

**AKC has pamphlets that explain the roles of the Gate, Ring and Table Stewards during “normal times” but these roles will be different while we are practicing social distancing and following COVID-19 safety protocols**

**Several GCOC members attended the Greenville show and paid attention to how they managed their trial while still adhering to COVID protocols. Their trial secretary was Chris Brooks who will also be our trial secretary. After finishing on Sunday, I spoke to Chris and he is willing to assist us in the same way he assisted the Greenville club (his home club). There will be one central check-in located in the main lobby where the photographer used to set-up. The person who signs up for exhibitor check-in will be at that same table handing out armbands and marking off each dog on a piece of paper as they check-in. On Saturday, for Rally dogs entered in both trials, they will only need to check in one time for the day. There will a sign posted that if they decide not to stay for the second trial to please let us know before they leave. Before the start of each class the ring boards will be checked to make sure dogs are matched to those who have checked in.**

**Obedience Stewards pages 1-4**

**Rally Stewards pages 5-7**

#### **THE STEWARD IN OBEDIENCE**

An exhibitor may not serve as a table steward in the class in which they are exhibiting in.

Stewards must keep in mind that they have been selected to help the judges and not to advise them. They should carefully refrain from discussing or even seeming to discuss the dog’s performance with the judge and should not under any circumstances show or give the appearance of showing the catalog to the judge. When not actively engaged in their duties, stewards should position themselves so that they will not interfere with the judging of the dogs.

Under no circumstances should a steward give information or instructions to owners or handlers unless specifically instructed to do so by the judge, and then they should do so only in such a manner that it is clear that the instructions are those of the judge.

Stewarding functions in the obedience ring fall into three general categories: gate, table and ring. Under ideal circumstances, a club will provide four stewards to perform these functions (there are two ring stewards). However, if the judge’s assignment is relatively light, a club could manage quite well with two experienced persons or each ring. The following discussion will explain the specific duties of each function. Although the duties discussed below cover most of the steward’s responsibilities, it is essential that the stewards be at ringside at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled start of judging to receive any specific instructions from the judge and to assist in setting up the ring as directed by the judge.

#### **OBEDIENCE GATE STEWARD**

The primary responsibility of the gate steward is to ensure that the next dog to be judged is immediately available when the judge is ready. ~~As soon as the judge begins the judging routine of a dog, this steward calls the next dog to be judged and ensures the handler is at ringside when the dog in the ring has completed all exercises.~~ Once a dog completes a run the gate steward will click next on the app which will signal the station 2 monitor to direct the exhibitor to the on-deck position (Station 1) outside of their ring. The gate steward will make sure the correct dog is on-deck and the jump height is correct.

Dogs may not enter the rings until the judge indicates they are ready for the next dog. The gate steward is responsible for ensuring the judging time of the class is not delayed by having the judge wait for dogs. Dogs must be judged in judging program order as listed for each day to the extent that it is practical to do so without holding up the judging in any ring. If the dog listed next is not at ringside when needed, the steward should not hesitate to call the next dog in order. Stewards are not required to seek out handlers. Handlers are responsible for being ready when their dogs’ numbers are called. The steward should report any absence to the judge, and the judge will decide when the dog is to be marked absent. This procedure should be followed even if the armband for the absent dog has already been issued.

~~It is normally the duty of the gate steward to distribute armbands.~~ Central check-in will distribute

~~armbands. When exhibitors identify themselves, the steward should check the catalog and ask the exhibitors' names and the names of the dogs.~~ The gate steward should verify the height and distance that the dogs jump.

The steward then should check that the number of the armband being given to the exhibitor corresponds to the number in the catalog. It is essential that every precaution be taken when distributing armbands.

Very often, exhibitors make requests for special consideration, such as asking to be judged out of order. Any request of this nature must be directed to the judge. It is the judge's prerogative to grant or deny the request. The steward should never consider the matter.

### OBEDIENCE TABLE STEWARD

The extent to which a judge uses the services of a table steward varies greatly. Some judges prefer to do their own bookwork and do not feel it is necessary to have the steward perform many of the duties in this area. The steward must receive specific instructions from the judge to ascertain exactly what will be required as table steward.

