **Open.** There are no new eligibility or restrictions for this class.
- **Advanced Open.** There are no restrictions to enter this class.
- **Utility.** There are no new eligibility or restrictions for this class.
- **Master.** There are no restrictions to enter this class.
- **Elite** (optional). There are no restrictions to enter this class.

## Overall Rule Applications.

- Classes may be judged in any order.
- Dogs may be judged according to jump height within the classes.
- Judges taking advantage of the back-up system may have their dogs judged any time prior to the start of the trial or after the last exhibitor normally competing in the trial.
- The honor exercise will only be required in the Novice and Advanced Novice classes.

## Overall Ring Procedures.

- A six-foot leash is required for all dogs in the Pre-Novice class, Beginner Novice class, and the Honor exercise portion of the

Novice and Advanced Novice classes. Handlers may use a shorter leash for the remaining exercises in either the Novice or Advanced Novice classes, or any other classes offered, at their discretion.

- Dogs who bark or whine once or twice during any single exercise should not be penalized. Dogs who bark or whine once or twice during more than one exercise may be penalized up to a non-qualifying score. To receive a non-qualifying score, the dog would need to be barking several times during every exercise or barking continuously during any one exercise. A dog that whines once or twice during every exercise should not be disqualified. Deductions should depend on the degree of intensity and frequency of the barking and/or whining.
- Dogs that eliminate, spit up, or vomit must now be excused and may not complete any remaining exercise.

**Overall Judging, Scoring, and Deductions.** Because it is impossible to list every deduction one can think of, this sentence has been added for all major and minor deductions: ***In all classes, the judge may deduct Major or Minor points, depending on the extent of the deviation from the ideal performance for any exercise.***

- Commands and/or signals may now be used in all exercises except the Utility Signal Exercise and the Elite Signal Heeling with Moving Stand for Exam exercise.
- Hand position has been clarified to say that the hands must hang freely, or the left arm may be held against the body at the center of the waist. This means the hand should be held right over the bellybutton area, not above, below, or beside it. For handlers with large dogs who prefer to have their arms hanging freely, handlers will not be penalized if their left arm is held slightly out and on the left side of the dog, so they do not hit the dog in the head.
- Pre-Novice and Beginner Novice do not require the traditional "front"
- Novice, Advanced Novice, and Open will now have a "Greeting" exercise. The position to begin the greeting exercise and the position for the honor dog will be the same location.
- New Mandatory 10-point deductions have been added for the following exercises:
  - **Novice**
    - Handler gives second command and/or signal to come
  - **Advanced Novice**
    - Second command and/or signal to come, second command and/or signal to take or hold the dumbbell
  - **Utility**
    - Dog does not sit after the second command to sit on the Directed Signal Retrieve
  - **Master**
    - Dog changes position during the three second stabilization period, handler does not stay facing forward during any part of the search.

- **Elite**

- Dog licks, attempts to eat, or eats any of the food offered after the judge says, "Exercised Finished," dog changes position during the three second stabilization period, handler does not stay facing forward during any part of the search.

**Class specifics:** A purpose, class restrictions, requirements, and specifics have been added to the beginning of each obedience class. Here are highlights for each class. Please be sure to read the specifics for each class and each class exercise.

**Pre-Novice (PN).** Each exercise is worth 40 points. Handlers may give extra commands, praise, and talk to their dog between and during all exercises. Excessive commands, talking, and/or encouragement may be penalized if the judge determines the dog would otherwise not be able to perform the exercise.

- **Heel on Leash.** This exercise is identical to the Novice Heel on Leash exercise except that the heeling pattern must be the "L" pattern only.
- **Serpentine Loop 3 Cones.** 3 cones set in a straight line approximately 6 feet apart. The handler can enter on either side of the cones, weaves through the cones from cone 1 to cone 3 and then weaves back through to cone 1. There are no halts or sits required.
- **Sit for Exam.** Handlers may physically place their dog in a sit if it is done gently. Judging begins when the handler gives the "stay" command. The judge approaches from the front and only touches the dog's head once before moving away.
- **Down Stay.** Handler leaves on order of the judge, goes to the end of the six-foot leash without looking back at the dog, turns around and returns to the dog. The handler may go around behind the dog or just go immediately to the right of the dog to heel position.
- **Straight Recall.** Handler leaves on order of the judge, goes to the end of the six-foot leash, calls the dog on order of the judge. They may take up to three steps backwards when calling the dog. A front is not required. Once the dog is close enough for the handler to touch, the judge will say "Exercised Finished."

