

**OBEDIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE, 2005 RESULTS – ZONE 10**  
**Virginia (Gin) Cummings**

**NOTES:**

**Font, font size and font colour have been adjusted for continuity. If a respondent replied in capital letters, the capitals were retained in order to cut down on obed rep's computer hours.**

**Mailed and handwritten responses were typed.**

**Errors in grammar and/or spelling were not corrected.**

**Not everyone responded to all questions.  
Some respondents chose to only comment on certain items  
and/or to not return the questionnaire.**

**1. PUBLISHING RULE CHANGES FOR COMMENT**

**Do you feel proposed future changes to Obedience Trial Rules should be published for comment in *Dogs In Canada*? (Historically, a small percentage responds.)**

**# of Responses – 42**

**Yes - 38      No - 4      Other - 0**

- I still think they should be published in print, mostly for those that don't have email/internet access.
- Sure
- yes if proposed changes were really wrong perhaps more people would respond
- YES
- I think that the proposed changes should be published somewhere so that those who have any comments or concerns have an opportunity to voice them prior to them going into effect. However, I also believe that the timeframe for changes should be reduced so that proposed changes can be implemented quicker than they are now

- Yes!
  - YES! The more places you can put it 'out there' the better.
  - It may be worthwhile even if it is a small percentage
  - Yes..... Or it could be circulated to entrants at various obedience trials since they are probably the ones that would respond.....
  - Yes. Mailing to individuals is too costly and the results may not be any different. If the information is provided, it is our responsibility to respond.
  - yes if proposed changes were really wrong perhaps more people would respond
  - Yes.
  - Yes, that might be a good way to let people know of any proposed changes
  - Yes. Regardless of how many people respond, the ability to respond should not be taken away.
  - A small notice with address or link on where details can be accessed. Perhaps in the Official Section could contain the details. It depends whether you want input from primary competitors, CKC members or the general public on rule changes.
  - No....as per your explanation. I think it more fitting to do it in zones. I also like the idea of getting to know who the zone rep. is through this type of process and having the opportunity to provide feedback to this person who then organizes it and sends it forward.
- (A lot of work and certainly appreciated!)
- I would like to see them published for comment because it prepares me for what is to come. Also it gives the illusion that input is wanted.
  - Yes. Although the response is low a greater number will get to read the changes.
  - YES
  - Yes. Regardless of how many people respond, the ability to respond should not be taken away.
  - No
  - Yes!
  - Yes – publishing gets the idea out, and then no one can claim they did not know what was happening.

- YES (Maybe the small response is due to the perception that those who do respond are not listened to !?)
- Definitely yes! I think it is important to have the opportunity to provide input or comment on proposed changes. Otherwise the council may be acting in a vacuum and not addressing the concern/needs of competitors. If the opportunity is provided, then no-one can complain about not being able to contribute to the process.
- Yes. The world is not 100% computerized and everyone should have the opportunity to respond. If they don't take it...
- Yes, for those of us who do read them and we shouldn't be penalized because others don't
- Yes. Even if few respond, many will have the opportunity to read about the changes and be well aware of them before they take effect.
- Yes I do. Even though a small percentage of people typically respond, at least it gives those people the opportunity to do so. I read all of the information in the Official Section, so that is usually how I find out about changes (proposed or implemented).
- No, the CKC can reach as many if not more people involved in Obedience than Dogs in Canada.
- YES
- Just because a person doesn't comment it doesn't mean they didn't read & think.
- Yes I think that proposed changes to Obedience Rules should be published for comment. If only a small percentage reply at least it gets exhibitors talking about these proposed changes. As a result you can get much information pro and con any such changes.
- Yes
- Yes. It is probably still a good idea. Most "surveys" traditionally get poor response in terms of numbers, but Dogs In Canada has the potential to reach more people – as well as this format.
- Yes
- Yes x 2
- When it comes to passing changes for obedience that you should publish the changes but not base your decisions solely on the responses. Possibly questionnaires could be available at Obedience Trials so that people who are not CKC members could still send in their suggestions.
- Yes, I take the time to read all the minutes and any pertinent information. I don't always have time to go online.

- No
- Yes because it is important for members be informed of proposed changes even if only a few reply – communication is very important.
- Yes All proposed rule changes should be published for comment and the membership should vote on any proposed changes.

Rationale: I pay a significant amount of money for my CKC membership (\$53.50). I am not a breeder, so there is no financial benefit to my membership. I maintain it because I need the information it provides (Results, Official Section, etc.) Currently, I must also pay for an internet connection to receive the information that I require, or I must pay another \$48.15 per year for printed results. This makes the cost of my membership over a \$100 per year. One of the advantages of membership in any organization is the ability to vote. All obedience participants are invited to give their opinion on the rules and proposed changes. CKC *members* should be paying for the privilege of the final decision process in the form of a vote. The organization can choose to ignore my opinion ... it cannot ignore my vote.

If all proposed changes are published for comment (and then a vote), we could perhaps avoid the confusing and expensive mistakes that are published in the rulebook and then have to be changed. This is wasteful and costly.

The CKC will like respond that the cost of a vote is prohibitive. Recently, rule changes and “mistakes” have required that exhibitors purchase a rulebook annually (at the least!) The cost is now well over \$6.00. Rulebooks should be good for five years. Proposed changes can be studied and discussed during that time. Once every five years we vote on new rules and changes. The would be reasonably cost efficient and less confusing for exhibitors and judges. The constant changing and fiddling with the rulebook is expensive, confusing and unnecessary.

<b>2. STAND FOR EXAMINATION</b>
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<b>In the Novice Classes, the Stand for Examination is currently performed on leash. Would you prefer this exercise to be performed off leash? Why?</b>
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**# of Responses – 47**  
**Yes - 7      No - 29      Other - 11**

- I would like to see this exercise as an off leash exercise. Would make it easier to train for a U.S. trial.
- No, this would make the exercise harder.
- Off leash would make a smother flow as the ring stewarts at the figure 8 could take the leash.

- NO, ON LEASH. FOR THE HANDLER TO HAVE SOME CONTROL IF THE DOG SHOULD PANIC.
- I don't believe that performing this exercise on or off leash really has any bearing on the exercise itself. I believe that keeping the leash on assists the handler in getting the dog over to where the heel free exercise will begin.
- Stay with on leash, it has been the tradition!
- I see no real reason to change it, but imho, dogs s/b able to do this on or off leash, and should be taught this in training.
- No dogs are still fairly green and unreliable as are many trainers. I see a potential risk to both dogs spectators and owners.
- Yes .. as it would conform to the AKC Novice test.....
- As this is a Novice exercise, I feel performing the exercise on leash is appropriate and safe. Dogs will have ample time for off-leash work in Open and Utility.
- Off leash would make a smoother flow as the ring stewarts at the figure 8 could take the leash
- I've done it both ways (competing in Canada and the US). I prefer the US version because it eliminates the required 6 foot leash which is somewhat unwieldy and only used in Novice. Moreover, I find it a cleaner move from the stand to the off leash heeling without having to fuss with the leash at the beginning of the off leash heeling.
- No, it is fine as it is.
- No opinion – wouldn't bother me one way or the other.
- Probably on leash for Novice because of the level more than anything else. No solid opinion on this though.
- No, keep it as is. This is an entry level for beginners (people and dogs). It allows for building of confidence and skill.
- It does not matter to me whether the Stand for Examination is on or off leash. Eventually the off leash stand has to be taught for Utility anyway. Still on-leash can pose its own set of challenges, because of the leash itself.
- Indifferent. This exercise is off leash in UKC and having competed in both I do not see any relative merits of one over the other.
- No.
- No opinion – wouldn't bother me one way or the other.

- No. I quite like it the way it is.
- It should be taught both ways. The only reason it might be nice off leash, is to avoid have to heel with six foot of leash bunched up in your hand.
- YES. The 6' leash is always a handful and awkward to hold. Especially for novice handlers, having no leash on the stand would be easier. Without the requirement for a 6' leash on the Stand For Exam exercise, a 2-3' leash could be used for heeling, removing the problem of 'how to hold onto all that extra leash' during the Heel On Leash exercise.
- I think it should be ON leash because it is the Novice class.
- No, I want this to stay on-leash.
- Absolutely no preference.
- Yes Eliminate the need for a six foot leash.
- I think it should be ON leash because it is the Novice class.
- Yes, I would prefer the exercise to be performed off leash. There is less likelihood for handler error (ie. letting the leash touch the ground which is challenging for small breeds) and eliminates the possibility of accidentally tugging on the leash which could cause the dog to break the stand. Also is consistent with the AKC trials for those that compete in the US for the dog's American CD.
- It doesn't really matter to me. The only reason I can see for changing it to an off leash exercise is to be more in line with the AKC.
- Probably on leash for Novice because of the level more than anything else. No solid opinion on this though.
- No. This exercise help the handler how to handle a leash. In this exercise it's the handler that is judge and can make some mistakes. A poor handler could make his dog look bad. If this exercise is judge without a leash some people will want to jump some step and this could cause the dog to be unstable. This is a novice class, and beginner should keep the leash.
- On leash is fine, for dogs that are not steady the handler has control. |Off leash shows that the dog is under control and steady.
- NO PARTICULAR PREFERENCE
- On leash – novice handlers need to learn control. Focus on off-leash work in open
- Leave the Novice Stand as is. The quality of some of the dogs entering the Novice classes leaves a lot to be desired. Should the dog decide to take off, or an aggressive dog want to lunge at the judge at least there is a least to get come control.
- No

- No, for a lot of dogs the Examination is hard on them and being connected to the owner I'm sure helps. Did this exercise in the States and I see no benefit.
- No good reason for leaving leash on.
- No. Control.
- No x 2 – Affords judges additional safety if dogs get nasty
- Leave it as it is. No reason to change this. It gives the Handler a chance to regroup with their dogs for off leash.
  - No, why rush training and exhibiting? I enjoy the natural progression from Novice to Utility
- I train both ways, so it makes no difference
- No opinion either way.
- No. The Novice Stand for Examination should be performed on leash.  
Rationale: This has been proposed before. It was my understanding that there was concern from the judges regarding aggressive responses from the dog. The leash is a safety feature. We have an off lease examination in the Utility Moving Stand. Let's leave the leash on at the Novice level.

<b>3. GROUP STAY EXERCISES</b>
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<b>A. In January 2005 the long down exercise in the Open Class was reduced from five minutes to three minutes. Do you approve of this change? Why?</b>
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**# of Responses – 46**

**Yes - 31    No - 10    Other - 5**

- Makes it an easier transition from the Novice class.
- Yes
- YES. IF THE DOG STAYS FOR THREE MINUTES, IT WILL LIKELY STAY FOR FIVE. LONGER TIMES ARE BORING FOR HANDLERS AND SPECTATORS.
- No. I do not believe that reducing the time by 2 minutes has done anything to reduce the safety of the exercise or to increase the number of dogs qualifying.

- Yes
- YES!
- No
- yes
- No .. I believe the changes are making the test too easy to pass
- Yes.
- I don't understand this change at all. Changing the time from 5 to 3 minutes did nothing to eliminate the concerns about the stays except make the down 2 minutes shorter. While I can't say that I "object" to the change, it just doesn't make any substantive difference to the exercise and was a waste of ink as far as I'm concerned.
- No, it was a stupid change. We want either the sit or down as an exercise, not a reduced down. This change as it was made showed me that the CKC does not listen to its members.
- Yes it speeds up the stays and statistically most dog who break down do it in the first minute.
- The change is nice. I don't see the extra 2 minutes as having done anything extra to prove a dog's ability to stay – particularly once the long sit is done.
- I think both the long down and long sit should be the same length of time for consistency more than anything else – but again I am flexible on this point.
- I am not sure why it was changed. In attending Dr. McConnell's workshop she had stated that if it were up to her she would get rid of this exercise, in the best interest of the dog. Maybe this needs to be considered (?)
- I did not approve of this change. A dog should be able to do a very very long down. I can appreciate from a crowd pleasing point of view why you would want to shorten things, but from an obedience point of view a longer down shows a more useful dog.
- Yes. It gives the dogs less chance of getting interested in their neighbours.
- I do not disapprove, but it did nothing to improve the quality of the sport.
- PERSONALLY BELIEVE THE GROUP OUT OF SITE SITS AND STAYS SHOULD BE REPLACED WITH SOMETHING LESS HAZZARD, HOWEVER, IF DOGS CAN DO 3 MINUTES THEN WHAT'S 2 MORE OR 2 LESS. DOGS SHOULD EITHER BE ABLE TO DO EITHER.
- The change is nice. I don't see the extra 2 minutes as having done anything extra to prove a dog's ability to stay – particularly once the long sit is done.

