



Guidelines for Judging Panel Construction and Scheduling of Conformation Dog Shows

Conformation dog shows require planning to run smoothly. **The core of the dog show, the competition schedule, is the result of a focused consideration of the hiring and assigning of judges as well as additional events and attractions.** Properly done, this process can save a club time, money and create an enjoyable day for all. This document provides guidelines that will help clubs organize and efficiently run their event when followed.

1. Determining the number and types of judges needed:

Every judging panel starts with the hiring of judges. The combination of judges hired must collectively cover all individual breed, group, and Best in Show assignments. Key factors to consider when hiring:

- A judge may not be assigned to the same breed, group or Best in Show at events held within 30 days and 200 straight-line miles of one another.
- A judge may not be assigned to a breed, its group, and Best in Show at the same event.
- A judge may not be assigned to no more than 175 entries at a show, except a judge may be assigned up to 200 entries if **only assigned** to a single breed specialty that day.
- Judging schedules are based on 25 entries per hour.
- A lunch break of no less than 45 minutes must be scheduled for judges assigned to 5 or more hours of judging (≈125 or more entries).

2. Maintain a spreadsheet with historical entry data.

Create a spreadsheet that provides historical entry data for every breed covering several years or more. Events in clusters that rotate days of the week should reference entries from past events held on the same corresponding date. (i.e., Saturday show should always use Saturday entry numbers). Maintaining this record will aid in identifying outliers in entry trends and help prevent under or over-assigning judges. Significant increases or decreases in a breed's entry year over year can be easily identified and further examined to identify cause. This spreadsheet should be updated after each year's event. Use the aggregate average for each breed's entry and the total entry as your baseline.

3. Judge Selection

Use the data from your spreadsheet or previous year's entry information to determine the approximate size of your panel.

- Entry numbers from past shows provide a starting point on how many judges will be required for your show.
- Select judges to ensure coverage for all group competitions and Best in Show.
- Utilize judges approved for less than a group to fill in the judging panel. The use of breed specialist and/or newer judges often draws entries and helps reduce costs.
- When contacting judges, ask of any assignments they have already accepted within 30 days and 200 miles of your show to check for any potential conflicts.
- Send written confirmation to all judges immediately upon hiring and include any conditions on contract.

4. Assigning Judges

The AKC provides a tool to assist clubs when assigning judges, the AKC Summary of Conformation Assignments report may be found in AKC Online Event Management at the bottom of your event opening page. As you add judges to your panel this report will show the impact of the assignments based on the previous year's competitors (number in parenthesis) with warning indicators when a judge has the potential to draw too many or too few entries.

- Yellow = warning of an assignment **approaching the maximum**.
- Blue = warning of a potential **under assignment**.
- Red = warning of an **assignment overload**.

