

AUGUST 2021

CONFORMATION JUDGES NEWSLETTER





STAY CONNECTED

By Denise Vavla

UKC Conformation Program Manager

It has been a while since the last Conformation Judge's Newsletter due to the pandemic and most all shows being cancelled. With the limited opportunities for judges and exhibitors to put the latest changes to several of our programs into practice, you will find some crucial point for each program noted below.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need any clarification with any of the rules. We are always available for you.

For specific events, you may also contact the program managers:

Karen A. Shivers: Nosework, Rally & Obedience

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SUMMER-TIME SHOWS

Heat Kills. While it is great to be back showing, most of the country (USA), has been experiencing a hotter than normal summer. As a reminder, it is especially important to keep the dogs, as well as exhibitors, in mind while they are showing in this extreme heat. It does not take much exertion before a dog or handler is overheated. If judging outside, be sure to use the shade wisely, and to remind everyone to keep themselves and their dogs hydrated. In addition, for the dogs, it is better to have a dog show with a wet coat, than for one to go down due to heat exhaustion.

JUDGE'S BOOKS

Marking and correcting your judge's books. Nobody is above making errors, or mistakes. What matters is how these errors are handled and corrected.

When judging, errors made by a judge are normally caught and corrected immediately or if not, hopefully it is corrected on the same day or same weekend while still at the event. In the best-case scenario, the earlier an error is caught and corrected, the better. The longer an error sits, the likelihood of the judge remembering what really happened tends to fade. When an error has been discovered, here is the procedure UKC would like a judge to follow:

- **When an error has been found and the judge still has access to the original judge's book.** If a judge has the original judge's book (all three copies) and they need to make a correction, the judge should mark a single line across the incorrect information, and then make the necessary correction to the judge's book. The judge must then initial all the additional entry corrections made after the fact.
- **What to do if an error is found after the event and the original judge's books are not accessible.** In cases where a judge has

left the show and finds an error on their judge's book, the judge must contact UKC directly and submit their correction in writing. At no time should a judge contact the hosting club and ask them to alter any judge's book due to errors. The following ways to submit corrections are acceptable:

- Make a copy of the judge's book, with the marked corrections and submit this to the UKC All-Breed Sports office by regular mail or email to judges@ukcdogs.com. (Best way to communicate corrections.)
- Email judges@ukcdogs.com, and provide a detailed list of the corrections, including the name of the club, date of event and show number, and what is needing to be corrected, which must include:
 - Breed
 - Sex
 - Armband Number
 - Class
 - Detailed correction

BREED STANDARD UPDATES.

Please note. The following breed standards have been corrected and are **effectively immediately** (no revision date added due nature of correction).

- **Frisian Water Dog.** There has been a correction to the spelling of the Frisian Water Dog (was inadvertently listed as Fresian).
- **French Bulldog.** There was a sentence that ended at random after the comma. This has been corrected to read:
 - HINDQUARTERS
 - HIND LEGS -The strong, muscular hind legs are a little longer than the forelegs, causing the loins to be above the shoulders.
- **Ibizan Hound.** The section on the coat in the breed standard was corrected by adding a comma between Smooth and Rough, this now reads as follows:
 - Two coat types are breed typical: Smooth, rough, or long haired, and neither is preferred. Both types are left untrimmed.

The changes to the following breeds will take effect **January 1, 2022.**

- **Romanian Carpathian Shepherd Dog.** This breed will be changing groups and go from the Herding Group to the Guardian Group.
- **Japanese Akita.** This breed will be changing their breed's name to the Japanese Akitainu.



JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP POLL

Ages and understanding. We are interested in your opinion regarding the current classes and age break-down for Junior Showmanship. As we all know, children have different learning curves and excel at different ages. What we are looking at specifically is the diversity of the age-range of the Junior and Senior showmanship classes. When it comes to the younger children competing against the older children in their class, we feel the younger competitors are at an enormous disadvantage. The current classes and age ranges for the licensed classes are as follows:

- In the Junior class, the age range is 8 years of age and under 13 years of age.
- In the Senior class, the age range is 13 years of and up to (and including) 18 years of age.

