

# Dog Show Stewards

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AMERICAN  
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# **STEWARDS CLUB OF AMERICA INCORPORATED**

This publication was prepared in cooperation with the Stewards Club of America. The Stewards Club of America was organized June 3, 1948, for the purpose of creating and promoting better and more efficient stewarding at dog shows and to cooperate with all duly organized kennel clubs.

“Dog Show Stewards” was originally compiled by R.B. Griffing, the first president of the Stewards Club of America. The Stewards Club of America and the American Kennel Club® hope that this publication will fill a continuing need of everyone interested in stewarding.

## DOG SHOW STEWARDS

Webster's Dictionary defines a steward to be, among other things, either "one employed to manage domestic concerns, supervise servants, collect rents, keep accounts, etc.," or "one who actively directs affairs; a manager."

The first thing to bear in mind is that a show committee must choose its stewards with care. Persons should be selected who are familiar with the most current judging procedure, breed classifications, and the AKC's "Rules Applying to Dog Shows." A good steward makes the work of judging easier by relieving the judge of unnecessary details. By assembling classes promptly, one will be able to keep the judging on schedule and eliminate, to a large extent, delays between classes. Stewarding is hard work with little or no compensation save the satisfaction that comes from the knowledge that the work has been done well.

Main stewarding duties:

- hand out armbands
- assemble classes promptly
- keep an accurately marked catalog noting placements, absentees and disqualifications
- prepare ribbon and trophy awards for each class
- keep the ring neat and clean
- contact show photographer, clean-up crews and veterinarians or superintendent through the public address system

The first principle stewards must have in mind is that they have been selected to help the judge and not to advise. The steward must carefully refrain from discussing or seeming to discuss the dogs or exhibitors with the judge, and should not, under any circumstances, show or give the appearance of showing the catalog to a judge. Stewards should not take or seem to take any part in judging.

Two stewards should be assigned to each ring when the entry is large. One experienced steward is sufficient when the entry is small.

No person should steward for a judge under whom

they have an entry, or under whom, in the course of the day's judging, such entry may become eligible to complete.

Anyone whose privileges are suspended by the American Kennel Club cannot be asked to serve as a steward.

## INSTRUCTIONS

**ARRIVAL AT SHOW.** Stewards should report to the Chief Steward at least thirty (30) minutes before scheduled judging time. They may be asked to report earlier. Remember that size of site and entry must be taken into consideration when determining arrival times. If for any reason you are unable to attend, notify the Chief Steward in plenty of time to obtain a replacement.

Immediately upon arrival at the show, report to the Chief Steward to confirm your assignment. Then go to the Superintendent or Show Secretary and obtain the bag containing the ring and judge's equipment including the judge's book, steward's button or ribbon, prize envelopes, ribbons, trophies or trophy cards, numbered armbands, elastic bands, and a catalog or steward's book for your own use.

Take the bag to the ring and arrange ribbons, armbands and trophy cards so that they can be selected quickly. Place the judge's book and pen where the judge can put his hand upon them easily and in general get the ring in order for the judge to begin. Check the ring for any unsafe conditions, e.g., holes or loose matting. Ensure that the placement markers are correct and that you have an examination table, if necessary. Familiarize yourself with the public address system (P.A.). This could be a two-way radio, phone, etc.

Always wear the ribbon or button identifying you as the steward throughout the assignment. This identifies you as an official of the show.

When you have everything in order, begin to distribute armbands. Notify the exhibitors when judging is about to begin to have all dogs ready for their respective classes.

Prior to the first class, discuss with the judge what procedures to follow for assembling a class, late arrivals and change of exhibitor.

**ASSEMBLING A CLASS.** Owners or agents are solely responsible for the presence of their dogs in the ring when their breed or variety is to be judged. Nevertheless, the steward should make every effort to notify all exhibitors at ringside who have entries in a given class that the class is about to be judged. Several ringside announcements will satisfy this responsibility. The steward must call every entry eligible to compete in a class, including those that had previously been reported absent.