- Yes, as five minutes was way to long for the dogs.
- Yes. Its less time having to wait and wonder if someone's dog is going to start something, which means less stress.
- Nice idea, but didn't address the REAL problem with this exercise – I.E. the problem of leaving unleashed, 'strange' dogs together in an area where they are beyond the control of their handlers and under the responsibility of a judge and one ring steward who may or may not know how or be capable of dealing effectively with any problems that arise.
- I do agree with this change. It's bad enough we have to be out of sight of our dogs, 3 minutes is more than enough time to prove they can do it.
- Yes, I approve of this change. 5 minutes was too long, especially for out-of sights. It is boring to watch and stressful for dogs and handlers.
- Not particularly. Saves time for the judges and makes it easier for the dogs. Is that the purpose of the change?
- Yes, it is still long enough to demonstrate the dogs obedience and eliminates the need of a dog to have to stay over eight minutes in the hot sun.
- Yes
- I do approve of this change, I think 3 minutes is certainly enough time to assess whether or not the dog is going to stay (with the owner gone). I think (although I don't know for sure) that the dogs who will have issues with this exercise either have it right away (within the first 15-30 seconds), or as the handler is returning to heel.
- Yes. 3 or 5 min. doesn't make a big difference for the dog and it is less stressful for the handler. It was a bit boring for spectators. It's too long for no reason.
- It's okay but don't eliminate entirely. |Hopefully dogs will be less stressed by a shorter time.
- YES
- Yes, if they (the dogs) can stay for 3 min. they can stay for 3 hours.
- Did I approve of the shorter down stay in the open class - yes, only because as a judge I am not standing in the ring for 5 minutes watching the dogs. This should not be a difficult exercise for the dogs if properly trained. A 5 minute down stay is not hard on the dog. He is after all or should be in a very comfortable position. It is an exercise that comes in mighty handy in real life situations. Some might say that how often in real life does a dog have to lay down for 5 minutes with other dogs. The point is if he can do this he can stay down in every day life under most distractions.
- Yes. 5 minutes was boring

- Yes but it is a very small step in the right direction. We need to eliminate this exercise as no one in their right mind would leave their dog loose unattended.
- No. Did not achieve anything apart from saving judges time.
- Yes, but it was unnecessary.
- OK x 2 – Hopefully doesn't lead to loss of the exercise
- The stay exercises, now where do we start? I never did feel comfortable leaving my dog in a ring for a couple of reasons. I don't think that the ring stewards should be put in a position to have to separate 2 or more dogs that may decide to get into it or even just a dog that decides to get up. Who knows how it will react to a stranger coming over to take them by their collar. There isn't always time to get the handler back into the ring. On that note I would say that it would be better for all handlers to stay in the ring. Really where would you ever leave a dog with a group of dogs unsupervised?
- No – I feel 5 minutes wasn't an unreasonable expectation. My dogs do much longer stays than that.
- Very minor improvement. Rethink on passive obedience exercises is needed.
- Yes
- Yes I approve of the long down being reduced to three minutes  
Rationale: Three minutes is an adequate test of the dog's ability to remain in a stationary position and it allows the judging to move along faster. I don't think it makes the exercise easier.

<p><b>B. Would you prefer that dogs do group stays with their leash attached to their collar? Why?</b></p>
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**# of Responses – 43**  
**Yes - 23 No - 15 Other - 5**

- No. If they were to get up, the leash may end up tangling with another leash and spoil the neighbors' stay.
- Yes, I also think that there should only be a maximum of 6 dogs allowed in the ring on all group stay exercises.
- This could create as many problems as it solves. Better to have more alert stewards with leash to remove trouble makers from the rest of the stays
- YES. SHOULD A CONFRONTATION OCCUR BETWEEN DOGS, HANDLERS HAVE A BETTER CHANCE AT SOMETHING TO GRAB AND SEPARATE THE DOGS.

- It might help
- No. While having a leash attached to a dog may make it a bit safer for the ring stewards and/or judge if they have to remove the dog from the line-up, I do not believe it has an overall impact on the safety of the exercise should a problem occur between dogs.
- No, I don't think having the leash on would make any difference.
- YES! I have always wondered why its never been done this way in the past. If there is a 'situation' it's a lot easier to grab a flying leash than trying to get one on a dog after the fact.
- No I see a huge problem with this as if a dog breaks and goes after another dog they could get tangled up and cause an injury.
- NO.... This makes the exercise like pre-Novice.... A real joke....
- Absolutely. If there is a problem, it makes it safer for the judge or steward to take action.
- Yes. I think this will at least improve the safety concerns to some degree because it will give a steward or judge something to get a-hold of other than the dog or the dog's collar if things start going off the rails.
- No. I would prefer that we made stays safer period. A dog can still be munched, even though the aggressor has a leash on. By having a leash, you are questioning their training. But by removing one or the other, you are increasing safety for dogs
- If it makes stays safer by making it easier to catch a dog before trouble arises, then I would be fine with it. I'm not entirely sure it would though. Leash length would need to be established.
- Yes, I would think it may be easier to catch a dog that has broken it's stay. More of a preventive measure. Unless there is more space between dogs or something similar I think it necessary to do everything possible in a worse case scenario and if two dogs actually get into fighting or playing it will be easier and safer for ring stewards to separate the offenders.
- Previously I had stated that the leash should be taken off as I thought that it could behaviourally condition the dog to maintain the 'stay'. I wonder about changing the exercise to keeping the leash off, moving the time back to 5 min and have the handlers remain in the ring as in Novice. Just an idea.-0 I am neutral on this issue. I have been to a lot of shows and have never seen a fight. Still I have heard stories and if it will lessen the risk to small dogs then maybe it would be worth it. I do not think it will affect a dog's ability to hold a stay. A trained dog will do it leash on or leash off.
- I am neutral on this issue. I have been to a lot of shows and have never seen a fight. Still I have heard stories and if it will lessen the risk to small dogs then maybe it would

be worth it. I do not think it will affect a dog's ability to hold a stay. A trained dog will do it leash on or leash off.

- Yes. This is from the perspective of the ring stewards who would be able to catch/control a moving dog.
- Yes. It would be much easier and safer to keep a dog from disturbing another dog.
- YES, I'VE HAD AN INTACT MALE IN THE NOVICE EXERCISE ACTUALLY STAND OVER TOP OF MY BITCH TO THE POINT SHE BROKE HER LONG DOWN. THIS IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE AND PERHAPS HAVING THE LEASH ON WOULD HAVE GIVEN THE RING STEWART A BETTER CHANCE OF CATCHING THE DOG BEFORE HE GOT TO THAT POINT. BY BITCH BY THE WAY WAS SPAYED SO THERE WAS NO EXCUSE FOR THE DOGS BEHAVIOUR
- If it makes stays safer by making it easier to catch a dog before trouble arises, then I would be fine with it. I'm not entirely sure it would though. Leash length would need to be established.
- Yes, as it is much safer for the ring stewards to receive and contain a dog when it get up from a stay.
- Yes. I've always wondered that from the get go. If there is an incident of dog aggression, its easier to grab a flying leash than to try to get one on. Therefore, its safer for ring stewards, et al.
- Again, this misses dealing with the real problem. The issue is a safety factor of leaving dogs unsupervised by their handlers with other unknown dogs.
- I think it is better that they be off leash, because if there is a scuffle, the dogs could get tangled in the leashed & that would make matters worse.
- Yes, I think it is a good idea, for safety's sake. If a dog gets up and moves, the leash provides the ring stewards a means of containing the dog. In the event that an "incident" occurs, a dog on leash will be easier to manage and reduce bite risk
- No What for?
- Yes
- I think it's a good idea, because should something bad happen in the ring between two dogs, there is something to grab onto.
- No. This would make the exercise too easy and some would enter without being ready. Dogs would be more susceptible to move, get up, go visit other dogs and this would be more dangerous for smaller dogs to get attack.
- NO I don't think it is necessary.
- YES

- Yes, gives the ring stewarts something to control dogs who break
- Leaving the leash on the dogs for the group stays - are we talking Novice or Open Class. In any event - No I do not want to see the leash on the dog.
- Yes - Control
- No. Sometimes dogs move around – carefully scratch at their collars or shift from side to side and the lead could get tangled enough to make it uncomfortable for them. The movement or noise of the lead (especially if the dog leaves) could affect the dog (s) beside him, which is unfair
- No, group stays are now obsolete . It is time we moved on and offered other less dangerous exercises.
- Yes – safety.
- No x 2 Would prefer people trained and proofed their dogs on the stays. If judges were permitted to (and did) excuse dogs after the moving exercises, if unruly, might be less of an issue.
- No it would be like a crutch. I reinforce exercises without collars on occasion. Trials show the public the extent of dog training, control and well mannered pets.
- It still won't save a toy dog from a larger breed with the poor quality of ring stewarding these days.
- Leashes on may make it easier to catch a dog wo breaks the stay but not sure if it would prevent an incident.
- Yes the leash should remain on during the group stays  
Rationale: The leash provides safe access to the dog if there is a problem. Most dogs are more “responsible” with their leashes on.

**C. What is your opinion of a handler/dog team being automatically excused from the group exercises if a non-qualifying score is received for one or more of the individual exercises? Why?**

**# of Responses – 43**  
**Yes - 12 No - 17 Other - 14**

- I think they should still be able to come into the ring for the final part of the trial. Good practice and it would at least demonstrate to the owner where they need to focus future training.
- No, I would like to get my \$20 worth and I also don't want my dog to think that he did anything wrong. However I think it should be the handlers option to end

completion of the remaining exercises.

- Great idea only the best trained dog should be left on out of sight stays. And novice dogs should be excused after breaking a stay. It seems foolish to return dog to the line up after he has fail the long sit in novice and foollish to put failing dogs in any lineup This could eliminate problem dogs and speed up judging time for qualifying exhibitors
- I don't think that this should be a requirement but I do think that it should be up to the handler to decide whether or not they want to complete the group exercises, knowing that they have already received a non-qualifying score. A lot of dogs have issues with the out of site stays. While this is a training issue, many times the dog only has this problem in a trial environment. If there is no chance of qualifying, the handler may not want to take a chance on creating a new stay problem or perpetuating an existing problem by continuing in the group exercises.
- No
- NOT IN FAVOR. IT SHOULD BE THE JUDGE'S DECISION WHETHER TO EXCUSE OR NOT, DEPENDING ON THE DOGS PERFORMANCE IN ALL EXERCISES.
- Yes, there would be fewer problems in the group stays.
- Yes as it would cut down the waiting time in large classes.
- Depends on the reason for the failing grade... If it is because the dog was not under control on the recall or off leash healing or was bothering another dog in the sit stay or down stay then yes... otherwise no.....
- I agree with this proposal. Potentially, this may eliminate dogs who are not under control from being in the group stays, especially in novice.
- I don't like it. You paid your money and should be allowed to stay, UNLESS, you ask to leave, at which point you should also be allowed.
- Love the idea. I think this will weed out potential trouble with dogs in the stays to a great extent. It won't solve all potential issues, but it would go a long way in reducing them.
- I think the handler/dog team should be given a choice and notify the steward immediately after the first half of the competition if they plan on returning. I don't think it fair to automatically excuse because it is part of the entire "test" and the handler should have the option of having his dog go through the entire test. But... for those who feel it will not affect the dog's performance in future trials they should have the choice of opting out of that exercise. An example is that even a dog who non-Q's for an agility trial will run the entire course – few handlers pull the dog in the middle of the run.
- See answer to 7A. Also I have seen handlers get very uptight with their dog as the exercises progress if they know that they have done poorly or even perhaps been disqualified.
- There are several positive points from this. The obvious is that if a dog is not controlled in the individual exercises then it is more likely to be the dog to cause havoc in the group exercises. From a

training point of view I would prefer it. Why risk your stays if you can not pass anyway? It would also speed things up. An increase in the average number of dogs a judge can judge in a day increases the club's profit and gets me home sooner.