The concept and knowledge each group is expected to know in the Junior and Senior classes are not that different. However, is an 8-year-old to really expected to know as much or to be able to express themselves as well as a 12-year-old? What about a 13-year-old against the 18-year-old?

There is a huge learning curve between the ages of 8 years to the age of 18 years. Our proposal is to shorten the gap between the ages so that the children have a better learning experience with other children of the approximate same age range.

The following changes are being proposed for the Junior Showmanship Classes.

- **PeeWee:** 2 years of age and under 4 years of age (no change)
- **Sub Junior:** 4 years of age and under 6 years of age (no change)
- **Pre-Junior:** 6 years of age and under 8 years of age (no change)
- **Junior:** 8 years of age and under 11 years of age (new age-range)
- **Intermediate:** 11 years of age and under 15 years of age (new age-range)
- **Senior:** 15 years of age and up to and including 18* years of age (new age-range)

The Junior, Intermediate, and Senior classes shall have two levels, Novice and Open. The 1st place class winners from the Junior Novice, Junior Open, Intermediate Novice, Intermediate Open, Senior Novice and Senior Open will compete for the Best Junior Handler.

If you would like to comment on the above proposal, please email dvavla@ukcdogs.com

TOTAL DOG EVENTS

Dogs showing in multiple events. UKC events have always been about the dog and many exhibitors can boast that “Our Dog’s Do More,” because their dog’s not only have conformation titles, but have performance titles as well. One way they earn their titles is by competing in Total Dog events, which require the dog to be entered in both conformation as well as a performance event on the same day.

The problem many judges and exhibitor’s find when showing a dog in multiple events, is that this usually leads to conflicts. While we encourage exhibitors to talk with the stewards (and judge’s) working the rings and sort out their conflict by arranging to exhibit their dog to avoid the conflict, keep in mind it is not always the performance event that needs to accommodate the change in judging order. The conformation ring may also adjust the breed

order to help accommodate the exhibitor by:

- Moving the breed up or down in judging order, provided the following steps are taken:
 - The exhibitors entered in the breed that is being moved are notified of the move,
 - The judging of the breed is not judged prior to any posted starting time
 - Should the exhibitor requesting the move not be present when it is time for the breed to be judged, the judging shall commence, and the dog will be marked absent.

ALL-BREED CONFORMATION JUDGES LICENSE.

Judging All-Breeds. Though UKC recognizes over 370 different breeds, there are three breeds, the *American Eskimo*, the *Belgian Shepherd Dog* and the *Toy Fox Terrier* that require additional steps to be licensed to judge the specific breed. When accepting judging assignments, it is of utmost importance that a conformation judge knows whether they hold all the required UKC conformation licenses, when asked to judge an **All-Breed show** at a UKC conformation event.

To accept any judging assignment that includes the American Eskimo, Belgian Shepherd dog or Toy Fox Terrier, a judge must hold the specific breed license. Keep in mind, Judges who officiate for any breed they do not hold the specific breed license, the exhibitor’s wins can be invalidated.

If interested in obtaining any of the individual breed licenses, please refer to the licensing requirements for the Breed Specific Licenses, found on the UKC website under the conformation judge’s tab.

ATTENTION CONFORMATION APPRENTICES.

A change in apprenticeship procedure. If you are a conformation apprentice, there is good news for you. There has been a change to the required number of dogs that a Conformation Apprentice must see during their apprenticeship assignments for the Terrier Group.

Previously, a conformation apprentice must have seen a minimum of 80 terriers from the Terrier Group. This number has been revised and the minimum number to be seen for terriers in the Terrier Group is now 50 dogs.

UNDERSTANDING SPECIFIC TERMS AND PROCEDURES

What is: Excused, Disqualified, Awarding a 2nd Place Ribbon, or Withholding an Award.

Confusion may lay in what happens when a dog is excused, disqualified, is given a 2nd place ribbon, or has an award withheld. You may think: “What difference does this make, the dog gets nothing, correct?” This is where some judges are mistaken, and here is why.