Stewards often couple their ringside announcements with calls over the P.A. system. Neither the show-giving club nor the Superintendent has any obligation to provide service for the purpose of calling or locating dogs that are not brought into the ring when required, but the P.A. system can be useful for alerting exhibitors in other rings or grooming areas. Public announcements are properly made 5 or 10 minutes before the judging of a breed or variety begins. It is impractical to call individual classes on the P.A. system at an all-breed show, but it may be a useful procedure for a specialty show. Under no circumstances is it permissible to call particular dogs or individuals to the ring over the P.A. system. Remember that at no time should you call an individual dog or exhibitor by name into the ring.

**ARMBANDS.** Keep the armbands in numerical order separated by breed—in the order of judging for that day. You should use your catalog or steward's book when distributing armbands. Be sure to check off the number of the ones given to an exhibitor. Carefully check the catalog number with the armband as each exhibitor enters the ring, and put a mark in your catalog indicating the dog is present. This is extremely important since errors in armband numbers can cause the wrong dog to be credited with an award. While a class is in progress, you should, if possible, familiarize yourself with the entry in the next class so that the transition to that class can be handled efficiently.

**ABSENTEES.** Each judge will have his own system of recording absentees. Stewards, however,

should keep a class-by-class account of all absent dogs. Certain judges will ask the steward to notify them of absentees once the class is assembled. Keep the armbands of all absentees in a prominent place on the judge's table. Many stewards place the armbands on top of the judge's book to insure the dogs are marked absent. Before making final placement markings, judges may refer to these armbands as a crosscheck.

**RING ROUTINE.** The judge will explain to the steward the judging procedure to be used throughout the day. You should line up the dogs in each class in the order the judge has indicated.

**LATE ARRIVALS.** Decisions to allow latecomers into the ring must be made by the judge. Stewards must never instruct exhibitors in this regard even if they are certain of what the judge's decision will be. Judges may permit late arrivals to enter the ring until their judge's book has been marked. However, many judges establish the cut-off point when all dogs have been individually examined and gaited. Given such instructions by the judge, stewards should so inform any exhibitor arriving after that time. *Never argue the point.* If an exhibitor becomes at all argumentative, consult with the judge for a final determination. However, if no general instructions have been given, do not interrupt the judge while he is examining a dog. Wait until the judge has finished individually examining and gaiting the current dog.

**CHANGE OF HANDLER.** A change of handler is permitted until all dogs have been individually gaited and individually examined. Stewards must, however, refer all such requests to the judge.

**SMALL RINGS, LARGE ENTRIES.** When entries are large, the judge may wish to split classes to facilitate judging. This is permissible, and in fact may be desirable. To allow for the correct marking of absentees, first assemble the entire class in the ring. The judge will inform you of how the class should be divided. Make a note of what dogs belong in what division. Call the divisions back into the ring in catalog order. If a class is split, the judge should select at least four dogs from the first section to compete for the final placements in the class. Remind those

exhibitors selected from each division to remain at ringside, as they will be required for further judging.

**REGULAR CLASSES.** Check the exhibitor's armband as they enter the ring and advise the judge when the class is assembled, indicating to the judge any absentees. While the class is being judged, alert the exhibitors at ringside to get their dogs ready for the next class. Prepare the appropriate ribbons and trophy cards for the class.

The judge will line up the dogs in order, in front of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th placement markers in the ring before marking the book or handing out ribbons or prizes. Take special care to see that the correct dogs and their handlers go to the appropriate markers. If the handler of a placed dog fails to go to the marker, remind them that they must go to the marker to receive their award.

If the handler of a placed dog leaves the ring before receiving an award, do not go after them, but report the matter to the judge.

Once the book is marked, the judge will then award the ribbons and trophy cards, if any. The judge must award the ribbons, not the steward. Additionally, ribbons must be presented in the ring.

As the exhibitors are leaving the ring after each class, notify the handler of the first-place dog to stay near the ring so as to be ready to come in for the Winners class. Also notify the handler of the second-place dog to stay near the ring in case that dog is needed for the Reserve Winners class.

