

MARCH 2020 EDITION

# ALL-BREED SPORTS NEWSLETTER

featuring breed standard revisions, club reminders, & more  
compiled by Hannah Tsui





**We're sure you've noticed that the look of UKC has recently changed! We are pleased to share our new look with our community. Our new logos showcase Dogs That Do More.**

The name of the Show Operations department, which licenses Conformation, Obedience, Rally Obedience, Agility, Nosework, Drag Racing, Lure Coursing, Weight Pull, and Dock Jumping, has changed to the All-Breed Sports department.

This change means that the look of UKC awards will be changing too. Ribbons will no longer feature the UKC Seal of Merit, but will instead have the UKC logo. All event rulebooks have been updated to reflect this change. UKC clubs that currently have ribbons on hand with the Seal of Merit should continue to

use them for upcoming events until that supply runs out.

Forms and event paperwork, such as judges' books and scoresheets, will be updated with the new logo as well. Paperwork with the old logo should continue to be used until supply runs out.

Any questions regarding ribbons can be directed to the All-Breed Sports department at (269) 343-9020.

## ATTENTION UKC CLUBS!

Please keep the following items in mind when preparing show paperwork for your next event:

- When submitting show paperwork to UKC, the Non-Licensed Class and Altered judges' books should be filed behind the regular judges' book for the same breed. If there were no regular licensed entries for the breed, NLC and Altered judges' books should be filed alphabetically within the group.
- Entry forms and move-up forms should not be stapled.
- Entry forms should be organized numerically by assigned armband number.
- Altered Group competition is not required. At the discretion of the club, Altered Best of Breed winners may advance directly to Altered Best in Show.
- Clubs hosting Obedience, Rally, or Agility events should be sure to submit a completed Junior Participation form for all Junior participants.
- Junior Membership Applications should be submitted on top of all other show results.
- Ring or table stewards may not make any markings on the official judges' books after judging has concluded. If caught, an error to a placement or award must be corrected and initialed by the judge.
- Clubs hosting Performance events should be sure to send in the original copies of the entry forms and retain their own copies.

## 2020 BREED STANDARD UPDATES

Several of the UKC Breed Standards have been updated for 2020. All affected breed standards have been updated on the UKC website and are available for download. Changes are as follows:

- **Swedish Lapphund:** Dewclaws are now permissible (formerly undesired)
- **Plott Hound:** Solid colors (including black) now allowed.
- **Mountain Feist:** Ears must be erect.
- **Perdiguero de Burgos:** Eyes – addition of "with little or no haw."
- **Teddy Roosevelt Terrier:** New photo received from the

National Breed Association.

- **Boston Terrier:** Over 25 lbs. will no longer be a Disqualification.
- **Chow Chow:** Self-colored noses in cream dogs now allowed.

## DO YOU REGISTER AND SHOW POODLES?

**United Kennel Club registers Poodles separately based on their variety and welcomes both Solid and Multi-Colored Poodles.**

UKC recognizes all Standard Poodles as one breed. The Standard Poodles belong to the Gun Dog group, drawing on their history as excellent hunting companions. Both Multi-Colored and Solid Standard Poodles share the same Standard Poodle registration, but they are separated in the show ring: Solid Standard Poodles and Multi-Colored Standard Poodles do not show against each other at the breed level. These unique varieties share a nearly identical breed standard that deviates only in regard to color and color patterns, but are judged completely separately.

On the other hand, both Mini and Toy Poodles are registered simply as Poodles. They belong to the Companion group. Like the Standards, both Solid and Multi-Colored Mini and Toy Poodles will register as the same breed.

In the show ring, the Mini and Toy Poodles will show as varieties of the same breed. The Toy classes will show first, followed by the Minis. Toy and Mini Poodles will show together in the Champion and Grand Champion classes.

However, the Solid and Multi-Colored Poodles will show as separate breeds, just like the Standard Poodles. This means it is possible that both a Solid and Multi-Colored Poodle could be in the Companion Dog Group ring.

If you register Poodles with UKC, please make sure to take care to select the correct Poodle breed upon registering or when purchasing a Temporary Listing number. If you show Poodles in Conformation, please be sure to clearly indicate on your entry form whether your Poodle is Standard, Mini, or Toy, and whether they are Solid



or Multi-Colored. Omitting any of this information could result in your dog showing in the wrong class, which we all want to avoid!

Please feel free to contact the All-Breed Sports department at [conformation@ukcdogs.com](mailto:conformation@ukcdogs.com) with any questions about showing and registering Poodles.

## **NOSEWORK EXHIBITORS: 2020 Rules Now Effective!**

We are very excited to have launched the new 2020 Nosework program! The updated program features changes that will benefit both returning and new dog-and-handler teams.

This update has been in the works for a couple of years, and we are very glad to have seen it to fruition. The completed program features changes made with the valuable input from our exhibitors and our Nosework judges.

The UKC Nosework program is modeled after real K9 detection dogs, who search for drugs, explosives, missing people, and crime scene evidence. Although the trial environment is vastly different than these real-life situations, the search scenarios do reflect those same abilities.