Excused. There are two types of excusals. In each case, when a dog is excused for either type, the dog must leave the ring and the judge's book is marked as EX with a written explanation of the excusal. A dog that is excused from the ring does not count as competition for the remaining dogs in the breed. Dogs that are excused for any of the listed excusals below are allowed to continue showing at the next event.

- **Mandatory Excusals:** The judge has no choice but to excuse the dog if any of the following occur:
 - Any dog is being exhibited with sutures, bandages, adhesive, or any other material that is indicative of or related to any injury, surgical or medical procedure.
 - Any dog that is lame, ill or is unfit for competition.
 - Any dog that is blind or deaf
 - Any dog that cannot be examined safely
- **Discretionary Excusals:** Judges have the right to excuse any dog as follows:
 - Any dogs that appear to be unsafe to approach
 - Any dog that appears to be ill or is deemed unfit for competition - *dogs determined to be unfit are dogs whose physical condition affects its ability to safely compete, or whose condition is so compromised it is not fit for exhibition. This includes, but is not limited to, any dog that has visible, unhealed injuries, is emaciated or is obese.*
 - Injury's indicative of a dog's natural work should be well-healed. Scars and blemishes due to hunting or working injuries as per a breed's standard are not grounds for excusal.
- **Some additional reasons why a dog may be excused.**
 - Just because the dog was fine during class judging does not mean it may be fine when it comes time for the judging of Best Male or Best Female or Best of Winners, or Best of Breed. A dog may be perfectly fine during the class judging but may get injured, and become temporarily lame, between the class judging and the Best of Sex, Best of Winners or Best of Breed judging.
 - A judge may not know if there is an emergency, or a medical reason behind an exhibitors request to be excused. A reason for the excusal does not need to be provided by the exhibitor, and the judge will mark the excusal as "handler's request" on the judge's book.

Disqualified. There are two types of disqualifications. In each case, when a dog is disqualified for either type, the dog must leave the ring and the judge's book is marked as DQ with a written explanation of the disqualification.

- **Breed Standard Disqualifications.** Any breed that has a disqualification as outlined in their breed standard must be excused from the ring and that disqualification is to be written on the judge's book.
 - Dogs excused from the ring due to a breed disqualification do not count as competition for the remaining dogs in the breed.
 - The dog may continue to show in other events, until that dog is disqualified for the same breed fault under another judge.
- **Disqualified due to temperament.** Dogs disqualified for temperament are immediately ineligible to continue showing at any UKC event, unless reinstated by UKC. This is a mandatory excusal from the ring with the cause being:
 - The dog either bit a person (judge, another exhibitor, its

own handler), or bit another dog

- The dog attempted to bite a person or another dog.
- Dogs excused from the ring due to this type of disqualification do not count as competition for the remaining dogs in the breed.

Awarded a 2nd place. Judges will occasionally come across dogs that meets the breed standard but are in poor condition, or the dog has not quite matured to the outline of the standard, but still shows good promise. Although these dogs do not lack merit, they should not be given a 1st place win.

- Dogs that fall into this category should still shows the inherent quality of the breed and therefore should be awarded a 2nd place ribbon even in a class of one.
- By awarding a 2nd place ribbon, the dog is not dismissed as not meeting the breed standard and will still count as quality competition for other dogs in the breed.

Withholding an Award. When an award is withheld, the dog does not get a ribbon. Withholding an award is for serious deviations, including dogs that lack merit. Dogs lacking merit can be applied to any section of the breed standard where there is a lack of a particular quality, or the dog does not have enough of a certain predetermined quality that makes the breed what it is.

- If presented with a clearly inferior specimen of a breed, do not be concerned with the impact the decision has on the other entries in the breed. In this case, it is the duty of the judge to withhold all ribbon placements for that dog.
 - If the dog is not worthy of an award, **do not** award the dog the 1st place ribbon, and then decide to withhold the Best Male or Best Female. This makes no sense. If the dog is not worthy, this should be noted at the class level.
- Giving the Best Male or Best Female a competition win based on defeating an inferior dog defeats the real purpose of Conformation shows.
- A judge that withholds any placements for lack of merit must note this on the judges' book and specifically address where the dog is lacking. Judges must always take the time to discuss withheld placements with the exhibitor, either at the end of judging the class or after judging the breed.

