



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 – **Our Sport is in Need of an Infusion!**

All judges were once where **you** are at this very moment before they took that first step to judge, and now a good number of them are reaching the age of going emeritus status after decades of service. What does this say for the future of our sport if too few applicants come along?

Give some ****serious**** thought to applying to become a judge and to give back to the sport in whole a new way. **Yes, you!** Take those first baby steps one day at a time towards this new goal, and you will find the rewards like no other. Take that first step today looking towards the future in a new adventure in the sport you love.

There are villages of knowledgeable judges who will devote time and effort to help you along. Just ask!!!

1. Maybe the first step could be just setting up a practice ring and running some of your friends through the paces.
2. Experiment.
3. Go to a show and just sit and watch judging.
4. Ask a judge to sit with you and point out what all goes into setting up a ring with a good pattern and flow.
5. Observe ring setups, heeling patterns, and ring time management.
6. Observe with the Obedience Regulations in your hand to see how scoring is done and supported by the Regulations.
7. Design some judging sheets to see what works for you for scoring.
8. Have some fun and take a friend along for discussions.
9. If you see someone that you think would make an excellent judge, mention it to them. Sometimes this can be just the nudge needed that gets them thinking on the subject.
10. Check out the AKC Judging process... <https://akcobedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/2022/04/14/obedience-and-rally-judging-application-updates-april-2022/>

To help assist you in gaining more judging knowledge, log on to <https://saintbernardarchive.com/library/> and scroll down to "**Judging Materials**" (under the Tidbit articles). You will find many samples of scoresheets and other helpful items and ideas to get you started.

The exhibitor may also find this helpful in understanding all the thought processes on the subject and have a better idea what a judge is doing, and why, while in the ring.

1. **Check out the Dog Talk articles.** There are quizzes in those articles to tweak your understanding.
2. **Check out the Charts.** They work as good references to review.
3. **Check out all the Random Little Tidbits articles.** There is an index at the top of the articles which will help guide you to the articles specifically aimed at judging.
4. The following pages will provide ideas and suggestions as what to observe when watching a team and judge in the ring.

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

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Subjects covered for Ringside Observation

John Cox

✓ Setting up the ring, (Review Chapter 1)

- ✓ Check ring size, location of gate and table (move if needed).
- ✓ Double-check jumps by measuring. ½ inch deviation is okay.
- ✓ Material of jumps, flat white, weight of wood, check the bar for weight for wood.
- ✓ Placement of jumps, pay attention to lighting and ring enclosures from the DOG's line of sight. If mats are necessary they must be at least 4' width under the jumps.
- ✓ Mark the ring for all your classes prior to the start of the first class--saves time.
- ✓ If deficiencies cannot be corrected, note in Judge's Book.

✓ Managing the ring - Heeling pattern(s) & Postings.

- ✓ Is your pattern choppy or does it have a smooth flow for ALL breeds?
- ✓ Is the heeling away from the ring gate and table, if possible?
- ✓ Is the Figure Eight out and away from obstructions (gates – jumps)?
- ✓ Have you preplanned adequate space for the physically challenged handlers?
- ✓ How do you plan to inform the exhibitors of your heeling pattern (tell, show, post)?
- ✓ Post required information for the class(es) to judge 45-minutes ahead of start time.

✓ Steward's instructions.

- ✓ Thank your stewards for volunteering their time.
- ✓ Review their duties and make sure they are understood before the class starts.
- ✓ Having printed instructions works best as you will then not forget items to cover, plus they will then have a hard copy to refer back to, if needed.
- ✓ Double-check with the handlers they have a 6-foot available before lining up for the Group exercise, and additional instructions for how you want the Group exercise handled.

✓ Judging positions - for all exercises.

- ✓ Give *serious* thought to the best positions for each exercise for observing the team in action. Keep your distance; be aware of *your* movements so as not to interfere.
- ✓ Stay on the dog's side as much time as possible, especially for the Fast and Slow during the heeling exercise.

✓ Watching dogs, handlers and scoring (Create habits).