**Beginner Novice (BN).** Exercises are worth between 30 and 45 points. Handlers may give praise and encouragement within specific exercises as outlined in the rules.

- **Heel on Leash & Figure 8.** This exercise is identical to the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure 8 exercise except that the heeling pattern must be the "L" pattern only. Handlers will be allowed to give one extra command and two verbal praises during the heeling and figure 8 portions without penalty. Cones will be used in place of stewards for the Figure 8.
- **Stand or Sit for Exam.** The handler



decides if they want to do a sit or stand for exam. Once they decide and make a commitment to a sit or a stand, they cannot change their mind. Judging will begin when the handler gives the “stay” command. The handler will go to the end of the six-foot leash, turn, and face the dog. The judge will approach the dog from the front and only touch the dog’s head once before moving away.

- **Down Stay/Walk Away.** The handler will perform a “T” pattern after leaving the dog for this exercise. The leash will remain on the dog.
- **Recall Over High Jump.** No stewards will be placed on the sides of the jump for this class. The handler will remove the leash and hand it to a steward who will take the leash to a pre-designated position. When calling the dog, the handler is allowed one extra command and/or signal if the dog does not come without penalty. The handler may also give one verbal praise or encouragement, or an extra command/signal once the dog is in motion for the recall. This may be given before or after the jump but not both. There will be a sit in front but there will not be a finish required for this exercise. The handler may use their hands to guide the dog into the front position before the sit.
- **Sit Stay.** The dog will be placed in a sitting position in the pre-designated area. The handler will leave the dog on order of the judge, walk immediately to the spot where their leash was placed by the steward, return to their dog without waiting for an order from the judge. The handler will go around and behind the dog, directly to heel position and wait for the “Exercised Finished” order from the judge. The handler may give one reminder for the dog to stay upon their approach without penalty.

**Novice (UCD).** The major changes to the Novice class are the elimination of the group exercise, the change to the honor, the addition of the greeting exercise, and an allowance for a second command/signal to come on the recall. All other exercises remain the same. A six-foot leash is required for the honor exercise.

- **Greeting and Honor:** These exercises are not done together. The greeting/working dog enters the ring and goes to the designated area that will be used for both the greeting and honor exercise. When the greeting exercise is over, and the judge says “Exercise Finished,” the greeting/working dog and handler will make their way to the start of the Heel on Leash exercise while the honor dog and handler is entering the ring and making their way to the same position where the working dog was placed for the greeting exercise.
- **Greeting.** Please read this section carefully. This exercise is very unfamiliar and new to traditional obedience exercises. It mimics more real-world situations and is a very useful exercise. Leashes will remain on the dog. The

judge will be approximately 20 feet from the designated area, facing the handler and dog. The handler will leave the dog when they are ready. Judging will begin when the handler gives the stay command or leaves the dog. The handler will proceed across the ring to the judge and may shake hands with the judge or be within 3 feet of the judge. The handler may turn sideways to greet the judge so that they can still see their dog. They must announce themselves by using their first name and their dog’s name. The judge is to return the greeting by saying “Welcome to Obedience, good luck, you may return to your dog.” Handlers are not to be penalized for forgetting what to say.

- During any of the Greeting exercises, judges or exhibitors may prefer not to shake hands. Judges should let exhibitors know this prior to the class so exhibitors do not feel awkward if they offer to shake hands with a judge and the judge refuses. Because of COVID-19 restrictions we have added the option when originally, it was not an option. Judges should consider posting something at the ring that states whether you are shaking hands or not. Once a judge decides not to shake hands with one class, they must do this for all classes where the greeting exercise is present. Exhibitors may just let the judge know they prefer not to shake hands if there is nothing posted from the judge.
- **Honor.** The honor dog will enter the ring when the greeting exercise is finished. The handler must have a six-foot leash on the dog for this exercise. On order from the judge, the handler will leave the dog in a down position, go to the end of their leash, turn, and face their dog. They will remain there until they are ordered back to their dog after the completion of the Figure 8 exercise. They will then be released from the ring. When they return for the working portion of their exercises, they may use a shorter leash.
- **Recall over High Jump.** Handlers will be allowed one additional command/signal to call their dog if the dog does not come on the first command and/or signal. They will receive a mandatory 10-point deduction, but they will not lose the entire exercise for not coming on the first command and/or signal.