A CALL FOR SENIOR CONFORMATION JUDGES.

The history of licensing conformation judges. Have you ever wondered how UKC judges are licensed? If you are a judge, you already know this answer. However, what you may not know is that the judging approval process has changed many times over the years.

The early years. How many of the "long-time" judges remember the days when a licensed conformation judge only held one or two breed licenses, and there were no All-Breed shows? And before being able to judge any breed they did not hold the specific license to judge, they had to apply and receive special permission just to judge that specific breed?

Do you remember having to research every breed, and then request a temporary license and submit a lot of paperwork just to get permission to judge those breeds, and it was not just a onetime deal? This had to be done every time the judge



was asked to judge a breed, they did not hold the license to judge, at different shows. Once the judge had proven they knew the individual breed, were they then licensed for that breed.

Though this was an effective way to make sure every judge understood the breeds they were judging, it was a cumbersome and ineffective way to get more judges into the judging pool.

Changing the approval process. UKC's next step to open the judging pool, and to contract and approve new judges was to approve new applicants for all breeds, except for the American Eskimo, American Pit Bull Terrier, Belgian Shepherd Dog, and the Toy Fox Terrier. The applicant just needed to provide documentation that they had sufficient experience in showing dogs and had titled dogs. Having an established breeding program back then was a plus. The thought process was that the cream would rise to the top, and the judging pool would even itself out. This worked well, but it was not good enough.

Understanding the importance of education. To stay current, and competitive to other dog sports, UKC implemented a judge's education platform to have consistency within the judging pool and to make sure the judges had the educational tools necessary to succeed. This is the category where most all of today's judges fall and unfortunately, many of the judges seceded and gave up their judge's license, due to the educational requirements. Those who fulfilled the new requirements have done an excellent job at keeping abreast of the ever-changing sport of dogs and know that the more they learn and collaborate, the better judges they become.

Where UKC is at today. Gaining a UKC conformation judge's license is vastly different and more difficult today than it was over 25 years ago. Judges must meet several pre-requisites before they can even apply, and then afterwards, continue their education with apprenticeships under well established and well-respected Senior Judges. The educational side of the apprenticeships provides the apprentice with different views and tools that can be used once they are fully licensed and is the easy part since most Senior Judges give of their time and knowledge freely. The most difficult part an apprentice has today is finding enough Senior Judge's to fulfill their apprenticeship assignments.

Requirements to be a Senior Judge. The Senior Judge requirements have been in place for four years and we could not be any prouder of the Senior Judges who have helped UKC in the judging approval process. Each Senior Judge has taken their own set of skills and have given of themselves to better the sport of dogs.

The reasons why a judge would want to take on the responsibility of mentoring new judge's is personal. However, if you enjoy learning new things while mentoring apprentices, and have ever experienced the pride of helping to educate others in the same field then becoming a Senior Judge is for you. Not only does this bring about a change of exhibitor's attitude about UKC conformation shows, but we are also seeing changes in other venues attitudes about UKC in general, and really is this not all for the betterment of the sport?

The Senior Judge status offers UKC judges the opportunity to mentor new judges and give back to the sport. If you would like to be a senior status conformation judge and become eligible to take apprentices, you will need to meet the following:

- Must currently hold the Regular Conformation Judge Status.
- Must have judged a minimum of 16 assignments completed at All-Breed shows with groups
- Must submit a letter of recommendation from two separate senior status judges. (These must be different from the people who wrote letters of recommendation when applying to become an apprentice.)
- Must submit one letter of recommendation from a UKC club with whom you have held an assignment.
- Must complete one of the following:
 - Attended a UKC Ring Procedures workshop within 12 months of requesting Senior Status
 - Complete the on-line judge's workshop within 12 months of requesting Senior Status.