**WINNERS AND RESERVE WINNERS.** After all the regular classes have been judged, call into the ring all the dogs that have placed first in their classes so that the judge can select the Winners Dog. Only **UNDEFEATED** dogs that have won first prize in either the Puppy, 12-18 month, Novice, Amateur-Owner-Handler, Bred by Exhibitor, American-bred or Open Classes are eligible to compete for Winners Dog. In other words, **if a dog has been entered in more than one class and is defeated in any one of the classes in which they are entered, the dog is NOT ELIGIBLE to compete for Winners.**



After the judge has selected Winners Dog, the other dogs competing for the Winners class must remain in the ring. The judge will mark the book and give out the Winners ribbon. If there is a dog that placed second in the class of the dog awarded Winners that is otherwise undefeated, call this dog to the ring **immediately**. Competition for Reserve Winners may not properly take place without this dog being called into the ring.

After the judge has selected Winners Dog and Reserve Winners Dog, call the first class in bitches and follow the same procedure as in dogs until the judge has selected the Winners Bitch and Reserve Winners Bitch.

Upon the completion of judging Reserve Winners Bitch, the order of judging is as follows:

**1. NON-REGULAR CLASSES WITH SINGLE-DOG ENTRIES** such as Veterans, Field Trial, etc. These classes must be judged before Best of Breed (Variety) since **UNDEFEATED** dogs that have competed at the show **ONLY** in these classes must go into Best of Breed (Variety) competition.

Beyond this consideration it is worthy to note that a champion of record, or a champion according to the owner's records, may be entered in Best of Breed (Variety) competition by fact of being eligible and entered in the Best of Breed (Variety) competition. An owner may request a dog to be moved to the Best of Breed (Variety) class by the superintendent, up to one-half hour prior to the start of any regular conformation judging. Only the superintendent may make changes of entries in the judge's book.

**2. BEST OF BREED (VARIETY).** The following dogs are eligible for this competition: All dogs entered for Best of Breed (Variety) competition and the Winners Dog and Winners Bitch, together with any undefeated dogs of non-regular classes with single dog entries.

**3. BEST OF WINNERS.** The Winners Dog and Winners Bitch shall be judged together for Best of Winners following the judging of Best of Breed or Best of Variety. In the event that Winners is awarded

in only one sex, or one of the Winners does not compete, there shall be no Best of Winners award. The dog designated Best of Winners shall be entitled to the number of points based on the number of dogs or bitches competing in the regular classes for that breed, whichever is greater. If the Winners Dog or Winners Bitch is awarded Best of Breed or Best of Variety and both have competed in this class, the winner would automatically be designated Best of Winners.

**4. BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX.** After the Best of Breed or Best of Variety and Best of Winners have been awarded, the judge selects Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed or Best of Variety. Eligible for this award are:

- Dogs of the opposite sex to Best of Breed or Best of Variety that have been entered for Best of Breed (Variety) competition.
- The dog awarded Winners of the opposite sex to Best of Breed or Best of Variety.
- Any undefeated dogs of the Opposite Sex to Best of Breed or Best of Variety that have competed at the show only in additional non-regular classes.

**5. SELECT DOG AND SELECT BITCH.** After the Best of Breed of Variety, Best of Winners, and Best of Opposite Sex have been awarded, the judge awards Select Dog and Select Bitch. Eligible for this award are:

- All dogs called into the Best of Breed (Variety) competition, excluding Winners Dog and Winners Bitch.

**NOTE.** The judge should select the winners of Best of Breed (Variety), Best of Winners, Best of Opposite Sex, Select Dog, and Select Bitch, and should designate all five awards, in that order, before marking any of the five awards in the book and awarding the prizes.

**6. STUD DOG, BROOD BITCH, BRACE AND TEAM CLASSES.** These non-regular classes are made up of multiple-dog entries and are judged after Best of Breed (Variety), Best of Winners and Best of

Opposite Sex have been awarded, unless otherwise stated in the Judging schedule.

**THE CHIEF RING STEWARD** is one of the most important members of the dog show committee. This position brings with it a diverse set of challenges; from show to show the responsibilities can vary greatly.

This person should have a complete understanding of the AKC's Rules and Regulations concerning dog shows and be available at all times as a resource for the stewards. The Chief Ring Steward makes out the ring assignments — basic dog show experience will be necessary to assign stewards to their rings. Some rings will need more than one steward, some judges will need a steward with more experience than others, e.g., foreign judges, stewards for the various groups and Best in Show. Additionally, ensuring the stewards are in their rings one half-hour before judging and that they have all of the equipment necessary for the day, i.e., pens, pencils.