Handlers competing in Nosework experience a very special kind of bond with their dog, built on extremely strong trust.

One of the most significant changes to the program is the revision of the Champion and Grand Champion title requirements. Several titles have been added – each level now has its own Champion and Grand Champion title. These Champion titles can be worked on as soon as the regular Nosework title is finished: for example, a dog could finish the Novice Nosework title and immediately begin working towards the Novice Champion title, instead of having to finish the Elite Nosework title prior to beginning the quest for a Championship title.

This allows all dogs and handlers at all levels to seek success and feel a sense of accomplishment as they make their way to more difficult levels. It offers more opportunities for experience and more freedom to work where they want within the program.

Please be sure to carefully read the new rulebook in its entirety, as there are subtle and significant changes throughout the program. We do suggest taking special note of the chapters for the levels at which you are currently competing. Above all, have fun, train, and trust in your dog! Happy detecting!



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## **UKC ARTICLE THE VALUE OF “MARKERS” IN TRAINING WRITTEN BY MICHAEL ELLIS**

I am often asked about the value of *markers* (conditioned reinforcers and conditioned punishers) in our training. Do we need markers to train dogs well? How do they work? What advantages might they give us over more traditional communication systems? How should we create and implement them into our training? This article will attempt to acquaint those of you who are unfamiliar with markers with their use, and perhaps give those of you who use markers a better understanding of their power, as well as some ideas on how you might expand their use in your training.

What is a marker? A marker is a dog trainer's term for a stimulus (typically a word or sound, although it could be a visual stimulus as well) that signals (**precedes**) reward or punishment repeatedly until *the stimulus itself becomes a reward or punishment via classical conditioning*. The use of a clicker is ultimately the same thing as a reward marker. You will hear trainers use terms like conditioned reinforcer, conditioned punisher, secondary reinforcer, secondary punisher, or bridge...these are simply other ways of saying marker. For the purposes of this article we will use the term *reward marker* for a sound that signals reward, and *punishment marker* for a sound that signals punishment. Once conditioned, a marker allows a trainer to reward or punish their dog with a sound in lieu of the primary reward (food, toy, etc.) or a physical aversive (correction). Conditioning a marker is a very simple process in which the trainer produces a sound and *follows it with*

either a reward or punishment repeatedly, but there can be a wide variety of different markers that signal different types of rewards or punishers. For instance, the trainer could create a marker that releases the dog to access a reward delivered by the trainer, one that asks the dog to continue performing the behavior that is being rewarded while it receives the reward, one that releases the dog to a remote reward (one away from the trainer), one that signals a toy reward, one that signals a food reward, one that signals negative punishment (withholding reward), one that signals positive punishment (some aversive applied to the dog), etc. The value of the marker is governed by whatever the dog has repeatedly received *immediately after* the marker during training. For example, if the trainer has conditioned a marker using kibble as a reward, then the marker would be roughly equivalent to a piece of kibble, if conditioned with the use of steak as a reward, then the marker would be roughly equivalent to a piece of steak, if conditioned with a toy, then roughly equivalent to a toy reward, etc. The same principle would apply to punishment markers...the intensity of the marker would be governed by whatever consequences had followed the marker in training, so different markers can have different values depending on the conditioning process.

What are the advantages of using markers in training? There are certain types of behaviors, and certain situations, that



trainers certainly wouldn't need a marker to train. For instance, one could teach a sit, down, or recall without the use of a marker by simply rewarding the dog immediately after they have completed the behavior, but it is not always feasible to reward certain behaviors in a timely fashion. For instance, what if the dog is at a distance, or the reward isn't readily available to deliver? The power of the marker is that the behavior can be marked (rewarded) as soon as the dog completes it, even when the primary reward isn't immediately available. Another situation in which markers are indispensable is when trainers are in the process of moving the reward out of sight. In initial training we frequently have rewards ready to deliver, in our hands or in a bait pouch, but over time it is essential that we teach the dog to make us produce rewards that are not visible to the dog. Markers make this possible. We can hide the reward, have the dog perform the behavior, mark it, and then produce the reward a number of seconds after the completion of the behavior, so we are less reliant on having the reward immediately available. There are also certain types of behaviors that are impossible to reward while the dog is performing them. Let's take eye contact, or focus, as an example. If a trainer were trying to reward eye contact without the use of a marker there would be significant difficulties. The dog would be engaged in the behavior and the trainer would try to capture it, but when the trainer attempted to deliver the reward, the dog would abandon its focus to access the reward, the last thing the dog would do before receiving the reward would be to look away from the trainer's eyes and toward their hand...the exact opposite of focus. The same holds true for teaching a dog to hold something in its mouth without chewing, like a dumbbell for competition obedience, or other personal items for service work. It isn't possible to reward a dog while it has something in its mouth, so a marker is indispensable for capturing the calm hold while the dog is actually in the act. The same principles hold true for the use of punishment. It isn't always feasible, especially with the use of negative punishment, to make the dog associate the punishment with a specific behavior, either due to distance, where the dog's focus lies, or physical mechanics. So, a marker allows us to tell the dog exactly when the infraction occurred, even if the consequence follows after the fact.

