

Agility

The Judges Sub Committee

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The Dogs New Zealand Agility judges sub committee —JSC — came about because a number of judges were concerned that decisions about regulations relating to the judging of dogs, appointment of judges and the education of judges were being made by a committee that routinely was made up of non-judges. There have been previous Agility committees that held only one judge and the idea was to take the pressure off that one judge for having a voice for all judges around the community. It was also hoped that the sub committee would make sound decisions to improve our judges, our courses, and our standards. It would, to a certain extent, police our judges to try and ensure they are following all the regulations as they are meant to. No point having regulations if no-one follows them.

The current JSC is the third iteration of the sub committee. It has grown from five judges originally randomly shoulder-tapped by the Agility Committee (AC) to a sub committee of people who volunteered to take on the role; if there had been sufficient potential members there would have been an election among the judges listed on the active panels. The current sub committee consists of Joanne Rennell, Chris Moody, Dyson Beasley, Libby Ellery, Carl Ranford, Donna Tofts and Meredith Evans. Meredith joined the committee after the resignation of Sallie Remon.

The JSC meets once a month via Google Meet to discuss items that the AC would like us to focus on, regulations we would like to amend/improve, to offer a viewpoint on situations of concern to competitors, clubs or judges that arise at shows, promotions, and other matters that are brought to our attention from time to time. We submitted on the promotion situation at the start of the year, and proposed a number of regulations for the AC to consider amending or consulting on. We have a few more in the pipeline. These regulations are minor improvements that don't change the overall picture of our sport but which the JSC feel improve safety or consistency. For example, we requested the AC change the regulation to make the

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Judges application:

www.dogagility.org.nz/cont/cont/judge_forms.html

minimum distance between obstacles not in a straight line be measured in such a way as to ensure it is five metres from the inside of one obstacle to the inside of the next obstacle. In certain circumstances this can be five metres from centre to centre but a lot shorter on the actual dog's path. We hope competitors and their dogs have noticed an improvement with this change.

Ongoing judges' training remains a focus. We endeavour to support trainee judges to learn, grow and progress through our current program for becoming a judge. We look at ways to make this a better process for all judges for their entire career while on the judging panel. Recently, almost half the current judges completed an online course with Jan Egil Eide (Norway) and Petr Pupik (Czech Republic) which aimed to teach the participants how to create safer courses with better lines. The course will be followed up with an in-person Judges Training Seminar with Jan in both the North and South Islands in September. We want judges to have confidence in their course design and decisions with clear cut regulations and support of the AC.

When the JSC was formed it was decided its members would hold their positions for two years with nominations for new members called for in opposite years to the AC. This way, the JSC would be a constant when the AC was changing and vice versa. The call is out for nominations of interested judges to take a place on this important sub committee.

While the judges are out in all weathers, waving politely at competitors in the ring as they go by, it should still be remembered we are all volunteers, we all just want to have fun with our dogs, and apart from travel expenses we don't get paid to be there.

We hope all judges act in a professional manner at all times when representing themselves, the judges' panels they are a part of and the AC as their governing body. If you have concerns please write to the AC in the first instance or to the judges sub committee directly on judges@dnzac.nz to have your matter looked into. *

Joanne Rennell
JSC Chair