- The only area I can see causing trouble is if it continually causes all the dogs except one to be left in the stay exercise. Some people might not want their dog staying by himself
- If the purpose of the exercise is to have the dogs sit with its fellow competitors it is necessary to include all dogs. If the judge thinks that a particular dog, who had already failed, was likely to be a safety concern then he/she should have the ability to excuse that dog from the long sits and downs.
- No. The handler has paid their entry fee, they should have the option to complete the round unless the judge feels there is another reason that warrants excusa- UNLESS THE DOG IS OUT OF CONTROL THEN I BELIEVE THE DOG SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO FINISH ALL THE EXERSICES.
- Love the idea. I think this will weed out potential trouble with dogs in the stays to a great extent. It won't solve all potential issues, but it would go a long way in reducing them.
- It depends on the exercise it failed. Just because a dog has a refusal on the retrieve on flat and the drop on recall does not mean it can't do stays. I think it should be the judges discretion. If the dogs is out of control during the run then by all means the dog should be not allowed to continue.
- I am of the mind set that it shouldn't be 'automatic', however it might be a good idea for it to be an 'option' that the handler can choose.
- No. This should be at the handler's request to the judge. The handler has paid the entry fee and may want to do all the exercises.
- I don't think it's fair that the handler be automatically excused. They have paid their money to be there & should be allowed to complete all the exercises, even if they know it's not a qualifying score.
- I think this should be discretionary, but with a clear option for either the judge or handler to excuse the team. If a dog is out of control in the ring and NQs in multiple exercises, then I think that to allow them to participate in the group exercises is unfair to the other teams. Likewise, if a dog breaks down in the ring, the handler should have the option to minimize the bad experience for their dog and not put other training at risk by setting the dog up to fail another exercise.
- Absolutely not!!! Presume we're still in the Open Class so unless the dog is completely out of control, whereupon the judge uses his discretion, why excuse? Again how did the dog reach the Open Class with uncontrollable behavior?
- Only should be at owner/handlers request as they have paid their entry.
- Yes

- I'd rather see this as the handler's option, unless the dog is deemed to be out of control. A dog might not do well on the DOR, but they might excel at the ROH. So why not let the dog experience a positive ring experience, instead of getting pulled out as soon as they do something wrong.  
I also think this would be detrimental for newcomers to the sport . . . to be eliminated from the ring before their entire performance is complete.
- No. Definitely no. If most dogs are disqualified it means that a team could be on its own to do the exercise. A dog that fails on a regular basis would never be able to continue on, this is not what competition is all about. People are paying to compete and should be able to get through the whole routine.
- GOOD Idea in this way of the dog is not under control during the floor exercises, it does not have a chance to cause problems on the stays.
- NO, BUT EXCUSED FOR REAL LACK OF CONTROL
- Yes
- I don't think the handler / dog team should be excused from the group exercises if a non-qualifying score is received for one or more of the individual exercises. It is quite possible that you could end up with only one dog in the ring the for stays.
- Absolutely. Proven – Unreliable.
- Excellent idea! 1) Skill level may not be up to snuff so group exercise may be a problem. 2) They have failed and can go home.
- No. Only handler/dog teams who have behaved badly should be excused. The rest should complete the test to make sure qualifying dogs have a complete line up.
- No. Unless the dog/handler is uncontrollable.
- Yes x 2 It would discourage people from entering before dog was ready. Might make for some pretty short trials!
- I don't agree. All exercises are important. The ring experience is valuable. Entry fees are expensive and I think exhibitors will only be discouraged if this happens. These are animals and they could be off for many reasons. If my dog fails 1 or more exercises, I still want to finish the stays. What would the viewing public think?
- It would compromise all the training prior to the trial.
- Should be left up to handler
- Yes A team that NQ's in the individual exercises should not be included in the group exercises.  
Rationale: A non-qualifying score is often due to lack of training, control or teamwork. Excusing the team would eliminate many unsteady dogs from the stay exercises.

**D. Would you like dogs failing the group sit exercise to be automatically excused from the remaining group down exercise?**

**# of Responses – 41  
Yes - 21 No - 15 Other - 4**

- No.
- Yes
- Yes it seem redundant to keep them in the lineup
- NO
- No
- No, unless the dog has created a disturbance. As above, I believe that the handler should have the option of continuing or not.
- Yes, or design a different exercise such has individual dogs honoring another, while one is doing the individual exercises.
- It should be optional and the handler s/b the one to make the call. However, for sits and downs, the dog should automatically be excused.
- No. I would like to see the exhibitor have the opportunity to ask to be excused instead.
- Yes. I like this proposal on 2 levels. First, if there's a dog who is not steady on his stays, it gets him out of the ring and eliminates any risk he may pose to the other dogs on the second half of the group exercise. Second, if your dog is going down on his sits, there is no benefit whatsoever to have him do the down-stay. I've seen too many excellent dogs ruined by having the down reinforced after a failed sit stay.
- YES. That would be wonderful.
- Yes. No need to reinforce a problem sit stay by asking the dog to do a down.
- Undecided.
- See answer to 'F'. But to specifically answer this....yes.
- This is another issue I am neutral on. It might be better to have a dog that moves from his place to be automatically excused. These dogs are more likely to cause the havoc. I just hate to see the challenge removed from competing.

- If the reason for the failure was one of aggression to other dogs Yes . Otherwise they should be left in.
- Yes.
- NO, UNLESS THEY ARE EXHIBITING SIGNS OF AGGRESSION. THEN THEY SHOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE EXCUSED AND WRITTEN UP.
- Yes. No need to reinforce a problem sit stay by asking the dog to do a down.
- No. Again it should be up to the judge. If the dog just lays down on the sit then no, but if the dogs gets right up to visit, yes.
- YES!!!!!!
- Yes, but this still means that the safety of other dogs in the ring has already been put at risk during the first group exercise. Why is this necessary???
- No, for the same reason stated above.
- As above. If the dog was disruptive in the break from the sit, they should be excused. Likewise, the handler should be able to opt out.
- Only if they look like serious troublemakers.
- No
- Yes
- No.
- No. same reasons as in C except if the dog is really a nuisance to other dogs (up to the judge's discretion)
- Good idea as well.
- Yes
- No I do not want a dog failing the group sit to be excused from the down stay. The only time this should happen is when the dog in the sit shows interest in the dog next to him or appears to be not manageable. IT has been my observation that most judges do excuse the dog for the down stay when the dog gets up and moves around on the sit stay.
- Absolutely.
- Yes. If the dog stood up, it may simply be repeated. If the dog lay down, then we correct it to the sit, then tell it to lay down.
- Not unless they disturbed other dogs.

- Yes
- x 2 If "C" comes to be, yes. If not, only if dog has behaved in a manner which may disturb others, whining, barking, leaving position, etc.
- No, just have the stewards and the judge (which usually happens) be prepared.
- Yes Does that fail the group sit should not be included in the group down.  
Rationale: A dog that simply lies down may not be an issue. However, a dog that gets up and goes to another dog is a threat. A dog that leaves or vocalizes excessively is stressful and may elicit some threatening response from another dog. It is not fair to the rest of the class to allow them to remain. They usually repeat the behaviour again!

<b>E Would you prefer that handlers remain in the ring in Open classes as in Novice?</b>
--

**# of Responses – 43**  
**Yes - 20 No - 23 Other - 0**

- Yes.
- Yes, maybe honouring while the next dog is doing the heeling pattern.
- Yes since so few judges or Stewarts seem to be paying attention to the line ups anymore handlers could at least watch there own dogs
- IF WE ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE EIGHT DOGS IN THE RING, YES (WITH LEASHES ATTACHED TO DOGS).
- Yes. I want to know who's is responsible if there's a problem. If my dog is beaten up who pays the bills?
- No, as I am not sure what purpose this would serve.
- If this were the case, why bother doing open stays at all? You are repeating novice stays all over again.
- Yes if there are any issues the owner can take care of their own dog and should have better control over the situation.
- No.... The reason for the handlers leaving the ring is to test the dog's stability.. Again why are these changes being proposed... we are watering down the exercises so they are irrelevant....?
- Yes. I would rather see an individual honor exercise for a stay. There would be distraction for the honoring dog without close proximity to unknown dogs.

- Yes. Although, I'd prefer that this exercise be changed completely with an honour down or some such thing.
- No. I think either the sit or down should be removed instead.
- No, I do see value in being able to leave from sight. If the dog can do a one minute sit stay within sight in Novice, asking them to do a 3 minute in sight sit stay in Open does not add significantly more to the exercise. One option would be to do a 1minute stay in sight, then all handlers leave for one minute, then return for one minute in sight again for a total time of 3 minutes.
- Assume you mean as regards long sit/down – no – I think it's a good test and very "real world".
- Yes.....see answer to 'B'.
- I think that having the handlers stay would make the exercise too easy. There should be more challenge when moving from Novice to Open.
- No. When are you people going to get with it?
- No, this defeats the purpose of the exercise.
- Yes.
- NO, I FEEL THAT THE EXERCISES ARE POINTLESS IN GENERAL BUT THAT'S WHAT'S CALLED FOR SO OUR DOGS SHOULD BE PROOFED TO ENSURE THEY DO WHAT WE ASK, THOUGH PERSONALLY BELIEVE THE EXERCISES SHOULD BE DELETED ALL TOGETHER FOR SAFETY REASONS.
- No, I do see value in being able to leave from sight. If the dog can do a one minute sit stay within sight in Novice, asking them to do a 3 minute in sight sit stay in Open does not add significantly more to the exercise. One option would be to do a 1minute stay in sight, then all handlers leave for one minute, then return for one minute in sight again for a total time of 3 minutes.
- This is silly – you are just repeating novice again!!!!!!!!!!!!
- If handlers remain in the ring at least the dogs would then be supervised. But what would be any different from Novice except maybe the length of the stays? This is not really what we need to test these dogs on a control exercise at a more advanced level.
- YES!!! YES!!!! YES!!!! YES!!!! YES!!!! YES!!!! (Did you get that?)  
I would never leave my dog unattended in the community like we need to do for that exercise – it just seems so un-connected to any real-life expectations I might have for my dog
- Yes! I don't believe that the out of sight exercises reflect realistic situations. There are no circumstances under which I would leave my dog unattended and out of sight for any length of time.