Judge	Assignments	Estimated Entry Total	Estimated hours of Breed judging (Does not include lunch break or group/BIS judging)
Judge A	Sporting Group, NOHS Toy Group, Brac Ital(6), Lag Rom(0), Pntr-GS(18), Pntr-GW(0), Ret-Ches(1), Ret-Curl(1), Ret-Flat(0), Ret-Gold(34), Ret-Nova Scotia T(5), Set-Eng(2), Set-Gord(0), Set-Irsh(7), Set-Irsh Rd&Wh(0), Span-AmW(0), Span-Boykin(2), Span-Clum(2), Span-Ckr (Black)(6), Span-Ckr (ASCOB)(3), Span-Ckr (PartI)(8), Span-Eng Ckr(3), Span-Eng Spr(1), Span-Fld(0), Span-Irw(0), Span-Suss(0), Span-Wel Spr(0), Spin Ital(1), Vizs(9), Wirehair Ptg Griff(1), Wirehair Vizsla(0)	110	4 Hrs 24 Min
Judge B	Herding Group, Austrl Cat Dg(15), AustrlShep(13), Beard Coll(4), Beauceron(4), Belgian Laekenois(0), Bel Mal(4), Bel Shp(3), Bel Terv(3), Bergamasco(0), Brgr Pcrd(0), Brdr Coll(6), Bouv(9), Briard(0), Canaan(2), Card-WC(11), Coll (Rough) (12), Coll (Smooth)(5), Entlebucher Mint Dog(0), Fin Laph(0), GSD(16), Icelandic Shpdg(1), Lan Heel(0), Min Amer Shep(21), Mudi(0), Nor Buhund(0), OES(1), Pemb-WC(12), Pol Low Shp(1), Pulik(0), Pyre Shep(0), Shetld(12), Span Water(0), Swed Vallhund(0)	155	6 Hrs 12 Min
Judge C	Hound Group, NOHS Working Group, Barbet(0), Brit(2), Neder Kooiker(0), Pointer(4), Weim(4), Amer English Coon(0), Am Fox(1), Bsst Fau de Brt(0), Basset(4), Bgle (13 Under)(0), Bgle (Over 13)(1), B & T Coonhnd(5), Bloodhnd(3), Bluetick Coon(0), Dach (Long)(13), Dach (Smooth)(12), Dach (Wire)(6), Eng Fox(0), Harr(0), Nor Elk(0), Plott(0), Redbone Coon(7), Sloughi(1), Treeing Walker Coon(0)	63	2 Hrs 31 Min
Judge D	NOHS Hound Group, Toy Group, Affenp(1), Blewer Terrier(9), Bruss Griff(6), Cav KC Spans(10), Chihua (Long)(19), Chihua (Smooth)(18), Chin Cr(7), Eng Toy Sp (B & PCI)(0), Eng Toy Sp (KC & RJ)(0), Hava(4), I Greyhnd(8), J Chin(12), Malt(10), Toy Manchi(0), Min Pin(5), Pap(17), Peke(14), Pom(17), Pug(1), Russ Toy(6), Russ Tsv Blnka(1), Shih Tzu(24), Silky(0), Toy Fox Terrier(10), Yorks(11)	210	8 Hrs 24 Min

This tool will assist in assigning your panel, potentially decrease overloads resulting in fewer judge changes after closing. Clubs should evaluate known anomalies such as was there a specialty last year that will not be occurring this year or vice versa. The Estimated Entry Total is based on the previous year's entry. This tool should be used in combination with your entry data spreadsheet.

- Determine who your group judges are first.
- When possible, assign to your group judge(s) only or mostly breeds from the group they are judging.
- When possible, assign breeds with varieties and/or breeds of a similar core (i.e., Setters, Retrievers, Corgis, etc.) to the same judge. This will help prevent conflicts for exhibitors.
- Avoid over-assigning or assigning the maximum number of entries to judges. This can lead to overloads and/or long days. It will also provide flexibility in case of cancellations.
- Avoid assigning group judges more than 150 entries. If possible, assign less, but do not under assign. (Clubs should always consider their financial situation when making assignments; over assigning or under assigning judges can have a negative fiscal impact.)
- If your event assigns breeds to specific rings, be mindful of those combinations when assigning breeds to your judges. Each move to a different ring adds time to the judge's overall assignment. Try to limit judges to no more than one ring move if possible.
- If a judge is being shared with a concurrent event on the same day, be mindful that their daily limit is cumulative. There should be an agreement between the clubs sharing the judge on the same day in advance who will reassign entries if the judge should overdraw.

- If possible, avoid assigning any group or Best in Show to a judge who is also judging a concurrent event the same day.
- If possible, avoid assigning a judge to both regular and NOHS groups the same day. Utilize judges approved for less than a group for special attractions.
- If necessary, a judge may be assigned to a regular group/Best in Show and a NOHS group Best in Show at the same event; however, a judge **may not** be assigned to the same regular and NOHS group or Best in Show at an event.
- A judge MAY NOT be assigned to a regular group and any other special attraction group at the same event (i.e., Puppy, Veteran, BBE)
- If offering BPUP and/or an FSS Open Show, avoid assigning these competitions to your group judges. Utilize new or permit judges for these events.
- Take advantage of junior showmanship only judges. Judges only assigned to judge juniors are permitted to exhibit the same day.