**Advanced Novice (ACD).** Exercises are worth either 30 or 35 points. Exercises will prepare the handler and dog for Open.

- **Greeting.** The greeting will be performed like the Novice Greeting except that the handler will announce their name, their dog’s name, and if the dog is jumping Standard or Minimum height.
- **Honor.** This will be performed exactly like the Novice Honor exercise.
- **Heel Off Leash and Figure 8.** This will be performed exactly like the Novice Heel on





- Leash exercise, except that it will be performed off leash.
- **Moving Down with Recall.** This exercise will be performed on the long side of the ring. Midway across the ring, the judge will order "Down Your Dog." The handler must not stop or break heel position when giving the command and/or signal for the dog to down. Once the handler reaches the other side of the ring, turns, and faces the dog, the judge will order the handler to "Call Your Dog." The handler will be allowed a second command and/or signal if the dog does not come on the first command and/or signal but will receive a mandatory 10-point deduction.
  - **Recall Over Jump with Dumbbell.** No stewards will be standing on either side of the jump. The handler will give the dog the dumbbell prior to leaving, go to the other side of the jump and call their dog all on the judge's orders. If the dog does not come on the first command and/or signal, the handler may give another command and/or signal to come but will receive a mandatory 10-point deduction.
  - **Recall Over Broad Jump.** The handler will leave the dog and go at least 8 feet on the other side of the broad jump, facing the broad jump and centered in the middle of the jump opposite the dog. On order of the judge the handler will call the dog to front. If the dog does not come on the first command and/or signal, the handler may give another command and/or signal to come but will receive a mandatory 10-point deduction.

**Open.** The major changes to the Open class are the elimination of the group exercise and the honor exercise, the addition of the greeting exercise, and the socialized heeling exercise.

- **Greeting.** The judge will be approximately 30 feet from the designated area, facing the handler and dog. The handler will proceed across the ring to the judge and will remain with their back to their dog. They may shake hands with the judge or be within 3 feet of the judge. The handler must announce themselves by using their first name and their dog's name, if the dog is jumping Standard or Minimum height, and the heights for both the high and broad jump. The judge is to return the greeting by saying "Welcome to Open, good luck, you may return to your dog." Handlers are not to be penalized for forgetting what to say.
- **Socialized Heeling.** Please familiarize yourself with this exercise. It is a real-world applicable exercise and has several parts to it. All dogs will do the socialized heeling exercise twice. They will perform it once as the working dog and once as the socialized team. Both dogs will be on leash and opposite one another to begin the exercise. They will walk toward one another, stop, remain for approximately five seconds, and continue past one another to the opposite side of the ring on the judge's

orders. Dogs and handlers must keep at least a four-foot distance between them with the dogs on the inside so that they will pass one another without a handler between them. There is only one area on the score sheet for Socialized Heeling. This area is used for both times the dog is performing the exercise. If the dog fails either time the exercise will be scored as non-qualifying.

**Advanced Open (ACDX).** Some of these exercises will prepare the dog and handler for Utility while some of them are new concepts for UKC obedience. Exercises are worth between 25 and 45 points depending on their difficulty.