- Sorry but this is dumming down again. Open is an advanced class.
- Yes
- Yes.
- No
- Not necessary.
- NO, IF SAFETY OF DOGS COULD BE BETTER MANAGED THAN IT IS NOW
- Only as an honour during one of the open exercises.
- No. Handler should leave the ring in the open stays.
- Absolutely.
- Yes but better still change to one of the other exercises discussed at Town Hall Meeting.
- Yes
- Yes
- No x 2 Feel we're catering to poor training. (One of us) had two close calls in 20 years of judging (the other) none in 23 years.
- No. I still want to leave my dog in the Open Stays. This is an excellent and practical exercise in my daily routine.
- It would help in some cases
- It would be safer for competitors dogs is one broke a stay it would probably go to owner
- No: I feel strongly that handlers should leave the ring in the Open stay exercises.  
 Rationale: Part of the challenge of this exercise is the fact that the handler leaves the ring. The ability to cope with being left alone is an important and useful concept! Obedience exhibitors are concerned about the risks of the exercise. Please consider the following: There would be two sets of Open stays, each for 3 minutes. The exercise would proceed with the qualifying handlers and dogs in a line. The judge will indicate that all even numbered dogs will do a sit (or down) stay and all odd numbered dogs will do a down (or sit) stay. The order of the position will be at the judge's discretion and the stay (sit or down) will be for 3 minutes. Handlers will not know whether they will be doing the down or sit first. Only the handlers of the dogs in a down stay will leave. This will insure that the handler of every second dog is still in the ring. It is my experience that dogs tend to be unsteadier in the siti stay. The handlers of the dogs in a sit would proceed to the other side of the ring and remain there. This procedure will allow us to test the dog's ability to stay in a consistent position with the handler out of sight and still maintain a high level of safety (even with the leashes off)

**F Would you like the Long Sit & Down exercises in Open classes replaced with different stay exercises which do not require a line of dogs?**

**# of Responses – 39  
Yes - 22 No - 10 Other - 7**

- Good question – no answer at this point.
- Honouring while the next dog is doing the heeling pattern or figure 8 (handler remains in the ring).
- Yes since at stay is a stay why not leave the dog in the ring after he qualifies to do his stay while the next dog is coming in. He could even do his stay while jumps are being set up etc
- YES. NO MORE THAN TWO DOGS IN THE RING AT ONE TIME. HANDLER OUT OF RING, BUT NOT OUT OF SIGHT.
- Yes.
- Yes
- ABSOLUTELY!! I have already suggested ways to change the long sit/down – either an honor down, or a scenario where the handler leaves the dog after completing the exercises, and greets the steward, and then helps set the jumps for the next dog etc. This can be a very challenging scenario for dogs that are social and think any conversation from their handler with another person is license for a party! <g>  
Yes and I say this primarily because my dog was attacked several times at different shows during these exercises.
- No.... but then again what is being proposed to replace the Long Sit and Long down
- Yes. As noted in D.
- Yes. The dogs have proven that they can stay in Novice. I unfortunately feel that the risk posed to the dogs in the out of sight stays outweighs any benefit that there may be to keeping the exercise. Notably, I didn't feel that way when trialing my sheltie and female boxer who were generally in stays with dogs of similar size and didn't, in my experience, ever pose a risk to my dogs. My views of the stays changed dramatically when I started trialing my 70 pound male boxer. My dog is steady in his stays and well mannered with other dogs but I've had occasion to pull him from Open competition because he was going to be lined up with other male dogs who were not steady in their stays and/or had shown a level of aggression towards other male dogs and, in one dog's case, my dog in particular, that I wasn't comfortable with. In that case, I knew that there were dogs who were potential problems and made the decision not to compete that day because the risk was too great. But that day made me think about the dogs that I don't know and who may well have an issue with other

males or male boxers. If another dog started something, I don't know how my boy would respond because he's not ever been put in that situation. If anything happened, my dog, the other dog, the judge or steward could get seriously hurt, my dog could be disqualified from CKC competition, mentally shaken to the point he couldn't do Open stays any more or even just create a very negative image for dogs or boxers in the mind of anyone who witnessed the incident. None of those outcomes is acceptable in my mind.

- Yes, an honour down would still show training. I like what the UKC does.
- No. I do think the stays could be made safer (leashes on, excusals if NQ in individual exercises and the 3 minute Open stay suggestion above), but I do see value in my dogs being under control around other dogs.
- Yes! Absolutely!
- Yes I think that this is a great idea. The more I learn about dog behaviour the more it is that I think that we need to consider the impact this exercise has on dogs in the line up. Some would say that this is part of competition, and yes certainly for people but do the dogs know this. It certainly wouldn't hurt to experiment with something different, especially if it has always been done in this fashion.
- See G below
- Yes
- YES AND NO FOR VARIOUS REASONS.
- No. I do think the stays could be made safer (leashes on, excusals if NQ in individual exercises and the 3 minute Open stay suggestion above), but I do see value in my dogs being under control around other dogs.
- Yes.
- Absolutely!!!!
- YES!
- It's not the 'line of dogs' part that I mind – it's the 'out of sight' part. I think the honour dog system set up for Intermediate is a good one. That shows that the dog can stay put amid distraction & the handler of the honour dog can stay in the ring.
- I would be interested in hearing about the potential options and think this would be a good idea.
- A line of dogs remaining in place over a period of time shows excellent control training and is impressive to watch – not boring.
- Yes.

- No
- NO
- YES
- Yes
- No. Leave the stays alone.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- No x 2
- No I have small dogs and I have always had a positive experience. Common knowledge shows the B classes have steadier dogs and more experienced handlers, so there is that choice if I'm worried.
- The honour exercises would work for me
- If safety is an issue as it seems to be, then yes.
- No The line of dogs should remain part of the exercise.  
Rationale: A line of dogs demonstrates the dog's ability to function among other dogs. Also, a line is easily monitored.

<b>G Is there an exercise(s) you would suggest to replace Open long sit and/or down exercises?</b>
--

**# of Responses – 44**

- No.
- One stay exercise after completion of a qualifying run be it sit or down a stay is a stay and the dog stays in the ring till this exercise is finished
- MOVING DOWN FOLLOWED BY RECALL (SIMILAR TO UTILITY MOVING STAND).

- I like the idea of one dog doing a stay while another dog is working, like in some of the transitional classes.
- As mentioned in 'D', have a dog in a stay while another dog is doing the individual exercises.
- See above.
- If they choose to continue this exercise maybe the handler could stand several inches behind the dog.
- No opinion here
- Honoring.
- A stand on recall, with the handler then leaving, and calling the dog to do heelwork.
- Just the suggestions on making it safer.
- No.
- Being fairly new to the world of dog obedience competition, I can't offer immediate suggestions. However perhaps to look at what other countries include as exercises in their competition and consider if any are worthwhile including in place of the 'down' exercise.
- I like the concept of the honour stay as done in UKC. I could see an honour sit, and then go with a group down. That would speed things up and still provide challenge. Also, I think dogs are less likely to go after each other from the down position.
- There should be one exercise. This should be an honouring exercise as in UKC and whether the dog sits or downs should be at the discretion of the handler. The handler will be out of the ring.
- Honour
- Dog does a down or sit stay while the handler leaves the ring briefly to talk to a steward out side the ring. Upon the handler's return, he/she stoops to pick up an object that the judge has dropped close to the dog.
- PERHAPS AN HONOURING SYSTEM WHEREBY THE DOG IN QUESTION HAD TO STAY PUT EITHER IN A DOWN OR A SIT, WHILST THE WORKING DOG DID A ROUTINE. THE HANDLER COULD BE AT THE OTHER END OF THE RING.
- Just the suggestions on making it safer.
- Less dogs in the line up which would allow more space between dogs. Ring stewards must pay more attention to what is going on in the ring.

- I have already made suggestions that address this.
- Dog left on a down-stay while the handler helps set up/measure the jumps for the next dog in the ring.
- Dog does a sit-stay alone for 1 minute with the handler out of sight as part of its individual exercises.
- A sit or down stay honouring exercise similar to the UKC.
- Maybe an item discrimination? 2 or 3 different items out on the floor & the dog has to retrieve the correct one? (i.e.: keys, toy, leash... anything really) I just don't know how you would standardize that – would everyone have to have the same 3 items, or would it matter, as long as the dog did a discrimination. The person would bring the items & the judge would decide which one the dog had to retrieve.
- Perhaps an honour exercise such as in Novice Intermediate?
- No!
- Yes, similar to the stay exercise in rally obedience. I would like to see the dog placed in a sit and/or down in the corner of the ring while the next dog performs his/her individual exercises (heeling, retrieve, etc). I believe this exercise is more useful and practical. It should also speed things up as two dogs would be judged at once and all group exercises at the open level would be eliminated.
- An honour sit or down stay (or both) as with the UKC. I think this is a more functional exercise than an out of sight sit or down stay.
- To the judge's discretion, do only one of the two, either a sit stay or a down stay to.
- NO don't take out the stays, we need them to steady dogs and give control to dogs.
- SOME FORM OF HONOUR EXERCISE
- Some sort of honour – during free heel pattern?
- No.
- Line em up – call em at random order then down em – leave - return
- 1) Put dog in stay and help steward set up jumps 2) honouring exercise
- Either Honour Exercise or Moving Recall (Can explain if necessary)
- Not at this time
- No x 2

- None. I don't know of any at this time.
- The honour exercise
- 1) An honour down or sit stay similar to what is already req'd in novice intermediate 2) a sit stay in ring while handler does gets leash from table and returns to dog, put leash on and exercise finished (suggested by a friend)
- No: I feel very strongly that this exercise should remain as part of our obedience tests  
 Rationale: The "Obedience Trial Rules and Regulations" (January 1, 2005) state the following under Purpose: The basic objective of obedience trials is to produce dogs that have been trained to behave in the home, in public places and in the presence of other dogs... ." Stay is a crucial tool for management and control. A dog that does a good stay is socially acceptable anywhere (in the home in public places). The group stays demonstrate the dog's ability to function in a controlled manner in the presence of other dogs. A long stay with the handler out of sight in which the dog is required to maintain a consistent position demonstrates a high level of training and control. It also indicates the dog's level of confidence and its ability to cope with being left alone.

I have (as you know) spent considerable time and effort on this issue. I am concerned that the safety issues driving the move to eliminate stays are a "red herring" bandied about by some high-powered trainers whose dogs fails them. I acknowledged that there is some risk inherent in this exercise. However, there are risks of aggressive attacks and other physical injury in all dog sports. I am at much more substantial risk of having my dogs attacked while walking in my neighbourhood than in the ring at an obedience trial. Off leash areas are much more dangerous than any dog event and many competitive exhibitors continue to use them.

We can make the stays safer and I have given you many suggestions to do that. If CKC eliminates this exercise, they have moved one step closer to reducing our trials nothing more than a competition of fronts, finishes and sits. I feel strongly enough about this issue to withdraw my support from the sport if the group stays are eliminated. There are plenty of other dog sports that I can participate in that will challenge my dogs and my training.

<b>4. CATALOGUE ORDER ACCORDING TO SIZE</b>
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<b>According to rule 6.1.2 (e) Entries in each class may be arranged according to the size of the dogs. Would you like to see that rule changed to – must be arranged according to size?</b>
--

**# of Responses – 43**  
**Yes - 29 No - 14 Other - 0**

- Yes.
- No, sometimes there are conflicts and this can not be done (eg. Dog is in another ring). However I think the stay exercises should be arranged according to size of the dog.
- Yes it saves time changing jumps and more importantly if you have problems in the stays it is a vet bill not a dead dog

- NO, LEAVE AS IS. IF A TEAM HAS A CONFLICT, MUST RULE MAY NOT APPLY.
- Yes, as this makes for more efficient running of the trial. It should be the club's option as to whether they want to start from small to tall or vice versa.
- Yes, please
- If I owned a small dog, I would likely be nervous every time it sat between a Rottie and a Shepherd! If the open stay format gets changed, this becomes a moot point.
- No I don't think it is fair for people with larger dogs to have to expect to be the last ones in the ring all the time.
- Leave as is.... A well trained dog does not have a problem with the size of the dogs adjacent to it.... I think the Judges should exercise more authority to remove a dog from a trial that has an "issue" with smaller or larger dogs in its class
- Yes. I think it is safer, particularly for the toy breeds.
- Yes. I think that little dogs are safer with other little dogs in the stays.
- No. It is unfair for the person who always has to go first.
- Yes. I have a larger sized dog known for their prey drive and I feel for those who have little dogs. I've had many folks with small dogs ask me if my big dog is OK (he is), but they should not have to worry about such things.
- Yes.
- I think we need to consider the dogs. What are the advantages for the dogs and make the changes based on what is helpful for them.
- No. However, the judge should have the ability to move a dog if there appears that an individual dog is likely to interfere with another placed next to it because of size or number.
- Yes.
- YES, WHEN I WAS TRIALS CHAIR FOR CDKC, I ENSURED DOGS WERE PLACED ACCORDING TO SIZE FOR MANY REASONS. THOUGH IT'S NOT DONE HERE IN THE WEST
- Yes.
- If I was trialling a small dog, I would likely be happier knowing it was beside another small dog rather than inbetween a rottie and a GSD!! However, this may mean that they will always be the first dogs in the ring. I suspect though that if the group exercises were eliminated, this wouldn't be an issue for anyone!!!!