When considering judges for the breeds not yet assigned, monitor the load assigned to the group judges, avoid potential delays and overloads. This is an opportunity to use judges that do not have a group and/or permit judges.

5. Scheduling:

If utilizing a superintendent or show secretary to write the judging schedule, be sure all specific requests are provided before entries close. It is important for the club/show chair to understand the nuances of an efficient schedule. Prior to the publication of a judging schedule the show chair should review the schedule to ensure it meets your goals.

Breed judging

- When possible, schedule table breeds or ramp breeds consecutively within the same time block to minimize the movement of equipment which causes delays.
- Schedule judges in a single ring. If a judge must relocate to a different ring, when possible, relocate the judge during their lunch break to avoid disruption.
- Outdoor shows in the summer and/or when warm weather is expected should begin as early as possible to reduce the number of dogs competing in the heat of the day.
- Brachycephalic breeds and heavily coated northern breeds should be scheduled early when hot weather is expected.
- Grooming intensive breeds should be scheduled later in the day.
- Breeds with single or small entries should be scheduled later in the day whenever possible; however, the stated considerations for brachycephalic and heavily coated northern breeds in hot weather supersedes.
- The rings scheduled to be used for group judging (regular and special attraction) should have fewer dogs assigned to them for early conversion into the larger group ring.

Group judging

Adhering to the guidelines outlined above concerning judge assignments and scheduling will reduce the number of changes that need to be made on the day.

- AKC strongly recommends the first group start time be scheduled at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Pursuant to the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*, a group start time must be printed in the judging program. Scheduling the start time at the earliest possible time allows clubs to adjust as the day

goes on; procedures allow for scheduled times to be delayed but may only start earlier than the scheduled time based on extenuating circumstances.

- AKC strongly recommends that the group order is published in the judging schedule as *subject to change contingent on the judging of breeds*.
- The Show Chair and Superintendents have the responsibility and authority to adjust the schedule for the groups (regular, NOHS and all other special attraction groups) based on the progression of breed judging to facilitate a smooth-running event. A final determination of the group order and/or any changes to it should be made and announced at least 1/2 hour prior to the scheduled start of groups to accommodate exhibitors prep time.
- Schedule special attraction groups to avoid conflicts with the same regular group; either (1) prior to the start of the regular groups with sufficient staggering to ensure they do overlap and create conflicts, or (2) schedule to immediately follow the completion of the same regular group.

Concurrent Event Scheduling:

At conformation events where there are multiple parties responsible for scheduling separate events, problems arise if the individual superintendents/show secretaries do not coordinate between events. A concurrent limited breed or specialty club not being aware of the all-breed club's schedule can create unnecessary conflicts as well as exceeding the 175-entry limit for judges, creating overloads which necessitates changing judges and/or hiring additional judges.

Concurrent event and host event secretaries/superintendents should provide each other with their proposed judges and schedule prior to any publication. Schedules should be written to avoid conflicts with the all-breed event and overloads on the day. Judging at the all-breed event may not be delayed to accommodate a concurrent event.

NOHS Groups and BIS

NOHS BIS should not be delayed for the sole purpose of holding it directly before and in the same ring as regular BIS. Clubs are following the regulation to provide NOHS groups with larger rings, preferably in the same configuration as regular groups regarding ring size. By delaying and moving the NOHS BIS to the regular group ring both competitions are being delayed.

NOHS Groups or BIS may only be delayed due to a competitor's conflict. NOHS BIS should follow the last NOHS group in the NOHS group ring.

Additional Special Attraction groups

In most situations, additional special attraction groups (puppy, BBE, etc.) will have less breeds represented than either regular or NOHS groups. These groups should be scheduled to start at the earliest opportunity, preferably 45 minutes before NOHS or the regular groups, or immediately follow the regular group if NOHS is not offered.

Questions or requests for assistance/additional information may directed to Event Operations at: EventPlans@akc.org and/or to Club Development at: clubdevelopment@akc.org.