



Below is the next in a series of Random Tidbits of information (from me) in regards to the AKC Obedience Regulations. Knowledge of the Regulations provides you the power for...

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Today's Random Little Tidbit – We Have a Run-off For a Placement!

You were informed by the judge after the last exercise that you have qualified. YEA! Whew, now time to rest, settle your nerves, put the dog back in their crate, and seek out your friends to tell them all about your ring experience. The next thing you know, YOUR armband number is being called. What? How can that be? You have competed and were told you qualified! Off you go to the steward to inform them you have been in the ring...and now you are being informed you're **NOW** needed back into the ring for a RUN-OFF! What is a run-off, you ask.

Panic sets in and you run to your Regulations (at least you have a set with you ☺) for a quick view of a run-off. Well lookie there, it is listed in **Chapter 2, Section 9** under Ties. Who would have thought to look there as it was not mentioned in the chapter in which your class was listed? Um, no, **Chapter 2** pertains to ALL classes and should not be skipped by. "**Section 9. Ties.** *In case of a tie for a placement in any class, except Beginner Novice, each dog will be tested again, individually, by performing the entire Novice Heel Free exercise. The original scores will not be changed. In the case of a tie in the Beginner Novice class, each dog will be tested again, individually, by performing the original Beginner Novice Heel on Leash exercise. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Heel on Leash exercise will apply.*" Also listed in **Chapter 2, Section 1**, Standardized Judging, it states, "*The judge will inform the first exhibitor in each class what the heeling pattern will be before that exhibitor enters the ring. This may be done verbally, by posting the pattern ringside or by demonstration. This same procedure will be followed in the event of run-offs.*" Don't make the mistake and assume it will be the same heeling pattern as in the class, it may and can be a different pattern, thus the reasoning behind the verbiage.

In the United States Coast Guard they have a saying, Semper Paratus. It simply means "Always ready". Are you ready for a run-off? The judge and stewards are waiting for you! Your armband number has been called! As you left the ring after qualifying you may have been thinking your performance (although not stellar) was not worthy of a run-off for a placement. But guess what? Other exhibitor's performances may also not have ended up as stellar from exercise to exercise, or one BIG error was made in one exercise causing the score to drop, now matching your score. The end result is there are now two (or more) scores that are the same, and a runoff is needed to see who gets the + after their score and wins a placement prize. Also keep in mind, it is not necessarily a runoff for a **1st** Prize, you could be in a runoff for maybe a **2nd**, **3rd**, or even a **4th** Prize.

The lesson to be learned is to keep track of what is going on in the ring *after* you exit. Be aware of how many dogs are left to be judged and also be aware of absentees. Figure out about when the last dog (or Group) will be going in, and as that time approaches THEN would be a good time to get your dog out of its crate. The two of you need to NOW head off to the warm-up ring (if there is one), or warm up away from the obedience ring(s). The exercise you will be doing in the ring is **Heel Free** (without the leash and no Figure Eight). It will be this exercise only, regardless of what class you were in. If you are not in a warm-up ring keep the leash on your dog at all times as you warm up.

After all the teams in the class are judged and if there is to be a run-off, the judge will inform the exhibitors of a runoff and post/show/tell the pattern before bringing the first dog into the ring. The most straightforward approach is to judge the teams in numerical order *by placement* and to call the teams one by one. After that team leaves the ring, the next team will then be called. This avoids one team knowing they are in a run-off and having more warm-up time than the first one(s). When it is announced there will be a run-off, *and you have done your preparations ahead of time*, YOU will be READY to turn in your best performance with a dog that has also been prepared without holding up judging. Plus, you will not be getting all frustrated in your rushing to get your dog out and ready. Never assume you will not be in a run-off! It can and does happen. If there was no run-off needed or your number was not one of those called for a run-off, at least you had a good warm-up practice session. A win-win for your team nevertheless. It is rare but the run-off teams could be called back for yet a another run-off if the winner still needs to be determined. Don't let your guard down; it ain't over until it is over!

It is worth mentioning that after your class is judged and the Award ceremony is over, *it still may not be over* for your team. You might be eligible for a run-off for High Scoring Breed, High Scoring in your breed's Group, other Special award(s), Highest Scoring Dog in Trial or Highest Combined Score (Regular or Preferred). It will be in your best interest to check your catalog or Premium List to see what prizes are being offered that day and mark the ones that may apply to you. Remember, Semper Paratus!

Determining run-offs in a particular class is not complex; however, they can become more complex to determine a winner for other awards, such as Highest Scoring Dog in Trial or Highest Combined Score.

Below is a guide on the AKC Blog (address below) on how to determine those awards if certain issues arise. Check out the Blog for other guidance when needed that may not be found specifically in the Regulations. You may sign up to be informed when there are new posts to the Blog.

How is High Combined handled when there is a run-off for High in Trial?

Situation #1

Dog A 198.5 UB 198 OB

Dog B 198+ UB 198.5 OB

Dog C 198 UB 198.5+ OB

Dog A and Dog C runoff for HIT

What do we do for High Combined?

Answer: All three dogs, A, B, & C, run-off for High Combined because each dog has beaten the others in one class.

Situation #2

Dog A 198.5 UB 198 OB

Dog B 198+ UB 198.5+ OB

Dog C 198 UB 198.5 OB

Dog A and B runoff for HIT

What do we do for High Combined?

Answer: Dogs A and B run off for High Combined, C has been beaten by B in both classes therefore cannot get High Combined over B.

<https://akcobedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/2011/05/01/high-combined-run-off/>



When it is time to come back into the ring for awards, keep in mind:

1. For the Awards ceremony, dogs may be picked up and carried into the ring if the handler desires (Chapter 2, Section 11).
2. Handlers are not permitted to wear such things as waist packs/pouches or any item that, in the judge's opinion, appears to be a training device or aid (Chapter 2, Section 3). This also applies to Awards.
3. All dogs in the obedience ring must wear a properly fitted collar approved by the judge. No dog may enter the ring, either for judging or for awards, with unacceptable equipment. No special training collars, such as electronic collars or prong collars, will be permitted. Nothing may be hanging from the dog's collar (Chapter 2, Section 17).
4. No dog will be eligible to compete if it appears to have been dyed or colored in any way, if its coat shows evidence of chalk or powder, or if the dog has anything attached to it for protection or adornment (Chapter 1, Section 17). Dog bibs would be an adornment and not allowed in the ring for Awards.
5. **KISS** (Keep It Simple and Straightforward). When going into the ring for Awards, enter the ring as you would with your dog for judging. The exception for Awards is you can carry your dog into the ring before, during and after the ceremony.
6. Keep an eye on your dog while in the ring for Awards with other dogs present. It is easy to get distracted and lose your attention that should also be on your dog. Keep it safe for everyone and keep the moment a pleasant one.

AKC Blog Address: <https://akcobedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/about/> Sign up to receive updates.

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