- Good idea if we have to keep the current sit/down exercises – if we replace them, it's a moot point. However, with absentees and changes in judging order due to conflicts, would the final line-ups be that different?
- I don't care really. It is more efficient to do things this way, but if a person has 2 dogs the same size entered & the club wants to spread them out in the running order – they should have the freedom to do so.
- Yes, it makes sense for the jumping exercises and ease of ring set-up. Size gives a much better flow and would make the rings move faster. Also for sits and downs, much better to have size order in the line-up. Less prey-drive risk for the big to small dogs. I never like seeing a small dog like a Papillion or Min-Pin set-up between large dogs. It's often quite intimidating for them. It's also a much bigger distraction for some of the larger dogs.
- Many Show Secretaries do that now. Ring stewards appreciate it and if safety is the issue of much of this questionnaire then it does supply an element of that.
- Yes, for the safety of smaller dogs, it also makes it easier for ring stewards eliminating as many jump changes and would also speed up trials.
- Yes
- No, I do not think it's necessary to change the wording to say "must"
- No
- Doesn't matter to me but for owners of small dogs they may appreciate it.
- YES (I AM THE OWNER OF A REACTIVE AND SNACK SIZE DOG)
- Only if it helps with the jumps in open/utility
- Catalogue Order according to size: Leave as is up to the discretion of the club.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes x 2 Absolutely. (Our club) has done it for years, without difficulty.
- Arranging by size. Good idea. I now that all of the dogs are supposed to be "trained" to distractions, etc, but lets remember that safety is our first concern.
- Yes

- Yes
- Yes – clubs should be encouraged to go from largest to smallest and not always small to large
- Yes: I would like to see if mandatory that entries be arranged by size.  
Rationale: Arranging entries by size improves the safety of the stays as the small/toy breeds are generally not placed adjacent to one of the larger breeds. It also judging to move more efficiently, as the jump heights are changed in a progressive order rather than a random order. However, “arranged by size” should indicate large to small and/or small to large. The little dogs get tired of always being first!

<b>5. PRE NOVICE AND NOVICE INTERMEDIATE CLASSES</b>
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<b>A. Do you feel the addition of the Pre-Novice and Novice Intermediate classes are helping increase obedience entries?</b>
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**# of Responses – 36**  
**Yes - 16 No - 13 Other - 7**

- No
- PRE-NOVICE, YES. NOVICE INTERMEDIATE, MARGINAL.
- No. From what I have seen so far, these classes have only been offered at a handful of shows. I think that they would need to be mandatory for clubs to offer in order to see an increase in entries.
- I like Pre-Novice --- I think it encourages more exhibitors to take the challenge of obedience. It also gives a dog that is not sure of showing and being in the show ring a chance to succeed.
- I cant comment since I have not used or watched these classes.
- I cannot comment as I have been out of the ring for a couple of years but I would think that it would help dogs become more familiar with the ring and show setting
- Not sure... I will never enter one so it does not mater to me .... Either my dogs are prepped for Novice or Open or they are not entered....
- I really like the idea of these classes, however, there is not a lot of interest around here.

- Yes. - I really like this class. I found that the pass/fail format eliminates any pressure on the dog/handler and I like that I could talk to my young boy during the class. I feel that it really helps give a good ring experience for young dogs.
- Sadly, no. But not many clubs offer them which does not help.
- Not yet, but they may take time to catch on. I personally intend to use Pre Novice when my up and coming obedience dog is ready.
- I don't know – I think so – there have not been that many trials where pre-novice is available for entry.
- Not sure.
- I have not noticed any change, but since I am not involved in organizing trials, I don't think I can comment intelligently on that.
- Cannot comment as I've not watched or participated in them.
- No experience, therefore not qualified to answer
- Yes.
- It is in the areas of the country where instructors and clubs are promoting it. This does not happen in very many places.
- NO, IN FACT IT INCREASES THE COST FOR THE TRIAL GIVING CLUBS AND MOST SERIOUS COMPETITORS THINK THEY ARE A WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY
- Yes, I loved the pre novice. It gives the handler and dog a chance to get prepared for the ring with on leash exercises. I tell everyone I can to enter pre novice for the ring experience.
- Perhaps a little.
- Yes.
- Yes, especially pre-novice
- Don't know not offered much by clubs
- Unknown
- No. I don't see a lot of clubs in Alberta offering these classes, and when they are offered, I don't see a lot of entries.
- No. People don't know these classes. It's the same cost as official classes.

- Yes,
- No
- Pre Novice & Novice Intermediate - Do not feel these classes are helping increase obedience entries.
- No.
- It would appear so from the judging schedule
- Not much
- Have not judged these yet
- Pre-Novice – yes x 2 Novice-intermediate – no x 2 receives few entries
- I don't have any comments for Pre Novice and Novice Intermediate.
- Yes, they are well-designed and help conformation dogs adjust and myself as well.
- Not really
- Seems most trials that offer these classes have at least one or two entries that may not have entered otherwise thus increasing entries.
- No. I do not believe that Pre Novice and Novice Intermediate are increasing entries. We get very few entries in these classes. It is questionable that they are worth the effort. It is my observation that many of the handlers in these classes are badly prepared and do not go on to the regular classes.

<b>B. Pre Novice – What do you like/dislike about this class?</b>
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**# of Responses – 42**

- I believe we are lowering the bar and we have enough poorly trained dogs in the building without inviting more. Fun matches are for this type of class
- LIKE, NO DISLIKES. 1. INTRODUCES DOGS TO RING ATMOSPHERE. 2. ALL EXERCISES ARE DONE WITH LEASH ATTACHED.
- I like the idea of having an opportunity to get a brand new dog into the ring for some experience before they have to do the full Novice exercises. I think it gives the

handler the opportunity to see where their dog is at. It also gives people new to obedience the chance to get into the ring where the rules are a bit more forgiving and they don't have to worry too much about off lead exercises.

- I like the fact that the class is entirely on leash. I wish it followed the Novice A and B exercises more closely. The handler is penalized because they are not always sure of the rules.
- See comment above
- No comment as I am not familiar with the class
- Too easy.... I won't enter it.... I will go to sanction matches or fun matches instead....
- I think it is a great introduction to obedience for new dogs and new handlers. Both can benefit with a positive experience to begin. Not as formal as the Novice class and much less intimidating for a newcomer to the sport.
- Because there's no competitive element to this class, I think you should be able to enter it as long as you want until your dog has his first CD leg.
- I like that you can talk to your dog
- I like the opportunity to introduce my novice dog incrementally to the ring.
- As above – not usually offered.
- I have not competed in this class (only Novice and currently Open)
- I think pre novice is too easy and shouldn't be necessary.
- As above
- Have never entered this class – no comment.
- The opportunity to verbally encourage the dog during the exercise. Again, a feature which many do not take advantage of, due to lack of understanding and promotion by instructors.
- THE ONLY THING I WOULD SAY IS THAT I WOULD NOT WASTE MY MONEY PUTTING A DOG IN THIS CLASS. WOULD RATHER PROOF THEM AT SANCTION OR CORRECTION MATCHES
- Loved everything about it!
- See above

- LIKES: A chance for new handlers to get their feet wet in a relatively easy class. Helps young green or nervous dogs to get in the ring in a situation where their handler can give verbal encouragement while they are working.
- I haven't entered it myself. I like that it seems to be encouraging new people to the sport.
- I like that you can give mild encouragement, but dislike that you MUST give verbal sit commands. I dislike the post exercise. I like the pass-fail scoring.
- Like the honour exercise – better test of dog's ability to stay.
- Perhaps based on poor teaching, some Pre Novice exhibitors seem to be unclear re: the relationship between Pre Novice and Novice classes. Jumping immediately from one to the other can make for some pretty sloppy work and confused novice exhibitors and dogs.
- Figure eight should be a figure eight.
- Like: opportunity for dogs and handlers to get obedience ring experience before competing at higher levels. Dislike: pass/fail rather than a score. A score is more helpful in determining areas that need improvement before starting novice competition. Also, the rules state (I'm paraphrasing so please bear with me) that moderate praise is allowed in the ring.... this is open to interpretation as to what is moderate and what is excessive.
- I like that it gives new exhibitors a chance to work their dogs without the pressure of qualifying (although you can earn a PCD now). I think it's also a nice place to take a younger dog, who might not be ready for off-leash work, but you want to trial them and see how they do.
- Like: It helps get the dog for novice competition. Handler and dog get more confident. Dislike: The circle left and right. It should be replaced by a real figure 8. No comments or scores are given so we don't know what mistake have been made.
- Good class to start out new dogs, let's you know where they are at in their training.
- I LIKE THE SAFETY OF HAVING MY DOG ON LEASH, AND OTHER DOGS ON LEASH
- Never entered either class. Doesn't interest me.
- Pre Novice - I do not like this class. It allows dog and handler to do things that are not allowed in the Novice Class, and they make these mistakes when they do get into the Novice Level. This is a stupid class and is really an easy title that means nothing.
- It's okay – little interest shown
- I went straight to Novice with my new dog. The last thing I need is new exercises to learn!

- This can be covered at sanction matches. Does not belong in trials with licensed judges.
- Have not judged these yet
- Good opportunity for ring experience. Dislike requirement for handlers to command dog to sit.
- I like everything about it.
- Never used it
- Like the fact it gives a green dog some added ring experience and that you are able to talk/give commands to help the dog. Would like to see you be able to show longer in this class after getting title. Since it is a pass/fail only – this would not take away any newcomer’s titles. This is a valuable class to give ring experience in actual trial situations.
- B, C I am not in favour of either of these classes. The exercises may be an interim step in the training progression for the regular classes but why test at that level. It’s a short jump to the real thing, so train for the real test. I think that most competitive trainers perceive these classes as an extraneous waste of training effort and entry fees. We are training for the end result, not the interim result.

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**C. Novice Intermediate – What do you like/dislike about this class?**

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**# of Responses – 36**

- Same as above
- LIKE ALL EXERCISES, NO DISLIKES.
- I have not had an opportunity to try this class so cannot comment.
- I don’t have enough background information to comment.
- See above
- Same as above
- I have not and will not enter this class so I have no comment

- From a planning perspective, if you only have one entry in the class it is a bit inconvenient to arrange for an honor dog. Otherwise I think it is a good transition however exhibitors in Alberta are not taking advantage of it.
- NA
- I have never seen it, so cannot comment
- Haven't taken the time to look at this class.
- No comment.
- I enjoyed competing in Novice and found the exercises to be appropriate.
- I do not like to see clubs burdened with another class.
- As above
- Same answer as B.
- I like a) the honour b) the handler position for the broad jump
- SAME RESPONSE AS PER MY ANSWER TO D.
- Have not really seen it or participated in it.
- See above
- REALLY LIKE THE BROAD JUMP EXERCISE – it is actually a safer exercise for the dog than the Open exercise which requires the dog to land and turn sharply to do a front (the current Open exercise has very serious potential for injury and is an exercise where dogs often slip/fall in the ring).
- I haven't entered this either, but I like the honour dog system. I don't like how the broad jump is done. (Perhaps if the handler stood directly across from the dog & effectively did a recall over it?)
- Novice Intermediate is a good transition between Novice and Open and can be an interesting class to watch. With all the safety concerns am not sure how the Honor exercise survived the cut but am relieved it did.
- Never seen it offered or done.
- Unknown
- I have not observed or participated in this class, so I cannot really comment.
- Like: Prepares for Open class. Dislike: Cost is the same as official class. Very few show offers this class.