Many judges use worksheets. The judge may ask the table steward to prepare and have ready the worksheet for the next dog. The steward should ensure that the class, proper armband number and breed of dog are correctly entered on the sheet. If the judge requests, the table steward must double-check to see that the scores on the worksheet are added correctly. The judge — and only the judge — will transfer the scores from the worksheet to the judge's book. The steward should check to ensure that no error has been made. If an error is detected, the steward should bring it to the attention of the judge. Under no circumstances should the steward write in the judge's book.

The table steward usually prepares the group exercise worksheets, if the judge uses them. These should be prepared according to the judge's instructions. It is essential that these sheets be prepared in judging program order, even if that is not the order in which the dogs were individually judged.

The table steward must review the catalog to see what trophies (if any) are offered and to ensure that all trophies and ribbons are available at the conclusion of judging. Very often the steward is asked to assist in the awarding of the trophies and ribbons to the winners.

### OBEDIENCE RING STEWARDS

Each judge requires two ring stewards. It is particularly important for these two stewards to report to the ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled time for judging to assist the judge in setting up the ring and equipment and to receive specific assignments from the judge. As the duties of the ring stewards vary with the class in which they are officiating, the remainder of this discussion will be divided by classes.

### NOVICE CLASS

The first exercise in the Novice class is the Heel on Leash. After the dog finishes the heeling pattern, they will perform the figure 8 but cones instead of people will be used. ~~\* the two ring stewards are required to act as "posts" around which the dog and handler will execute the Figure Eight. Both stewards should be ready immediately when the Figure Eight is called. The judge will indicate where they want the Figure Eight performed. When should the stewards go to the assigned position? The stewards will most often go to the assigned position just after the judge gives the order "Exercise finished" for the Heel on Leash portion of the exercise. This method saves time by not requiring the judge to call the stewards each time they are needed. The stewards stand 8 feet apart, facing each other, with their hands hanging naturally at their sides or folded in front. Hands should not be placed on hips or in any way extended from the body.~~

~~It is absolutely essential that stewards do not talk or move while this exercise is being performed. Stewards must resist the temptation to turn their heads to watch the dog's performance.~~

~~\*After completion of the Figure Eight exercise, a steward must be available to take the leash from~~

~~the handler.~~

**\*Due to COVID protocols Cones instead of stewards are used as post for the Figure 8 exercise. Instead of stewards taking and returning the leash to handlers the judge will direct the handler to take their leash to a designated area and retrieve it from that area before leaving the ring.**

The judge will then give the order for the Stand for Examination. Very often the judges will require the steward to hold their clipboard and pencil. Once the steward has these items, they should promptly move away from the area where the exercise is taking place. But the steward should be close enough to quickly return the clipboard and pencil when the judging of the exercise is completed and the judge gives the order "Exercise finished."

~~The steward does not return the dog's leash until after the Recall exercise is completed.~~

Any number of incidents may occur during the group exercises, and stewards must be particularly alert. If a dog breaks or starts to move toward another dog, a steward *may* be asked to restrain the dog's movement. The stewards' attention should be divided between the dogs and the judge to make sure they are alert to a possible disturbance.

The gate steward will line up the dogs and handlers outside the ring immediately prior to the judging of the Group Exercise – Sit & Down Stay. The judge should not be made to wait while the handlers are lined up. The Group Exercise is done in judging program order.

*The stewards must be ready to follow whatever instructions the judge may give.*

#### OPEN CLASS

~~When issuing an armband to a handler, the gate steward should verify the height and distance the dog jumps. The gate steward should also take the leash and dumbbell from the handler when the dog is brought into the ring.~~

*The gate steward should verify the height and distance the dog jumps. The judge will designate where they want the exhibitor to leave their leash and dumbbell.* A discussion of heights and distance will be described later. It is essential that the steward setting the broad jump have a tape measure or steel ruler to ensure the accuracy of the jump. The first duty of the judge will be to check that the jumps are properly set. Stewards must arrange jumps quickly and accurately, or much time will be wasted.