Due to the fact that the Chief Ring Steward should be available to take over in any ring at any time during the dog show, the Chief Ring Steward should not accept a judging assignment for that show, or assign themselves a specific ring to cover.

## **GENERAL**

Be neat in your appearance. Remember to dress appropriately for inclement weather.

If any question arises relative to rules with which you are not familiar, refer to the Chief Steward, Executive Field Representative or the Superintendent. Do not argue with the exhibitors.

Be courteous at all times to exhibitors, agents and spectators.

See that your ring is kept clean. Call for clean up promptly whenever needed.

Do not allow anyone in the ring except the exhibitors and those who actually have the right to enter the ring.

No badges, ribbons or coats with kennel names shall be worn or displayed, nor other visible means of identification used, by an individual when exhibiting a dog in the ring.

Do not make any marks or changes in the judge's book. The judge alone must mark awards in the judge's book and hand out the ribbons. Under no circumstances may this be done by the steward. If any questions arise about the judge's book, the Superintendent should be called.

When not actively engaged in your duties, place yourself in a part of the ring as to not interfere with the view of those watching the judging. Do not permit exhibitors to crowd about the gate and interfere with access to the ring.

Mark the placements in your catalog and then check with the judge's book. Advise the judge of any discrepancies. Keep your marked catalog for one year in case any questions may arise regarding official AKC® recording of the event.

All absentees in each class must be marked in the judge's book by the judge. This includes dogs entered for Best of Breed competition.

No breed shall be judged prior to the time stated on the program.

Before assembling the next class, always check your watch/clock to ensure that no class is called into the ring before the scheduled judging time listed in that day's judging schedule.

During the break for lunch, do not leave anything in the ring.

Upon completion of judging, all unawarded prize money, trophies, trophy cards, ribbons, etc., are to be returned to the Superintendent's office. At this time, check to see that the judge has signed the judge's book and answered the questions on the front cover. Ask the judge to personally return his judge's book to the Superintendent's office.

# RULES

The following are a few rules of the American Kennel Club with which you should become familiar.

**Chapter 3, Section 13.** ... A dog that has been defeated in any regular class or non-regular class for single dog entries in its breed or variety at the show is ineligible to compete for Best of Breed or Variety. ...

**Chapter 7, Section 15.** A judge's decision shall be final in all cases affecting the merits of the dogs. Full discretionary power is given to the judge to withhold any, or all, prizes for want of merit. After a class has once been judged in accordance with these rules and regulations, it shall not be rejudged. A class is considered judged when the judge has marked his book, which must be done before the following class is examined. If any errors have been made by the judge in marking the awards as made, he may correct the same but must initial any such corrections.

**Chapter 7, Section 16.** A judge may order any person or dog from the ring. For the purpose of facilitating the judging, judges are required to exclude from the rings in which they are judging all persons except the steward or stewards and the show attendants assigned to the ring and those actually engaged in exhibiting.

**Chapter 7, Section 17.** A judge shall be supplied with a book called the judge's book in which he shall mark all awards and all absent dogs. The original judges' books at shows shall be in the custody of the judge, steward, superintendent, or superintendent's assistant. None other shall be allowed access to them. At the conclusion of the judging, the book must be signed by the judge and any changes which may have been made therein initialed by him.

**Chapter 7, Section 18.** A judge's decision, as marked in the judge's book, cannot be changed by him after filing, but an error appearing in the judge's book may be corrected by the American Kennel Club after consultation with the judge.

**Chapter 7, Section 20.** If a judge disqualifies a dog at any show, he shall make a note in the judge's book giving his reasons for such disqualification. In computing the championship points for a breed, said dog shall not be considered as having been present at the show.