Another significant advantage of marker use over traditional training methods is connected to a concept we call *reward placement*. In the early stages of training new behaviors, where and how the trainer physically delivers the reward makes a big difference in the long-term integrity of the behavior, and we call this reward placement. Let's say a trainer is trying to teach a dog a correct front (sit straight and close in front of the handler), but every time they deliver the reward, they use their right hand. Eventually the dog begins to sit crooked facing the right side of the trainer's body. Using a marker allows the trainer to separate the production of the reward from the completion of the

behavior. The dog sits front, the trainer marks the behavior, breaks out of position, moves away from the spot, then delivers the primary reward a number of seconds later. This prevents the dog from noticing that the reward is coming from the right side of the body, and because *the marker itself is a reward*, the dog is reinforced for the straight front. The same principle holds when working on many other behaviors that we create and maintain through proper reward placement. Focused heeling is another excellent example. When teaching a dog to focus heel properly, trainers frequently have a reward ready to deliver (in their hand) and deliver it when the dog is focused and in the correct position. If a trainer were to reach across the front of their body to deliver the reward the dog would gradually begin to move itself into a position that makes it easier for them to access the reward coming from the right, and as a consequence would begin to forge (walk in front of the handler), crowd (touch the handler's leg), and crab (walk sideways like a crab). We prevent this by delivering the reward with our left hand above the dog's head, but over time the trainer needs to get the reward out of their hand and out of sight. Markers allow the trainer to keep the gains they made through reward placement when it is no longer efficient to have the reward delivered to a specific spot. The dog is heeling properly, the trainer has the reward hidden on their body, or placed remotely, they see the behavior they want, they mark it, then break off from heeling, move away from the dog, and produce the reward a number of seconds after marking it. Again, by doing this the trainer avoids having the dog focus on where the reward is produced, and are thus able to maintain their criteria over time.

Markers also allow trainers to give rewards and punishments without actually using primary reinforcers or punishers. *Once conditioned a marker is a reward or punishment*, and although the trainer needs to maintain the value of the marker through classical conditioning by continuing to deliver a consequence (good or bad) a significant portion of the time, the markers can be used without consequence on occasion and still have the full effect of a reward or punishment.

Most trainers use a fairly straight forward set of markers in their training. One marker that releases the dog to access a reward, one that says keep doing what you are doing, and one for telling the dog they are wrong (punishment), and these are powerful tools for precise communication, but this is just scratching the surface of the power of markers. Be creative! As we alluded to before, you can use different markers for a wide variety of different rewards and punishments, as well as different reward placements. Although this article is a very basic treatment of marker training and its advantages, I hope that it has piqued your interest, and that you will explore the concepts further and incorporate markers into your training. I think you will be very pleased with the results. Happy training!





## MICHAEL'S BIO

Michael is an internationally renowned dog trainer and teacher with nearly forty years of experience in competitive dog sports and companion dog training. Michael started his career as a teacher of dog trainers in 1996, when he began giving seminars and clinics to training clubs and organizations around the world. Over the next thirteen years he taught extensively to a very diverse group of professionals and hobbyists, from competitive sport trainers, police departments, and the US military, to search and rescue groups, service dog agencies, and pet dog trainers. During this period Michael taught over three hundred seminars in the US, Canada, and South America, that comprises more than one thousand days of lecture and practical work, not to mention many hours of private training and coaching. Michael's clear, concise, and patient style made him one of the most popular coaches of trainers in the country, and he did much to popularize the use of reward based techniques in the world of protection sports.

In 2009, Michael stopped traveling full time in order to open the Michael Ellis School for Dog Trainers. In the ten years since the opening of the school he has helped more than one thousand individual students, the majority of whom have taken multiple classes, on their journeys to become better trainers. Many MES graduates have gone on to be highly sought-after professional trainers, and respected members of the training community at large.

In 2008, Michael started collaboration with Leerburg Enterprises and Ed Frawley to produce training videos and online classes. This partnership continues to this day. These resources have helped the growth of many thousands of trainers and aspiring trainers around the world.

In addition to teaching, Michael has competed in, and done decoy/helper work, for multiple club and national level events in both IPO(IGP) and the ring sports (Mondioring and French



ring). He was one of the first Mondioring decoys certified in the US, and one of the first members of USMRA. He has coached national champions in several disciplines, and many national and international competitors, but he is perhaps most proud of the now thousands of club level and beginning trainers that he has helped to improve their communication, knowledge, and physical skills.

Michael, in partnership with trainer Lisa Maze, has bred Malinois under the kennel name Loups du Soleil for more than twenty-five years. Loups du Soleil is one of the most successful breeders of working Malinois in North America.



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KENNEL CLUB

**REVISED PREMIER ENTRY PERIOD:**  
**April 20 – May 15**