- ✓ In a class with jumps, *first* look at the jumps to make sure they are set correctly *before* the team enters the ring. Then look at the dog entering the ring to make sure (in your mind) the jumps are set for at least the minimum standard height and/or distances for that breed. Know how to measure to verify height.
- ✓ Bring the team into the ring **ONLY** when you are ready to proceed.
- ✓ As the team enters the ring, do a quick visual check of the collar, leash and for forms of identification, making sure all items conform to the Regulations.
- ✓ Check the armband; first to make sure there is one and it matches your worksheet.
- ✓ Keep your eyes on the team once they enter the ring and until they leave the ring.
- ✓ Exercises where the handler leaves the dog, keep the DOG in your vision and the handler in your peripheral vision until the handler reaches where they are going. If any scoring is to take place during this timeframe it most likely will be the DOG.
- ✓ After the last exercise (individual in particular) refrain from too much conversation with the handler. Let them concentrate on getting the leash on their dog and exiting under control. Do not be a distraction to the team which could end up causing a scorable fault for which YOU may have been the cause.
- ✓ Watch the team exiting the ring before you enter data in the Judge's Book.
- ✓ Make sure the leash is attached or slipped through the collar as the team exits; otherwise a scorable fault is warranted under Miscellaneous Penalties. Also, is the team under control when exiting the ring in the area of the gate.



✓ Use the WORDS in the Obedience Regulations.

- ✓ Know and use the correct words in the Regulations if you are giving information or feedback to the handler. For example, do NOT inform the handler the dog “bumped.” The dog “crowded” and did not allow the handler “freedom of motion at all times.” The handler should be able to go to the Regulations and *find* exactly what your comment was all about.

✓ Awards ceremony.

- ✓ The AKC considers this a BIG deal, so practice in getting procedure down.
- ✓ Make sure your ribbons are at ringside well before the end of the class and double-check to be sure they conform to the Regulations (Chapter 1, Section 18).
- ✓ Bring all the qualifying handlers (Regular, Alternative or Optional titling classes) back into the ring.
- ✓ You are required to inform the spectators that a perfect score is 200 points.
- ✓ You have the choice to present the placement ribbons in the order of 1st > 4th or 4th > 1st.
- ✓ As you announce the placement and score, bring that team forward and have them STAY forward. Speak UP so the spectators OUTSIDE the ring can hear you!
- ✓ Bring the next placement forward (etc.) and line them up next to the team previously brought forward. The objective is to present to the spectators the placements and separate them out from the other qualifiers in the ring.
- ✓ After the placements are presented, next go down the line of qualifiers and YOU hand them the Qualifying Score ribbon and announce to them their score.

✓ Judge’s Book entries.

- ✓ Know how to fill out a Judge’s Book. Refer to the Judge’s Guidelines for samples.
- ✓ When you go to the table to enter data in the Judge’s Book do it efficiently and move on to your next team. Precious time can be lost at the table resulting in running late.
- ✓ Write neat and be precise, plus double-check your addition.
- ✓ Keep in mind, there are *new* abbreviations to be used (NQ-R & HLR).
- ✓ When writing in the book know the differences between “Excused” and “Released” and when to use the correct word in your entry.
- ✓ Make SURE all the boxes are filled in, including absentees, Miscellaneous Penalties; write in the exercises (abbreviate) in Regular Open B/Utility B, Preferred Open/Utility and Versatility exercises and the Roman numeral for the chosen exercise order.
- ✓ If you made a correction in the book *make sure* it is initialed.
- ✓ Double-check to see you have the times started and stop entered in the book.
- ✓ Double-check to see the placements, scores and catalog numbers are recorded.
- ✓ Double-check to see all information is carried down to the Total Score and Final Qualifying Score boxes.
- ✓ If there was a run-off did you add in the plus (+) sign(s) to indicate the winner(s)?
- ✓ If there were discrepancies or explanations needed, write those in on the inside cover of the Judge’s Book. Carry a piece of carbon paper in your briefcase so you can make a copy of what you wrote on the cover for your records.
- ✓ Sign the book!
- ✓ If a dog was disqualified or a dog-on-dog attack, complete those forms and make sure they are also turned in.
- ✓ If you hand off the book to be turned in, give the book ONLY to the Obedience Chairman, Superintendent or Show Secretary.
- ✓ Your “worksheets” are not to be given out, that would include photographing.