- Gives owners and dogs a class to compete in until they are ready for |Open.
- Novice Intermediate: This is not a bad class - but we already have a graduate novice so why do we need this class.
- It's okay – would like to see more interest.
- Am not familiar with it. Read it and forgot exercises involved.
- Has some merit. Big step between novice and open.
- Have not judged these yet
- Difficult to judge as there are so few entries. Results in less familiarity of routine for judging.
- Excellent class. I enjoyed watching all areas and I have yet to enter because I don't have my confirmation dog yet. I plan on entering these classes once I have completed the champion title.
- I like the Honour exercise
- Again, good ring experience for dogs and I feel it is a useful bridge from Novice to Open

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**5. POST ENTRIES**

**Note: Responses from club/trial secretaries appear in a separate document**

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**Would you like to be allowed to post enter a trial(s) -- i.e. enter on the day up to one hour before the trial starts provided space is available?**

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**# of Responses – 34  
Yes - 16 No - 15 Other - 3**

- Excellent idea as many people who are having a good day may add an extra class especially with the new pair need for title since a great many trials close within days of each other one never knows what the dog is going to be like till the trial.
- NO.
- Absolutely!!!
- Yes.
- Yes.
- If an hour is enough time – but I would certainly consider the work involved to do so. I do think it is an interesting option because I know sometimes knowing what the times of the trials are or other details make me wish I had entered.

- No, I think that this would be a scheduling and paper work nightmare. It would take up too much time for the judge and ring stewards to organize. I do not think that the resulting chaos is worth increased registration. I also think that with the current advance registration it allows for the Judge to plan how s/he will organize activity in the ring with the specified number of competitors/dogs. I also think that that to register last minute ( one hour before) puts a lot of pressure on people and dogs, and when people are pressured this can impact the dog and perhaps how it reacts in the ring and with other dogs. Also, at times trials can be finished earlier than expected and there is no way to predict this until it happens. Then the next round of competitors go in (earlier), so this in itself would impact the 'hour before' attempt at registration.
  
- I think this a question that should be posed to clubs. I am not sure if it is “doable”, and I would hate to see them forced into something that they do not want. As a competitor I can see advantages and disadvantages. It would be nice to be able to put off entries until you know whether you can go for sure. Sometimes a.m. and p.m. can be an issue and that might solve the problem. Still when I get a schedule in the mail I want it to be followed, not the day lengthened by the addition of many dogs.  
  
I suspect that as long as I knew what approximately what time I would be in the ring, I would be ok with it either way.
  
- No this would slow down the trial.
  
- I would have to think about that. Working with Alberta Kennel Club on the show sec. side of things, I can see some problems – but nothing that we couldn't adapt to. It certainly would help to increase entries, I would think. You would have to put some restrictions such as entries paid in cash only etc. Interesting thought though.
  
- Yes.
  
- NO, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE A HEADACHE FOR MOST TRIAL SECRETARIES, HOWEVER THERE MAY ARISE A SITUATION THAT WOULD ALLOW FOR SUBSTITUTES...AS IT STANDS NOW, WE HAVE A MOVE UP RULE, BUT THAT IN ALL HONESTY THE WAY TRAILS ARE RUN, IS A VERY HARD REQUEST TO FULFIL.
  
- No as this makes for a hectic environment for the organizers of the trial.  
I don't think this would have any influence on the number of entries.
  
- No.
  
- From the perspective of an exhibitor, yes. From the perspective of trial secretary – sounds like a nightmare doing the CKC paperwork
  
- Hmm, Having been an trial secretary for AAC events, I'd have to say no to this one. That adds a lot of unnecessary work for club members who already have their hands full.

- No – a trial secretary’s nightmare! Also, participants would not have a sense of timing of the day if post-entries were allowed. Impacts on running order etc. Not a fair practice for those who enter by deadline. Also, bigger risk to clubs as they may not know if they will cover their costs etc ahead of time. Makes planning much more difficult.
- I might like it as an exhibitor but as a Show Secretary, absolutely not and as a buyer of expensive potentially incomplete catalogs absolutely not. Our club is not into laptop operating show secretaries and does not have sufficient members to cope with the extra work.
- Yes think it would increase a few entries at a trial. Would make very little extra work for trial secretaries maybe more of a problem when with an all breed show
- Yes
- No
- Would you like to be allowed to post enter a trial(s) -- i.e. enter on the day up to one hour before the trial starts provided space is available? Great idea, often people enter and then can’t compete and other times don’t enter and then wish they would have. Should be for a larger fee so that most people would still preenter to save money. |Other wise it will be hard to plan schedules and book judges.
- I can see this being a secretarial nightmare as those of us who procrastinate line up just before the class begins!
- We allowed post entries years ago we seem to be going back in time. This makes for a lot of work for the Trial Secretaries. Should be a Club's choice.
- Absolutely
- That has its advantages – waiting for confirmation of title in the mail – waiting for bitch to come in season – or not.
- Yes. It worked before when we did it.
- No
- Yes x 2 – It worked back in the 70’s with Working Dog Trials held in Red Deer
- I think it would be great to be able to enter the same day of the trial.
- This is a very thoughtful and lovely idea. Yes, I would as I have arthritis and I don’t know when I can have a “healthy spree” or have my neck act up. This would also help clubs with low entries with the cost.
- My thoughts are that it is a “great for exhibitors, a nightmare for the show secretary”. United Kennel Club does accept post entries and they don’t seem to have a problem with it, however. Might make scheduling a little difficult but UKCX classes go in the same order at every trial (I believe it starts with utility)

- Undecided. I think that this is a question for the show/trial secretaries and committees. I am not sure of the logistics of this in relation to overload, etc.

## 7. EXCUSALS

A What is your opinion of a handler/dog having the option of voluntarily excusing themselves from the group stays if a non qualifying score is received during the individuals? Why?

**# of Responses – 29**  
**Yes - 16      No - 10      Other - 3**

- I believe this is an excellent idea. Dogs have bad days why make it worse practicing errors
- NOT IN FAVOR. SHOULD BE JUDGE'S DECISION.
- Yes. In addition to the comments indicated above, I also believe that this is where we loose a lot of obedience competitors. Many dogs develop problems in the group exercises and many are difficult to resolve. If a dog does not have a problem in the group exercises, why take the chance on creating one when there is absolutely no chance in qualifying. For dogs with a problem in the group exercises that the handler has been working on, again, why continue to these exercises when there is no opportunity to qualify.
- I think this is an excellent idea. It's my dog and my money. If I feel that my dog isn't as ready as I thought him to be and I fear that he's going to break his stays thereby disturbing other dogs or setting his training back, I ought to be able to "honestly" pull him instead of him developing an "upset tummy".
- If this does not become mandatory, I think it should be a voluntary option. Currently, people lie and say their dog is ill or injured – it is not worth turning people into liars to keep this exercise mandatory. Plus, maybe those who have problem dogs will see the light and pull them from the stays before they cause trouble
- Yes – as above.
- My answer will be the same for 7 A and 7 B. I think that any failed exercise should result in being excused, immediately following the exercise. It should not be viewed as punitive. It should be the Judge who informs the handler, not at handler discretion, for consistency purposes. To answer 'why' is tricky. Some would say that they paid their fee so are entitled to their time in the ring. Some would say that it is helpful to have the time/practice in the competitive ring. Ultimately, the immediate excusal by the Judge would assist in a practical way as people would know their standing (sometimes competitors stand around until the long sit/downs wondering/discussing who has qualified). It may also be practical in terms of time efficiency.

- People already do it so it might be a good thing to make it legal since there is no way of enforcing the rule. Otherwise my same comments as the involuntary excusals apply.
- This is a difficult question as it could leave only one dog in the sits and downs. However, there are no penalties to a handler who does not turn up, therefore it may be advisable to make the withdrawal official
- It is a great idea. If the dog has already not qualified why be forced to endure the pitfalls of the group exercises. Might keep a few more dogs in the Open ring longer, if not given as many chances to practise messing up the groups.
- THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA, AFTER ALL IF THEY FEEL THEIR DOG ISN'T READY AND ONE CAN'T CORRECT IN THE RING, WHY SET IT UP FOR FAILURE.
- Unsure.
- See 3 C above. With entries going up all the time, why shouldn't they have the opportunity to get some bang for their buck if they would like to continue. I would be worried of this causing more of a decline in obed entries!
- Yes. Stays can be a problem exercise for many dogs, why force them to do sits/downs when they have already failed? BUT, THIS STILL DOESN'T ADDRESS THE REAL PROBLEM WITH THE GOUP EXERCISES!
- I think this is Fabulous! The handler should have the choice because they know their dog best. The dog may not be feeling well, or may simply not be working well that day & if the handler doesn't want the dog rehearsing unsuccessful behaviours or associating bad feelings with the ring – that should be their choice.
- Definitely yes. A handler knows their dog best and can assess the impact of continuing. To force a team to participate in an exercise where the dog is essentially set-up to fail and potentially affect other teams, is unfair and very demotivating.
- Sometimes it is not to the benefit of the dog to have to stay.
- I think this is an excellent idea. For one thing, if a handler is doing more than one event at a show (say, also doing agility or conformation) it could cut down on the issue of ring conflicts. Also, if you know your dog has trouble on the stays, why put them through a situation where they can get “ring wise”?
- No. It would non-sportive like. It's a lack of respect for the judge and other handlers.
- Good idea then owners can take their dog out of a situation where the dog is stressed, also can take out dogs that owners know will probably not hold the staves.
- Sometimes it's just not working

- I do not agree with this unless the dog is totally out of control under which circumstances the judge would excuse the dog. Could again lead up to none or very few dogs doing the stay. Some handlers would use this option just to leave early.
- Absolutely. Why chance it?
- Love it! Same reasons as Page 2, first C
- No x 2 why wait until sits & downs, if you're going to excuse them, do it after the first NQ
- I think it would be fine to be able to excuse yourself from group exercises but the handler has to remember that just because they are upset you have paid your entry so take the opportunity to expose your dog to the full routine. No I don't think that the exhibitor should be able to excuse themselves as this could cause a lot of confusion and the ext exhibitor won't be able to know when they are to be ready to go in.
- I think this is extra work for everyone involved. I also feel this detracts from good sportsmanship. If 5 people fail the individuals then only 3 show up for a group stay, that defeats the purpose of group stays. Why are we wanting to compromise the integrity of the trial? We are just lowering the bar.
- No. As previously stated, I feel that the judge should excuse any team that does not qualify during the individual exercises. This should be mandatory.  
Rationale: This would improve safety by eliminating many unsteady dogs from the stay exercises. This should not be at the handler's discretion. We constantly see dogs in the ring that are not ready to be there. If the handler is foolish enough to put the dog in a trial, why would they be sensible enough to excuse themselves from the stays?