In the Open class, the Figure Eight is performed off lead as part of the Heel Free exercise. ~~The requirements of stewards are the same as in the Novice class. Again, stewards should be immediately available when the order is given. Cones instead of people will be used.~~

The Open class has two retrieving exercises: The Retrieve on Flat and Retrieve over High Jump. ~~The gate steward takes the dumbbell from the handler as the dog enters the ring and places it on the judge's table. When directed by the judge, a ring steward shall deliver the dumbbell to the handler or to the judge as specified by the judge. This should be done immediately so handlers are not made to wait. The ring or gate steward will show the exhibitor where the judge wants them to place the leash and dumbbell.~~

#### UTILITY CLASS

~~When issuing an armband to a handler, the gate steward should verify the height and distance the dog jumps. The gate steward should also take the leash and dumbbell from the handler when the dog is brought into the ring.~~

*The gate steward should verify the height and distance the dog jumps. The judge will designate where they want the exhibitor to leave their leash and dumbbell.*

The Utility class contains the Directed Jumping exercise, during which the dog must complete a high jump and a bar jump. As in the Open class, one steward immediately sets the high jump while the other steward sets the bar jump. Again, this must be done quickly and accurately. As in the Open class, the judge will make sure that the jumps are properly set.

~~For the Scent Discrimination exercise, the gate steward will have placed the handler's articles on the chair or judge's table. Each judge wants this done a specific way and will explain this to you prior~~

*to the class.* The steward will select the articles as directed by the judge, and separate them from the rest. The judge may position the remaining articles or may ask the ring steward to perform this function. The articles must be placed so that the closest article is about 20 feet from the handler. The judge or ring steward must touch (not necessary to scent) each of the eight remaining articles, spreading them in a random manner on the floor or ground, about 6 inches apart. On the judge's order, the handler will place the scented article on the judge's book or worksheet. Without touching that article, the judge or steward will place it among the others.

After completion of the Scent Discrimination exercises, the ring steward places the unused articles in the handler's container and returns them to the judge's table.

For the Utility class Directed Retrieve exercise the steward takes the three gloves from the judge's table and goes to the far end of the ring. After the dog and handler are in position (midway between and in line with the two jumps) but facing the opposite direction, the steward will drop the three gloves across the end of the ring. The steward will drop one glove in each corner, about 3 feet from the sides and the end of the ring, and one in the center, about 3 feet from the edge of the ring. The three gloves must be clearly visible to both dog and handler. It is not necessary to "iron" the gloves flat, but they should be open, not closed. After the exercise is completed, the steward retrieves the remaining two gloves and places them on the judge's table.

For the Moving Stand and Examination exercise, a ring steward may be needed to hold the judge's clipboard and pencil during the examination and will stand aside as directed by the judge.

## **THE JUMPS**

Although the gate steward will ask the handler what height the dog jumps, it is conceivable that the handler will know only the height of the dog. Because of this, it is essential that ring stewards be familiar with the *Obedience Regulations* concerning the setting of the jumps.

The minimum jump shall be set at the nearest multiple of 2 inches to three-quarters the height of the dog at the withers for the breeds listed in Appendix A.

In the Regular Open and Utility classes and the Optional titling classes the minimum jump shall be set to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to the height of the dog at the withers for all other dogs, with no dog jumping less than 4 inches or more than 36 inches.

In the Preferred Open and Preferred Utility classes the jumps will be set to 1/2 the height of the dog at the withers.

The broad jump is set at twice the distance of the high jump. The low side of each hurdle and the lowest hurdle shall be nearest the dog. The highest hurdles shall be removed first.

The hurdles shall be spaced as equally as possible as follows:

1. For dogs that jump 8 inches or less — use one hurdle
2. For dogs that jump 16 to 24 inches — use two hurdles
3. For dogs that jump 28 to 44 inches — use three hurdles
4. For dogs that jump 48 to 72 inches — use four hurdles

## Rally Stewards

### THE GATE STEWARD

Gate stewards should report to their assigned ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled judging time for the class.

The duties of gate stewards should include:

~~• Distributing armbands.~~

~~• Checking to ensure that the armband number given to the exhibitor corresponds to the dog's name and number in the catalog.~~

~~• Directing exhibitors to the judge if they request to be judged out of order due to conflicts and reporting any absences to the judge and table steward.~~

*Central check-in will distribute armbands. Please check to make sure to make sure the On-Deck dog is in the room, and verify the height and distance the dog jumps*

• Assuring that the jump height is correctly set by the ring steward for each dog in the Advanced, Excellent, and Master classes before it enters the ring.