- **Heel Off Leash with Moving Stand.** This exercise will help the dog and handler prepare for the Utility signal exercise. The handler may use both a command and/or signal to perform the moving stand and/or the moving sit. The moving stand is to be done on the long side of the ring and the moving sit on the short side. Once the handler has given the command and/or signal to stand, they will go to the end of the ring, turn, and face the dog. They will return to the dog on order from the judge and without any additional order from the judge will go automatically to heel position and continue to the end of the ring. There will be a right or left turn and when ordered, the handler will perform a moving sit exercise, go to the end of the ring, face the dog and return to the dog on order from the judge. Without any additional order from the judge, they will go automatically to heel position and continue to the end of the ring where the judge will order and "About Turn." The judge will then order a right or left turn to take the dog and handler down the center path of the ring. The halt will be ordered in approximately the same position the halt is ordered in the Utility Signal Exercise. Here is where the exercise becomes much different than other traditional exercises. Once the halt is ordered and the judge gives the "Exercise Finished" order, the handler may praise their dog. However, they need to stay in the same place where they have been stopped. The start of the next exercise will be in the same location they were ordered to "Halt."
- **Figure 8 and Down Stay.** After the judge has said "Exercise Finished" for the Heel Off Leash with Moving Stand, two stewards will enter the ring and go to the designated location for the Figure 8. This location should be about 15 feet from where the handler was given the "Halt" command from the Heel Off Leash with Moving Stand exercise. The stewards will stand ten feet apart instead of the normal 8 feet apart to accommodate the dog doing a down stay between them. When the stewards are in place, the judge will ask the handler if they are ready and when the handler indicates they are ready, the judge will then order a "Forward." The dog and handler will walk straight to the figure 8, enter the figure 8 by going

either clockwise or counterclockwise. They will complete one figure 8 before executing a "Halt" without order from the judge. The judge will then order the handler to "Down Your Dog," and "Leave Your Dog." The handler will leave the dog, walk to the opposite end of the ring, turn, and face the dog. After a brief pause, the judge will order the handler to return. That segment looks just like any regular "Return to Your Dog." The dog will be expected to stay in the down position, between the two stewards until the handler returns and the judge orders "Exercise Finished."

- **Retrieve of an Object.** This is more of a real-world application exercise rather than a traditional obedience exercise. Handlers will be expected to bring three items to the ring for the judge to choose from for the retrieve object. Any item is acceptable that is not harmful to the dog, contains any food, or is a traditional obedience retrieve item, such as a glove, dumbbell, or article. The item cannot be made of glass, break or fracture easily, or splinter. Toys are acceptable items if they do not squeak or roll freely. The item must be able to be thrown safely the same distance as the Open Retrieve on the Flat. (Acceptable items might be a set of keys, a pair of socks tied together, mini backpack, braided rope toy/tug, wubba kong, kong fetch stick, firehose tug, etc). The judge should choose the item prior to the dog entering the ring, so the handler does not have the opportunity to go and practice with the chosen item before the exercise. Once chosen, the object can be placed in the side pockets, or on the top of, the bag or container that the handler will use for the scent discrimination exercise, much like the gloves are placed there for Utility.
- **Scent Discrimination.** This exercise prepares the dog for the Utility Scent Discrimination exercise. It is done with only three articles with the dog and handler facing the articles that will be set in a straight line, perpendicular to the handler, about 25 feet away from the handler and about six to 12 inches apart. The exercise will look very much like the Utility Scent Discrimination exercise except for these modifications.
- **Directed Retrieve.** This exercise prepares the dog for the Utility Directed Signal Retrieve exercise and is very similar to the exercise. The difference being that the dog and handler will be in the center of the ring and sitting between Gloves one and three instead of at the opposite end of the ring.
- **Send Away to a Box.** This exercise prepares the dog for the Utility Directed Jumping exercise and the more advanced exercises in Master and Elite. The "box" gives the dog a target area to be sent to that will mimic the area the dog should be in when it is asked to perform the go out for the directed jumping exercise, the Master Send Away with Dumbbell Retrieve exercise, and the Elite Advanced Directed Retrieve and Jumping exercise. The dog must be sent to the box, enter the box, turn, and sit inside the box.

For this exercise, the handler will be returning to the dog. The handler does not have to step inside the box when returning to their dog.

**Utility (UUD).** The exercises for Utility will remain the same. The differences come in some clarifications and scoring allowances for certain portions of some exercises.

- **Signal and Heeling Exercise.** Any type of audible command during any portion of this exercise will receive a non-qualifying score.
- **Scent articles** can be made of metal, leather, or wood. Whatever the handler presents, they all must be of the same material (i.e. there cannot be one metal and four of something else or any combination). All five must be the same thing and must be numbered for identification.
- The steward is the one that may scent the remaining articles before placing them on the ground for the scent discrimination exercise.
- **Commands and/or signals** may be used in all exercises except the Signal and Heeling exercise.
- **Directed Signal Retrieve.** The handler may give one additional command and/or signal to sit with a major deduction. If the dog does not sit **after** the second command and/or signal there will be a mandatory 10-point deduction.
- **Consecutive Recalls.** The judge will now choose which will be done first, the drop or the straight recall. Whichever is chosen must be used for all exhibitors in the class.
- **Directed Jumping.** The handler may give one additional command and/or signal to sit but will receive a major deduction for each go out.