<b>B</b>	<b>What is your opinion of a handler having the option of requesting excusal immediately following ANY failed exercise? Why?</b>
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**# of Responses – 33**  
**Yes - 17 No - 7 Other - 9**

- Why not judging would be speeded up at large trials and I am sure judges are not thrill judging a dog that is not there on any given day. As a handler I would be more than happy to pull a dog that is having a really bad day.
- NOT IN FAVOR. JUDGE SHOULD DECIDE ON EXCUSALS.
- Yes and to take this even further, I think that the handler should have the option of leaving the ring at any time they wish. If a dog is having a bad day or has lost focus

even if they are qualifying, it is sometimes better to forfeit your round rather than perpetuating the behaviour. As we all know, sometimes behaviours in the ring only happen in the ring and it would be beneficial if the handler was able to stop and try again another day.

- Another option would be for the handler to be allowed to complete the exercises but be allowed to train them if desired, rather than do them formally. It is estimated that each dog in Open is allowed 7 or 8 (can't quite remember) minutes in the ring. If the handler chooses, I think that they should be allowed their ring time to train within reason of course, and leave at any time. Sometimes, this is the only way that handlers can work on and/or solve ring issues that they have. This is done in agility (particularly with NADAC) and most handlers who have particular issues are quite happy to pay their money, take the elimination and train for the time they are allowed on course. This may give people a reason to continue doing obedience, rather than giving up. I realize that this is what "fun" matches are for, but it is just not the same.
- Again, I think this is an excellent idea. I used to ride show jumpers and if you felt that something wasn't quite "right" with your horse, you could excuse from the round at any point. I don't believe that was ever abused by competitors. It's of immense benefit to a young animal or an animal who's either new to that level of competition or having some issues to be able to excuse yourself from competition and take the dog home to work on training instead of reinforcing a bad attitude. If my dog has failed an exercise, especially an early exercise like heeling, what is the benefit to anyone to have me slog through the rest of the round?
- I think it is a good exercise for the handler to keep going even when their team has failed. Make the most of the rest of your time – get your dog back in work mode or whatever. Focus on the successes in the ring. For me this is about sportsmanship. In most sports you have to continue even if things do go awry. Plus, if a team leaves the ring early, the next team up is put in a bad situation. I time my warm up and ring entry very tightly, with my dog getting out of his crate almost at the end of the previous person's routine. If they left the ring after the first exercise I would be scrambling. I think most trainers would face the same issue. It would be compounded if several people did the same thing. Ring stewards would be searching for people who thought they had more time – particularly those at the end of the class.
- Yes – I think if things are not going well and the handler feels it's in everyone's best interests they should have the option – a dog may not be quite as ready as one thinks and continuing through is not a good lesson for dog or handler.
- See 7A for answer.
- I think that would be a good thing. Sometimes the embarrassment can be a bit overwhelming. From a training point of view why go on if the round is falling apart?
- Yes. The handler should have the option of retiring a dog. The handler knows the dog and if it is having a 'bad day' continuing in the show environment could adversely affect the dog's future performances.

- It should be allowed. The handler is best equipped to judge how their dog is behaving on a given day. Why give it an opportunity to have more failures.
- My answer would be along the same lines as A. If there was a major distraction that caused the dog to not perform properly, such as equipment in the next ring crashing on them etc. I would want to haul my dog off as soon as possible.
- Another great idea. Again, the handler has paid their money, they should have control over how they chose to exercise their time in the ring. If they feel staying in the ring is only going to jeopardize their training objectives they should be allowed to leave. May keep these folks in the game longer as their dogs will not develop as many 'ring' specific behaviours.
- SAME AS ABOVE, UNLESS AT THAT POINT OF FAILURE, AND THE JUDGE AGREES THAT IT THEN BECOMES ACCEPTABLE TO ALLOW FOR ONE CORRECTION BEFORE MOVING ONTO THE NEXT EXERCISE.
- Unsure. I would say that if the dog is struggling, and that should be obvious to anyone watching, and handler makes that call, it should be allowed. Even the show jumping entries at shows like Spruce Meadows can voluntarily excuse themselves if need be. My only concern might be that trials will become more like matches.
- Definitely like this idea. The handler knows his/her dog and should be able to decide if there is a problem that would be best solved by getting the dog out of the ring without doing all the exercises. Also, the handler has paid the entry fees.
- I think this depends on the circumstance. If you go in for stays, then I think you need to do both. With the individual exercises, I think the handler should have to go through them all unless the dog is obviously uncomfortable. I would be concerned about people taking advantage & I think it is disrespectful to the judge to be leaving before it is over. Also, for people further in the running order, it would be very difficult to have your dog warmed up & ready to go at just the right time if you have no idea how long the dogs before you will be in the ring. Having said that, I think that people should have the right to not do group exercises if they have failed in the individual exercise.
- I can see why some handlers would want to do this. They can then not allow the dog to self-reinforce by getting to continue the game. This is a fairly common practice in agility. If the dog is not working, the handler can stop the game.
- Sometimes it is not in the dog's best interest. Would be time saving to the trial
- I think the handler should finish the exercises. I think that once a handler has clearly failed an exercise, they should have the option of using the remaining time in the ring as a training experience (not harsh training, or excessive), but at least make use of the ring time.
- No Same reasons as A

- Not the best idea. Dogs should complete the floor exercises so that a pattern is conditioned. I would not want my dogs figuring out that a failed exercise means that the work is over.
- Too confusing for the judge, other (next) exhibitor
- Rather than the handler having the option of requesting to be excused immediately following ANY failed exercise I would prefer that handler/dog complete all exercises but allowed to praise and encourage the dog on all the following exercises. Not training in the ring just verbal praise and encouragement.
- Sometimes it is an embarrassment to continue.
- Hmmmm. I could go either way. On one hand, if a dog is having a bad day, why keep going and conditioning these poor behaviours (I don't think a handler would pull on one failure of an otherwise working-well dog). Conversely, it would wreak havoc with the 7 dogs/hour (example) scheduling.
- Obedience is a sport. You do not leave until it is over. It would play havoc with timing of classes.
- In both cases I believe it's up to the handler. It's their money and their dog. Who am I to say they must continue?
- Yes x 2 Should improve training and speed up the trials.
- Yes to all 3 questions.
- Same as above. As well as passing, my goal is to receive the least amount of zeros. I always try to pass as many exercises as I can. This also gives a person a guideline to train. I don't agree with this option.
- Yes. The handler have the option to request excusal after any failed exercise.  
Rationale: This still allows the judge to control his ring, but gives us some control over a testing situation that may have become exceedingly stressful or frightening for the dog (or the handler)

**8. OPEN/UTILITY ORDER OF EXERCISES**

**A. Would you be in favor of having a number of different orders of exercises available in Open B for the judge to choose from randomly at the beginning of the trial? All dogs would perform the exercises in the same order for that trial.**

**# of Responses – 30  
Yes - 17 No - 11 Other - 2**

- Sounds like a good idea.
- YES.
- Yes.
- YES!! I've done Open B in the US and it really makes it a bit more interesting for all involved once you're at that point.
- Yes. I think it would make things more fun and interesting. If your dog knows the exercises it should not be any more difficult. I don't think pattern training is a legitimate argument against this change.
- I have no problem with this.
- I have not competed in Open B so do not feel qualified to answer this question.
- I really believe time is a big issue. One reason clubs prefer conformation over obedience is that it is much more profitable. Right now the order is reasonably efficient, or at least the judge can keep it that way if the judge chooses. The other problem is causing confusion for the judge. I know this sounds like I have too low of expectations, but judges already occasionally forget heel patterns and/or forget exercises. I think a standard routine allows the judge to concentrate just on judging. Mixing things up throws another thing that could cause problems. I can see the idea's merits from a creating challenge point of view, but I am not sure if it is practical.
- Yes. This would be a good challenge for the dogs.
- Yes
- NO, AS THERE ARE A LOT OF "BEGINNER" DOGS IN THE B GROUP, BELIEVE THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN OPEN C GROUP DESIGNED FOR DOGS THAT ALREADY HAVE THEIR CDX AND ARE BEING CAMPAIGNED AND AT THAT POINT, THEN HAVE A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ORDER OF EXERCISES FOR OPEN C.

- No, I like it the way it is.
- Absolutely NOT!!!! I think that GREEN DOGS NEED CONSISTENCY in order to build CONFIDENCE. If dogs keep failing, entries are going to suffer!!! Let the dog remain doing open with exercises in a non mixed up order UNTIL they TITLE, or better yet, put in a 60 day rule that they can trial for 60 days with the same order after titling, before having to do mixed up orders.
- YES, assuming all dogs would perform the exercises in the same order for that trial.
- I would like that. I think the chosen order should be posted where it can be easily seen by exhibitors.
- Yes – this would keep it more interesting for handlers and dogs and help avoid dogs becoming ring-wise. Would also discourage pattern training.
- Yes
- Yes, I think this is an excellent idea.
- Yes
- No I prefer to train in a specific order. Some dogs need that. Could be in a Open C class for dogs who have their Open B title.
- No – If it is a new dog I need the security of order, not random selection. Once in Open B, forever in Open B. Also, a novice co-owner is always in B classes.
- I like the idea of having a different order for the exercises in the OPEN B class. All dogs to perform the exercises in the same order.
- No
- Yes – love it!
- No
- No
- No x 2
- For me this would increase my stress in executing the order competently. If I'm the first dog in, I'll never remember the order.
- A & B Yes I am in favour of varying the order of exercises in Open B and Utility  
Rationale: This would increase the challenge of the sport for our dogs and us.

**B. Would you be in favor of having a number of different orders of exercises available in Utility for the judge to choose from randomly at the beginning of the trial? All dogs would perform the exercises in the same order for that trial.**

**# of Responses – 29  
Yes - 11 No - 12 Other - 6**

- NO. YES IN OTCHX, MOTCH AND GMOTCH.
- Yes.
- YES!
- Yes. Same reason as above.
- No comment.
- I have not competed in Utility, so do not feel qualified to answer.
  
- Same comments would apply as for Open. The only change for Utility is that at least the entry is smaller so I could see it being more practical.
  
- As above
- Yes.
- Yes
- FOR THE SAME REASON AS ABOVE ONLY REPLACE THE WORD CDX WITH UD
- No, I like it like it is.
- NO AGAIN! See the above response.
- YES
- I would like that. I think the chosen order should be posted where it can be easily seen by exhibitors.
- Yes, as above
- Yes
- If you split the classes into Utility A and Utility B, then yes. Otherwise, no. It would be too difficult for “novice” handlers and dogs.
- Yes

- No for the same reason as Open B.
- If utility was split, in Utility B
- The same for the UTILITY B exercises. Have a number of set patterns and judge picks the pattern for the class. All dogs do the same pattern. Only if we have a Utility B Class. Utility A should remain the same.
- No
- Yes!
- No
- No
- No x 2
- Because of the high number of failures in a class (utility) I don't think this would help the exhibitors.

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**C    Would you be in favor of splitting the utility classes into Utility A and Utility B?**

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**# of Responses – 30**  
**Yes - 17 No - 8 Other - 5**

- NO.
- Yes
- Definitely! Open A is so nice because everyone's in the same boat and you're really competing with your peers at that stage with everyone just wanting to pass. Having a new dog and new handler in Utility is even more stressful! How nice it would be to have a separate Utility class where the newbies could go do their thing together. However, like Open A, I think that once a handler gets a UD on a dog, he/she should have to be in Utility B from that point forward. Utility A should be for the "true" Utility newbies.
- Yes, but it really makes no difference to me.
- No comment.
- I have not competed in Utility so I can't specify the advantages or disadvantages.