• Ensuring that dogs are judged in catalog order but not to the extent of holding up judging.

• Ensuring handlers and dogs do not enter the ring until the judge so indicates.

• Ensuring that the next dog to be judged is immediately available.

~~• As soon as the judge begins judging the dog in the ring, the steward calls the next dog and ensures that the handler is ringside.~~

As soon as the exhibitor leaves the ring the steward will make sure the on-deck dog approaches but does not enter the ring until instructed to by the judge. The exiting dog will leave the area and the dog in Station 2 advances to Station 1 located inside the Rally room and becomes the on-deck dog.

If the next dog is not available, the gate steward should not hesitate to call the next dog in order.

~~• As needed, ensuring that the leash is returned to the handler as the dog and handler complete the course, and that the dog is on-leash when the team leaves the ring.~~

• Being aware of any problems with the dogs on course and being ready to follow instructions given by the judge.

• For Advanced, Excellent and Master, verifying that the jump height is listed correctly for each dog.

• Assisting with any other duties as assigned by the judge.

### THE TABLE STEWARD

Table stewards should report to their assigned ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled judging time for the class. The extent to which a judge uses the services of a table steward varies greatly. The steward must receive specific instructions from the judge as to what will be required. Judges must use worksheets to communicate with the table steward. The judge may ask the table steward to prepare and have the worksheet ready for the next dog. The table steward is responsible for totaling deductions on the judge's worksheet and transferring them to the official judge's book. Final scores may be recorded in the official judge's book by the table steward; however, the judge must verify the scores and sign the book prior to awarding ribbons. The table steward must be aware that any and all class changes of dogs in rally can only be made by the superintendent or the trial secretary. No additions or corrections to the judge's book are allowed by any other person.

The duties of table stewards should include:

- Correctly entering the class, proper armband number and breed of dog on the worksheet.
- Correctly adding the scores on the worksheet.
- Correctly transferring the scores from the worksheets and the times to the judge's book, and after doing so, initialing the judge's worksheet.
- Informing the judge of any error on the worksheet, and after the judge corrects it, entering the score and time of the dog into the judge's book correctly.
- Listing the time in the judge's book as minutes, seconds and hundredths.
- ~~Posting each dog's unofficial score at or near ringside after the dog finishes the course.~~ Texting each dog's unofficial score to the outside board keeper.
- Making sure the judge's worksheets are not displayed or exhibited to any other person at the event, unless specifically directed to do so by the judge.
- Making all trophies and ribbons available at the conclusion of each class.

## THE RING STEWARD

Ring stewards should report to their assigned ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled judging time for the class. Each judge in rally will have at least one ring steward.

The duties of ring stewards should include:

- Assisting in setting up the rally courses initially and from class to class as needed.
- Assisting in the posting of unofficial scores if needed by the rally table steward.
- Being aware of any problems with the dogs on the course and ready to follow instructions given by the judge.
- Making sure that jumps in the Rally Advanced, Excellent and Master classes are set at the correct jump height for each dog entered in the classes.
- ~~Assisting with the leash in the Rally Advanced, Excellent and Master classes, making sure that the leash is returned to the handler and that the dog is on leash before leaving the ring.~~
- Performing any other duties as assigned by the judge.

## THE TIME STEWARD

Time stewards should report to their assigned ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled judging time for the class. This will allow them to become familiar with the course layout/design and the timing equipment. The correct timing of a dog is important to rally events and exhibitors. If two or more dogs in a class earn the same score, the tie is broken by time.

The duties of time stewards should include:

- Being stationed in a position or place as specified by the judge prior to the running of each dog on the course.
- Making sure the timing of a run starts when the judge says "Forward" and the time of the run ends when both the dog and handler cross/pass the Finish sign.
- Immediately reporting the time to the table steward after each dog completes the course.

Making sure that the time reported is in minutes, seconds and hundredths. If there is a malfunction in the timing device when a dog is running a course, the timing steward will report the malfunction to the judge and the table steward immediately after the dog and handler crosses the Finish sign