If you have met the above requirements, you may submit the Application for Senior Status along with your letters of recommendation for approval. Requests for Senior Status are reviewed monthly. Upon approval, you will be notified of your Senior Status and may begin accepting apprentices.

Featured Breed: Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog (LCLD) standard in review by Catahoula Owners, Breeders, and Research Association (COBRA)

2019

Catahoula Owners, Breeders and Research Association
The UKC National Breed Club

Judges Education

We strive to promote and educate judges and exhibitors in the structure of the Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog in order to preserve the breed in its original form and function. The United Kennel Club conformation standard is used.



Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog All purpose working ranch dog. A medium to medium-large dog, short coated dog, well-muscled, yet trim. Powerful, but denotes agility and great endurance. It is a moderate breed and should not resemble either a sighthound or a bulldog in appearance. The Catahoula is independent, protective, and territorial. Aloof, lack of animation may cause some to draw away from judges when being examined. They should never be excessively aggressive or shy.

Size: Male 22-26, Females 20-24, with the mid preferred. Weight may range from 50-95 lbs with females generally 20 lbs less than males.

Proportion: Body is slightly longer than tall and the distance from the elbow to the ground should equal 50-60 percent of the dog's height from the withers to the ground. A dog with legs shorter than the ideal is to be more heavily penalized than a dog with longer legs. Catahoulas should always be presented in hard, working condition. Any deviation from the ideal must be judged by the extent of the deviation, and the effect it has on the dog's ability to work.

Head: Powerful build without exaggeration. Gender differences should be apparent. Full dentition is desired, worn or broken teeth should not be faulted. **Nose pigment, any color.**



Muzzle: Viewed from the side, the length of skull and muzzle are approximately equal in length. The planes of the top skull and the bridge of the muzzle are roughly parallel to one another. The muzzle is strong and deep. Viewed from above, the muzzle is moderately wide and tapering toward the nose.

Teeth, a complete set of evenly spaced white teeth. A scissor bite is preferred, but a level bite is acceptable. Full dentition is desired, but dogs

should not be penalized for worn or broken teeth. **Faults:** Snipey muzzle. **Serious Faults:** Overshot or undershot bite.

Eyes: Any color without preference. Eye rims are tight and may be any color or combination of colors. **Serious Faults:** Malformed pupils; pupils not centered; sagging eyelids making haw visible; functional abnormality of eyelids or eyelashes.

Skull: The skull is broad and flat. **Cheeks:** are well developed. **Stop:** is well defined and of moderate length. There may be a slight median furrow between the eyes and running back to the occipital bone. **Lips:** may be tight or slightly pendulous with pigment of any color of combination of colors. **Faults:** Excessively broad skull; narrow skull.



Neck: Muscular and of good length, not overdone. The circumference of the neck widens from the nape to where the neck blends smoothly into the shoulders. **Faults:** Neck too short and thick or too thin and weak; excess skin forming dewlap.

Shoulders are strong and smoothly muscled. The shoulder blades are long, wide, flat and well laid back. The upper arm is roughly equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an angle sufficient to ensure that the foot falls under the withers.

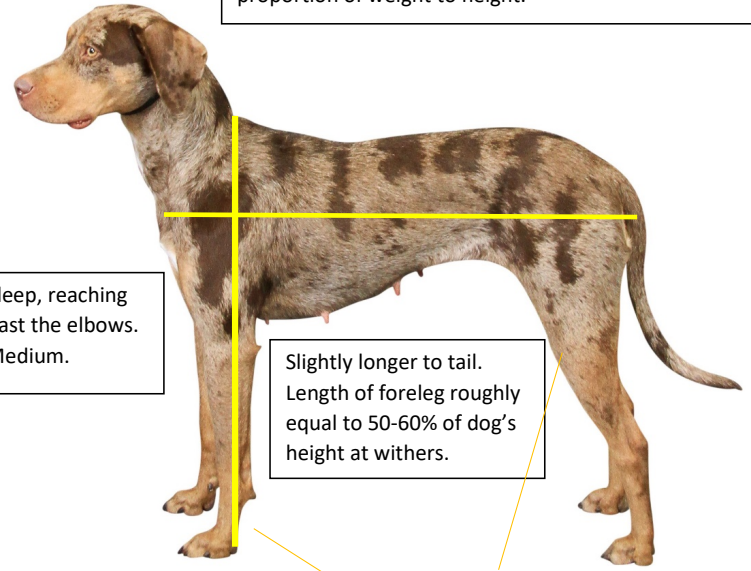
Forelegs are straight, and of medium bone, indicating strength without excessive thickness. The elbows are close to the body and do not turn out. **Pasterns** are strong, short, and slightly sloping. **Faults:** Forequarters significantly heavier than the hindquarters; bone too heavy or too fine; straight shoulders; out at elbows; weak pasterns.