**Master (MOD).** This class brings back a traditional obedience exercise called the "Seek Back" and adds Nosework, Ringsport, and European Obedience type exercises.

- **Seek Back.** The judge will designate the area where the handler will drop the required glove. The glove cannot be dropped on the centerline where the send away exercise will be performed but must be dropped on the long side of the ring since the dog and handler must be at least 30 feet from the glove after the glove is dropped. A right or left turn must be included so a suggested pattern would be to start on the short side of the ring. At the end of the short side, command the handler and dog to execute a right or left turn followed by the command to "Drop It." The handler must proceed at least an additional 30 feet before the judge orders the handler and dog to perform and about turn and halt. The judge then orders the handler to "Send the Dog." The handler can only use their voice only for the seek and retrieve of the glove.
- **Positions with Recall.** Prior to the class, the judge will choose one of the



allowable sequences to be used for the class. The same sequence must be used for each dog in the class and posted before the start of judging. The starting position will be either a down or a stand. The judge may mark a line where the handler will stand both when leaving the dog and giving the dog the commands and/or signals.

- A steward will be giving the sequence to the handler. The steward will have the sequence written down in some manner to show the handler and will change the sign about 4 seconds after the dog assumes the correct position. The handler is allowed one extra command/signal for each position change but will receive a major deduction for the additional command/signal. If the dog fails to take any position after the second command and/or signal the exercise will be scored as non-qualifying. The dog must not move more than one body length from the starting position. After the final position is given to the handler and performed by the dog, the steward will back away from the handler or leave the area before the judge commands the handler to "Call Your Dog."
- **Send Away to a Cone and Return.** Before the exercise begins, a steward will place an 18" tall cone or pylon on the centerline path of the ring and approximately 8 feet in from the end of the ring. The handler must be at least 40 feet from the cone before beginning the exercise. The dog will be sent from the handler on order of the judge and may go either way around the cone before directly returning to the handler. The handler may give one additional command to go out and/or around the cone and one additional command to come to front without penalty.
- **Send Away with Dumbbell Retrieve.** Please refer to the diagram in the rulebook to clarify this exercise. The steward will remove the pylon that was just used for the previous exercise. The handler must have two identical dumbbells for this class of the same size and color and should be appropriate to the size of the dog, but the handler is free to choose the size of the dumbbells. The judge will choose which dumbbell the dog is to retrieve, and it does not have to be the same for each dog in the class. The chosen dumbbell is not revealed to the handler until the dog has stopped in the designated area for approximately three seconds. At that time, the judge will tell the handler which dumbbell to retrieve.
- The handler may stop the dog and give one additional direction command during the retrieve but will receive a major deduction for the stop/redirection. For instance, if the handler gives the dog the command and/or signal to retrieve the dumbbell on the left, and the dog starts toward the dumbbell on the right, the handler can stop the dog and redirect it to the correct dumbbell with a major penalty. There is only one major penalty if the handler chooses to do this, even though the dog is stopped and redirected. If the dog is stopped and redirected more than once, the exercise will be scored as non-qualifying.

- **Handler Discrimination.** This exercise is performed **after all** dogs have competed in the class. Dogs that have not qualified up to this point must **not** perform this portion of the class. There should be no more than 10 people within each grouping for his exercise. This exercise mimics the Master Handler Discrimination exercise in Nosework with a few minor changes. For this class, the dog is searching for the handler's item. The item must **not** be a glove, or any type of dumbbell or article that would normally be using for retrieving in other exercises. The dog is not to retrieve the item but is to perform a down or a sit at the correct box that contains the handler's item. Please read the section carefully in the rulebook as this is a very detailed exercise. The boxes are to be placed in a random order and do not have to be placed exactly where the "X's" are in the diagram in the rulebook.
- The handler must face forward when they enter the handler's station. They cannot purposely stand in the direction of their box if they happen to know where it is. Handlers must not look for their boxes prior to entering the ring or when preparing the dog to perform the search. The handler must not move around inside the handler's station or step outside of the designated area at any time until the dog has returned, and the exercise is finished. The handler can only send the dog with a verbal command without any form of a hand signal or forward movement of the handler's body or arms. The handler must remain quiet in the handler's station without moving or speaking. The dog must perform either a sit or a down at the correct box and hold that position for a count of three. If the dog changes position from a sit to a down, or a down to a sit once the count has begun the dog will receive a mandatory 10-point deduction. The handler may reward the dog with a toy/tug/praise upon its return to the handler's station, but the toy cannot be purposely thrown or dropped. No food rewards will be allowed in the ring.