**Chapter 11, Section 6.** No entry may be changed or canceled unless notice of the change or cancellation is received in writing by the Superintendent or Show Secretary named in the premium list to receive entries, prior to the closing date and hour for entries, except that a correction may be made in the sex of a dog, or a dog may be transferred from one division of the Puppy Class to another or between the Puppy and Twelve-to-Eighteen Month Class at a show prior to the judging. A dog determined to be ineligible by its owner/agent, for the class in which it has been entered may be transferred to an eligible Open Class at a show prior to the judging of any regular conformation class within the sex of that breed or variety, and that dogs which according to their owners' records have completed the requirements for a championship after the closing of entries for a show but whose championships are unconfirmed, may be transferred from on one of the regular classes to the Best of Breed or Variety competition, provided this transfer is made by the Superintendent or Show Secretary at least one half-hour prior to the scheduled start of any regular conformation judging at the show. No dog may otherwise be transferred to another class. Owners are responsible for errors in the entry forms, regardless of who may make such errors. However, superintendents and show secretaries that validate entries with AKC records may correct the dog information to match the AKC registration data for the dog as specifically authorized by the American Kennel Club.

**Chapter 11, Section 8.** A dog which is blind, deaf, castrated, spayed, or which has been changed in appearance by artificial means except as specified in the standard for its breed, or a male which does not have two normal testicles normally located in the scrotum, may not compete at any show and will be disqualified except that a castrated male may be entered as Stud Dog in the Stud Dog Class and a

spayed bitch may be entered as Brood Bitch in the Brood Bitch Class. A dog will not be considered to have been changed by artificial means because of removal of dewclaws or docking of tail if it is of a breed in which such removal of dewclaws or docking is a regularly approved practice which is not contrary to the standard. Neutered dogs and spayed bitches would be allowed to compete in Veterans Classes only at independent specialties and/or those all-breed shows which do not offer any competitive classes beyond Best of Breed.

When a judge finds any of these conditions in any dog he is judging, he shall disqualify the dog marking his book "Disqualified" and stating the reason. He shall not obtain the opinion of the show veterinarian.

When a dog has been disqualified at a show as being blind, deaf, castrated, spayed or changed in appearance by artificial means except as specified in the standard for its breed, any awards taken by such dog at that show shall be canceled by the American Kennel Club and the dog may not again compete unless and until, following application by the owner to the American Kennel Club, that owner has received official notification from the American Kennel Club that the dog's show eligibility has been reinstated. ...

**Chapter 11, Section 8-A.** A dog that in the opinion of the judge menaces and threatens or exhibits any sign that it may not be safely approached by the judge or examined by the judge in the normal manner shall be excused from the ring. When the judge excuses the dog, he shall mark the dog "Excused," stating the reason in the judges book. A dog so excused shall not be counted as having competed. ...

A dog that in the opinion of the judge attacks any person in the ring shall be disqualified. When the judge disqualifies the dog, he shall mark the dog "Disqualified," stating the reason in the judge's book.

When a dog has been disqualified under this Section, any awards at that show shall be canceled by the American Kennel Club, and the dog may not again compete unless and until, following application by the owner to the American Kennel Club, the owner

has received official notification from the American Kennel Club that the dog's show eligibility has been reinstated....

**Chapter 14, Section 1.** Every dog which is present in the ring for a class in which it is properly entered must continue to compete in all competition in its breed or variety for which it is entered or becomes eligible, unless it has been excused, dismissed, disqualified or found to be ineligible under the rules.



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# NOTES

## AKC CODE OF SPORTSMANSHIP

*PREFACE: The sport of purebred dog competitive events dates prior to 1884, the year of AKC's birth. Shared values of those involved in the sport include principles of sportsmanship. They are practiced in all sectors of our sport: conformation, performance and companion. Many believe that these principles of sportsmanship are the prime reason why our sport has thrived for over one hundred years. With the belief that it is useful to periodically articulate the fundamentals of our sport, this code is presented.*

- Sportsmen respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen commit themselves to values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- Sportsmen refuse to compromise their commitment and obligation to the sport of purebred dogs by injecting personal advantage or consideration into their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsman judge judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsman judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsman exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsman exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- The sportsman respects the AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies governing the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen find that vigorous competition and civility are not inconsistent and are able to appreciate the merit of their competition and the effort of competitors.
- Sportsmen welcome, encourage and support newcomers to the sport.
- Sportsmen will deal fairly with all those who trade with them.
- Sportsmen are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportsmen spurn any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed upon them.
- Sportsmen always consider as paramount the welfare of their dog.
- Sportsmen refuse to embarrass the sport, the American Kennel Club, or themselves while taking part in the sport.

Complete text of booklet available at: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

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