Body: Slightly longer than tall. The topline slightly downward from withers to level back. A slightly elevated rear resulting from slightly straighter rear angulation should not be penalized too severely. **Loin:** a broad back, slightly arched loin. A slightly longer loin is acceptable in females. **Ribs** extend well back and are well sprung from the spine.

Chest is deep, reaching at least to the elbows, and broad. **Tuck-up** is apparent, but not exaggerated. **Croup** is medium to long and slightly

sloping. A slightly elevated rear resulting from straighter rear angulation should not be penalized too severely. **Faults:** Chest too broad, too narrow or too shallow; soft topline; exaggerated or absent tuck-up; loin too long.

The Catahoula must be both powerful and agile so actual weight and height are less important than the correct proportion of weight to height.



Chest deep, reaching to at least the elbows. Bone Medium.

Slightly longer to tail. Length of foreleg roughly equal to 50-60% of dog's height at withers.

Short slightly sloping. Stifles well bent. Tuck up apparent.

Ears: drop, short to medium in length. Proportionally wide at the base, gradually tapering to the slightly rounded tip. They should fold over and be generally triangular in shape. The top of the ear fold is level or just slightly below the top line of the skull. When the dog is at attention, the inner edge of the ear lies close to the cheek. Laid back ears acceptable, but not preferred. **Faults:** Any ear type other than described above.

Disqualification: Cropped ears.

Hindquarters: Strong and smoothly muscled. In balance with the forequarters. **Stifles** are well bent, and the **hocks** are well let down. When the dog is standing, the short, strong rear pasterns are perpendicular to the ground and, viewed from the rear, parallel to one another. **Faults:** Thin, weak hindquarters; cow-hocked; open-hocked.

Feet: Oval in shape, toes long. Pads thick. Strong nail. Dewclaws may be removed. **Fault:** cat foot.

Coat: Single coated, short to medium. Texture ranges from smooth to course without preference. **Disqualification:** Long, Fuzzy coat.

Tail: Natural extension of topline. Thicker at base and tapers. Natural bobs permitted but not preferred. Full length tail may be carried upright with tip curving forward when dog is alert.

Faults: Ring tail; docked tail.

Disqualification: Complete absence of a tail (no external coccygeal vertebrae evident.)



Gait: Possibly the most important feature. Smooth, fluid and effortless. Good but not exaggerated reach with powerful drive. The topline remains level with only a slight flexing to indicated suppleness. Viewed from any position, legs turn neither in or out, nor do feet cross or interfered with each other. As speed increased, feet tend to converge toward center of balance. Poor movement should be penalized to the degree to which it reduces the dogs ability to perform the tasks it was bred to do. A dog not gaing smoothly should not be chosen as a better specimen.

Endless variety of colors and pattern with no preference. Color should not be a primary consideration. Serious Fault: 70 percent or more white. Disqualifications: 90 percent or more white coat color; solid white head; albinism.



Eyes, color without preference. Eye rims are tight and may be any color or combination of colors. **Nose pigment, any color.**





Preferred Bite – Scissor



Acceptable Bite - Level

The Catahoula is billed as the world's most versatile Ranch dog. They can be trained for most any purpose, but care should be taken when judging that the historical use of the dog is represented well in the specimen shown.