**Elite (EOD).** This class is a very challenging class with some exercises that are very new to regular American obedience exercises. This class is optional for clubs to offer because of the larger ring requirement of 40 x 70 feet. The class may also be offered as a stand-alone class for clubs that would like to host this class outside of a regular obedience trial due to the ring size. It may be hosted in conjunction with a Rally trial as a stand-alone Obedience class as well.

**Signal Heeling with Moving Stand for Exam.** This exercise should be familiar to many obedience competitors and judges and should not cause too many issues in understanding how it is performed. The main difference from other venues is that it is started as a heeling exercise identical to the Utility Signal exercise with no voice commands, using signals only. When the handler does the

"Stand Your Dog" portion, in this exercise, the handler will only go 10 feet from the dog and will turn and face the dog during the exam. The judge will then examine the dog and order the handler to "Call Your Dog to Heel." The handler may use only a signal, without voice, to command the dog to return to heel position.

**Food Refusal.** This exercise is new to traditional obedience exercises but is very valuable in real-world situations. For this exercise, the handler, after downing the dog on order of the judge may command the dog to stay and to leave it before leaving the dog. If the handler chooses to use both commands, there must not be any separation between the two commands to the dog. It must be given such as: "Tango, stay, leave it," or just "Stay, Leave it." The handler will then leave and go at least 15 feet forward before turning and facing the dog.

The steward will then approach the dog from the front and offer food from a suitable receptacle by placing the food on the ground, close enough so that the dog would have to move to get the food. The food does not have to be directly in front of the dog but should be close enough in any direction so that the dog would have to reach to get the food. The distance away will depend on the size of the dog so it should not be the same exact distance for each dog that does the exercise. If the food is in a container, the container must be open so that the dog can access the food. The food can also be placed on a flat paper or plastic plate. Food for the exercise should be kept at the judges table in a sealed container. The food can be removed from the container and placed on a plate to use in the exercise, or the container may have the lid taken off and used as it is if the dog is still able to easily access the food from the open container. Where the rules say, the dog may smell the food, it does not mean that the dog can move from its position to smell the food, it means that it would be acceptable if the dog reaches its nose out to smell the food but does not otherwise move or touch/lick the food. If the dog, at any time prior to the "Exercise Finished" order from the judge licks, attempts to eat, or eats any of the food offered, it will be scored as non-qualifying. It will be a mandatory 10-point deduction if the dog does this after the "Exercise Finished" order.

**Recall with Stand and Down.** This is a control exercise that requires the dog to perform a stand and a down when the dog is performing a recall. The handler should be at least 60 feet from the dog when performing this exercise. The dog will begin the exercise in a down position. The handler will leave the dog on order of the judge, walk to the other side of the ring, turn, and face the dog. On order from the judge, the handler will call the dog. When the dog has reached 1/3 the distance, the handler without order from the judge will command and/or signal the dog to "Stand." On

order from the judge to call the dog the second time, the handler will command and/or signal the dog to come and when the dog covers 2/3 the distance the handler, without additional order from the judge will command and/or signal the dog to "Down." The judge will then order the handler to return to their dog.

**Advanced Directed Retrieve and Jumping.** This exercise is like the Master level Send Away with Dumbbell Retrieve exercise with the addition of a jump and a pylon. The judge will decide which position the dog will take on the send away and it must be posted prior to the exercise and must be the same for each competitor. The judge will also decide which dumbbell and jump the dog must take, however the chosen side for the dumbbell/jump combination may change for each competitor.

Additional commands and/or signals may be used in portions of this exercise such as a stop and redirect but are limited. The dog is sent around the cone, stopped in the desired position, and commanded to retrieve and jump the appropriate dumbbell and jump on order of the judge.

