



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 – **FUN MATCHES!** [From the August AKC Gazette Secretary's Page, pages 83 & 84](#)



<http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/8db19c6a#/8db19c6a/1>

### [AKC Match Regulations - Fun Matches](#)

The Board VOTED to modify Chapter 1, Section 3 of the Match Regulations **to allow clubs to hold fun matches open to the public** to introduce new dog owners to their club and AKC Sports. Currently, the Regulations state that once a club becomes sanctioned, the club may not hold a fun match open to the public.

### [Chapter 1. General Explanations, Section 3. Fun Matches](#)

"A fun match is an informal dog event that does not require American Kennel Club approval.

"AKC clubs are encouraged to hold fun matches open to the public in order to introduce new dog owners to their club and the sports. Fun matches may be held in conjunction with a licensed event (on the same day and location), or they may be an independent event. If held in conjunction with an event, the fun match must abide by the Regulations, policies and procedure that apply to that sport. In addition, caution must be taken so the fun match does not disrupt the licensed event. Any AKC class may be offered. In addition, "run-throughs" may be offered where the exhibitor may do all or part of the exercises from a class, or specific amount of "ring time" may be provided. AKC clubs holding fun matches should follow the basic structure of the class in order to familiarize exhibitors with the AKC Sport. Corrections shall be limited to verbal corrections or gently guiding the dog. At the option of the sponsoring club, food and/ or toys may be allowed in the ring. Clubs should not schedule fun matches to conflict with sanctioned or licensed event of the same sport as defined by the mileage restriction that applies for that sport AKC may take action against a club should thus occur."

I was pleased to see the above post in the AKC Gazette. Back in the 70s & 80s there were fun matches galore in the Pacific Northwest, as in other parts of the country. Many of these events were hosted by groups of folks in their early stages of forming a club. Once a club was formed, clubs were only able to host Sanctioned A/OA or B/OB matches on their way to becoming licensed to hold AKC shows. After becoming licensed, clubs could hold Sanctioned matches, member only matches; later on C matches were introduced with fewer restrictions.

Over time the fun matches declined almost to the point of becoming extinct. Fun matches are an informal and relaxed place to be introduced to our sport(s). Places where newbies learn what a Performance or Conformation event is all about, and maybe engage them to participate in future fun matches with their dogs. For folks already in the sport, it is one of the best places for training a new dog with all the distractions of an actual show. Plus, having no schedules or judging programs to meet create a more relaxed time and mood to socialize and learn from others.

Fun matches have another valuable aspect – training grounds for future judges. Those interested (or prodded ☺) can learn how to run a conformation ring or a performance ring such as Obedience and Rally. There is less pressure; and taking some of the "mystery" out of the judging process, plus an opportunity to try out new ideas and learn what works the best. Maybe to set a new goal in life, giving back to the sport and becoming a future judge??? **Let's be blunt and face the facts**, our sport will die without new blood and new judges coming along.

Clubs may also benefit in hosting fun matches in teaching club members how to put on such events, and a club's treasury now has a new outlet for building funds for future events.

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