**Unfamiliar Scent Discrimination.** This exercise is identical to the Master Handler Discrimination exercise except that the scent the dog will be searching for is that of the judge and not the handler and scent cloths will be used in place of a person item. The judge must have their own set of scent cloths. A minimum of three, specifically dedicated to the judge, are recommended to have for this class. Only dogs that have qualified up to this point will be allowed to perform this exercise.

The judge's scent will be given directly to the dog via the judge's scent cloth. The judge should approach the dog and offer their personal scent cloth for the dog to smell when the dog and handler are in the handler's station. The handler may command the dog to scent the cloth during this procedure. If a dog shows fear or resentment or leaves the handler's station during the taking of the scent, the judge should excuse the dog from the exercise. Once the dog has taken the scent, the judge should leave the handler's station area and not have any scent cloths visible to the dog on their person. The judge should be far enough away from the dog and handler as to not interfere with the dog searching for the item that belongs to the judge. This is a trained response. Dogs may come directly to the judge if the judge is too close to the dog when the handler sends them to search. The handler may recall the dog back to the handler's station and restart the dog one time without penalty. The handler may not recall and restart the dog more than two times and receive a qualifying score.

**Non-Licensed Classes:** These classes will now have an official score sheet and judge's books. In all Non-Licensed classes except





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for Precision Heeling, handlers will be allowed to praise and encourage their dog during and between all exercises. Handlers who are extreme with their commands, talking, and/or encouragement may be penalized. Non-Licensed classes may be judged by a licensed judge or any other person deemed qualified by the club.

- **Veterans.** This class is identical to the Novice Class except that the recall will be a straight recall without a jump. Dogs are considered veterans when they reach the age of seven.
- **Brace.** This class is identical to the Novice Class except that the recall will be a straight recall without a jump. There must be two dogs with one handler in this class. Dogs must be coupled together while doing the exercises in unison.
- **Precision Heeling.** This class allows for normal deductions and scoring as with regular classes. The class only offers heeling exercises with different patterns that must be marked out in the ring. The circle and rectangles must be marked; however, the diagonal and pattern heeling are not marked in the ring. Please refer to the diagrams in this section of the rulebook to review the exercises. Deductions must be incurred for any heeling errors.
- **Pairs.** Two judges may be used for this class. The exercises are based on Novice exercises and Team exercises. There are two dog and handler teams for this class. Judging is based on how the dogs perform and how well the pairs perform the exercises in unison with one another.
- **Team.** Two judges may be used for this class. The exercises are based on Novice exercises. There are four dog and handler teams for this class. Judging is based on how well the dogs perform and how well the teams perform the exercises in unison with one another.

**High in Trial.** The new system for High in Trial is based on the original score that the dog receives during any of the Novice, Open, or Utility classes. Only regular licensed classes are

eligible for High in Trial. Dogs competing in Additional Titling classes only are not eligible for any High in Trial awards. Please be aware that dogs must meet the following criteria to be eligible to be considered for High in Trial:

All dogs who placed **first** in Novice A, Novice B, Novice C, Open A, Open B, Utility A, and Utility B are eligible for High in Trial.

- Dogs must have earned a score of 195 or above to compete for High in Trial.
- If only one dog has a score above 195, that dog will automatically be determined the High in Trial winner.
- If no dogs scored above 195, the highest scoring dog from the available classes will automatically be determined as the High in Trial winner and no individual performance is required, unless there is a tied score, whereas the tied dog's will runoff using the following procedure to determine the High in Trial winner.

Dogs competing for High in Trial must do a Heel Off Leash pattern that is not either an "L" or a "T" and must do a straight recall without jumps that includes a front and a finish. The dog that has the least number of deductions after performing the Heel Off Leash and Recall exercises will be declared the High in Trial winner from the eligible dogs.

We are excited to offer these changes, new classes, and new challenges for our obedience competitors. We hope this new program encourages all handlers from beginners through experienced to enjoy the sport of obedience with their canine companions.

Obedience forms very special bonds like no other that happen between the dog and handler through relationships developed during training and trusting in your partner.

**Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any assistance or have any questions. I can be reached through my direct line at: 269-366-3544.**