- If we were getting large entries in the Utility classes I would favour the split. At this point the entries are too small and having tiny classes puts a burden on the clubs.
- Not sufficient experience to answer
- Yes
- Yes
- YES, MOST DEFINATELY, WHY SHOULD RANK BEGINNERS HAVE TO COMPETE WITH THOSE PEOPLE WHO OBVIOUSLY HAVE DONE THIS NUMEROUS TIME BEFORE AND THEIR DOG ALREADY HAS IT'S UD
- No, I like it like it is.
- Definitely NOT if utility B requires a mixed up order and is for people who have put an OTCH on a dog. The DOGS NEED CONSISTENCY, especially in utility so they can build confidence!!! Let them ( as in ALL DOGS) show in Utility A until they are titled, and/or introduce a 60 day rule beyond that. I have many friend competing in the States, and they are saying that the mixed up order in the B classes has caused a LOT of great dogs a LOT of problems. Some people stop participating in the sport because it is really adversely affecting the ability of their dog, and so obedience loses another participant and agility claims another.
- YES.
- No, there aren't enough people entered. & really, by the time you get that far, A & B shouldn't matter.
- Yes.
- Yes
- Yes, I think that is an excellent idea.
- Yes
- | Yes then those trying to get a |Utility don't compete with the dogs being campaigned.
- Yes
- I AM IN FAVOR OF SPLITTING THE UTILITY CLASS INTO A & B
- No
- Yes!
- No
- No

- No x We're not overburdened with utility entries
- Yes I agree with splitting the class into Utility A & B
- Yes but only if we vary the exercises as indicated in questions A & B  
 Rationale: It is already difficult for many handlers to get an OT Ch, without adding the complication of varying exercises. Open A should be for any dog that does not have a CDX and Utility A should be for any dog that does not have an OT Ch. As soon as the dog has the CDX or an OT Ch, the dog must move into the "B" classes. This is where the OT Ch Excellent, Master OT Ch and Grand Master OT Ch points will be earned.

<b>9. GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE JUDGES</b>
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<b>The Council is currently working on future changes to the <i>Guidelines for Obedience Trial Judges</i> in an effort to maintain consistency in judging, and to make the obedience ring more "user friendly" for competitors.</b>
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<b>A. Could you offer some examples of where we might concentrate when considering greater consistency in judging?</b>
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- Same ring set-up for each exercise. Same amount of points awarded or deducted, eg. straight fronts, heeling, etc. Keeping distance from the dog/handler team while judging, no need to crowd a working team.
- Perhaps more emphasis should be placed on doing the principle feature of the exercise and less on fronts finishes a sits. It seems a lot of judges only make sits in heeling and sits it the other exercise .
- THAT JUDGES BE TESTED IN AN OPEN BOOK TEST FROM TIME TO TIME.
- a judge who judges everyone on the same criteria and what happens in the ring, on that day, with that dog. Not a judge who bases their judging on WHO is on the other end of the leash, or what dog they are handling. If a judge tends to mark tough, that's fine as long as everyone is judged the same way. I've seen BIG discrepancies in scores for the same errors.
- I think this is difficult as guidelines always are interpreted in a certain manner Consistency can only come about if the rules are definite and each judge sticks to that,
- Scores should reflect the 'true' preparation and work that has gone into a dog and handlers performance.... I know judging is somewhat subjective but any judge watching a performance form outside the ring should be within I would say 2 or 3 points of the score that was given to the team by the actual Judge. Also there should be very few 190 and higher scores... lots of 170 to 180 scores and only if the class is

poorly prepared a few scores below 170. Only those teams that have truly worked hard to perfect their performance should be given as core over 190...

- The judge always takes off the same number of points for faults. I don't know if there is a guideline for judges that suggests taking off a particular number of points but if not something written and endorsed by the Council may be helpful
- I've been very happy with the overall consistency in judging I've seen in Alberta in the past 6 years.
- Heeling – what constitutes unqualified heeling? It varies too much between judges.
- Excessive help for exhibitors – I've seen instances as a ring steward and observer where the judge has gone way overboard in helping an exhibitor to qualify. Yes, novice people should not be set up to fail – but I've seen one judge kick a dumbbell in front of the jump on a crooked throw so the dog would be more likely to make the jump (this was after several re-throws that should not have been re-throws). I've also seen one judge push a dog from behind on the novice recall when the dog balked at coming in – then qualified the team! I don't think we do people any favors by qualifying dogs that should not be qualified. These same judges would not miss a bump or a crooked sit on an Open B or Utility dog.
- There are several methods of training being done now including food based, clicker as well as several other methods. While I hope that judges are judging on the execution of the exercises and not the method – I also feel that judges need to keep their preferences for training off trial premises.
- Judges preferred training method attitude should not be evident in their presentation of marks and in their judging.
- Perhaps guidelines in general dog demeanor may need to be provided for clarification – for example two teams have executed all the exercises perfectly but dog A is “serious” and executes the exercises in an almost military way while Dog B has a wagging tail and almost a bounce in his step, and mouth slightly open – as in what some might call a smile. In many cases I do not see both dogs being given equal score.
- Please have ALL Judges fill out score form with comments if points are lost on any specific exercise. This is helpful to the handler/dog. It also lets me know that the Judge is actually paying attention.
- When I match judge I find the guidelines for determining heeling deductions a bit confusing. How do you compare a dog that heels a foot back vs a dog that bounces in and out of heel position?
- Not a great deal of knowledge. The only area on which I can comment is that the marking be a bit more structured. From my limited amount of competition it would appear that some judges are more lenient and others harder when it comes to the marking. Some take half a point for an infraction and others a whole point. For handler error there seems to be a greater discrepancy.

- Education – to help judges have a more uniform interpretation of the rules and give them confidence to enforce them.
- BREED TEMPERAMENT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION, MOST OF THE HERDING GROUP DO NOT TAKE LIGHTLY TO BE FOLLOWED CLOSELY BEHIND BY THE JUDGE. IT SERVES NO POINT. AS WE ALL KNOW SOME DOGS ARE MORE WIRED THAN OTHERS TO BARK WHEN THEY ARE HAVING A GOOD TIME, AND AFTER ALL ISN'T THAT WHAT THIS SPORT IS ABOUT. I HAVE FOUND THAT THERE IS A LOT OF INCONSISTENCY WHEN IT COMES TO BARKING TO THE POINT THAT ONE JUDGE WOULD HAVE NQ'D ME EVEN IF WE HAD SUCCESSFULLY PASSED ALL THE EXERCISES. OTHERS ARE MORE UNDERSTANDING. I WOULD MUCH RATHER SEE A HAPPY DOG GOING ABOUT HIS/HER WORK IN THE RING EVEN IF IT WAS BARKING THAN WATCHING SOME SLUG BEING PULLED ABOUT KNOWING FULL WELL THAT IT TRULY DIDN'T WANT TO DO THIS JOB IT WAS BEING ASKED TO DO BUT BASED ON THE FACT THAT IT KEPT IT'S MOUTH SHUT, IT WOULD RECEIVE A HIGHER SCORE THAN THE DOG THAT BARKED WHEN IN FACT, IT WAS NOT THE BETTER WORKER. IT TRULY IS MUCH HARDER TO GET A DOG THAT IS ALLOWED TO EXPRESS ITSELF DURING AGILITY, FLY BALL OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITY, TO THEN PUT ON A DIFFERENT HAT AND SAY, NOW YOU HAVE TO BE A DIFFERENT PERSONALITY AND NOT SHOW YOUR ENTHUSIASM. I HAVE ALSO HAD JUDGES DOCK ME 2 POINTS FOR ONE TINY LITTLE WHOOF WHICH THE RULES ALLOW FOR.
- Things like barking – taking a lot of points off an exceptional working dog who gives the odd bark out of joy should not be the same as points off a dog who barks non stop due to stress. Somewhere in there, the willingness and enjoyment clause in the rule book should come into affect. Another thing that drives me nuts, are judges who have to come right up behind the dog to determine if the front is out or not. They should be able to tell without any of that! Judging should be the same for each competitor with THAT dog on THAT day. It should not come down to reputations of handlers or dogs!!!
- Every dog/handler team is judged to the same standard from the same judging perspective. There should be consistency in the judge's position in the ring for all dogs. For example, if a judges is going to walk all around one dog to score a front or finish then this must be done for all dogs in the class.
- Barking with happiness between exercises. Some judges doc points & others do not – I don't think there should be a deduction.
- Acceptable 'shifting' in long sits and downs with and without penalty, standard 'following' distance between judge and heeling team (some follow very close)
- Judging all dog/handler teams the same, regardless of breed, in each class is consistent. If judging is tougher at higher levels (ie. if lagging during heeling is punished more harshly in the Open B class vs the Novice A class) then that would be inconsistent. Also, I would like it spelled out in the rules that the judge must walk a ring steward through the heeling pattern at the beginning of each class. I have been the first in the ring when the judge refused to do this. I felt this was unfair to me as the

first competitor as each team behind me had an advantage having watched someone perform the heeling pattern. This is also inconsistent judging.

- Apply the rules as they are written. Be more précis (consensus) on what is considered a minor fault (amount of point off) and a major fault. Consistent judging for every breed of dog. Judges should give the same score for a similar routine. Now we have judges that are very strict and others that will let go minor faults. It's really unfair.
- Defining a space limit for being out of position in the heeling exercise. Some dogs are not in the heeling position for long stretches and are still passing.
- EACH DOG IN A CLASS IS JUDGED TO THE SAME STANDARDS, ALL CLASSES THAT A JUDGE SEES ARE JUDGED TO THE SAME STANDARDS AND EACH JUDGE USES THE SAME STANDARDS AS ALL THE OTHERS
- I have no complaints regarding consistency. Sometimes well known handlers get a "break"
- The Cdn Assoc of Obedience Trial judges came up with Guidelines a few years ago. I don't think we need to change or make more.
- Most judges are good
- The only suggestion I can think of is consistency in marking heeling. Sometimes the judge is too generous. Would not want identical heeling patterns or identical ring set up.
- Define heelwork. Maybe dogs should look where they are going – not wrapped around handler's leg looking up. Distorting their fronts and pacing.
- A strict guideline on what to mark a minor/substantial fault is. One judge gives 2 marks off for a no sit while another takes 3.
- - 1) Make sure ALL judges receive the Guidelines book. The new judges don't seem to be receiving it.
  - 2) Make it available (possibly online?) to exhibitors so they are aware of how the exercises are to be judged.
  - 3) Enforce the requirement that judges hand out meaningful scoresheets to exhibitors. This will make judges accountable for their scoring.
  - 4) Mandatory obedience seminars, along the lines of the advanced conformation seminars.
  - 5) One should be able to show a dog anywhere in Canada and get marked the same – no "regional" rules
- Hard one
- Judges should be happy about judging. Amount of marks deducted. Some are very hard.
- All competitors and breeds treated equal

- Keeping heeling patterns consistent for each exhibitor. That each exhibitor in a class is gen a fair test that is the same for everyone with standard deductions. Perhaps defining what is deducted for substantial or minor penalties.
- I think judging is an art not a science. How a judge perceives a performance is very personal. However, I think that the points deducted for defined faults could be more consistent.  
Heeling patterns should be more consistent. The number of sits, turns, etc. in a pattern creates more faults to be judged and inconsistencies in scores between judges.  
The Seek Back is frequently trivialized and is an exercise where there is great inconsistency in judging. Some judges give an entire heeling pattern (which must be judged). Other just have us go to the end of the ring and drop the glove. This can result in a difference of several points in Utility scores, simply because of the heeling. It also has the effect on the success of the Directed Jumping exercise because the glove has been dropped in the middle of the ring. Part of the challenge of Directed Jumping is created the previous retrieve of the glove. A grid system requiring that the glove be dropped in of of four locations would make the heeling pattern and the judging more consistent.  
There needs to be more education for judges addressing: interpretational issues, ring set up, handling (legal and illegal) rules (I swear they don't know them sometimes) canine (and human) behaviour, breed differences, structure and how it relates to performance, how to handle "issues", etc. I think this would make judging much more consistent.  
Judge should have be re-certified every five years. They should not be allowed to judge forever without proving they are still capable of it. They should have a dog in the ring occasionally (an OT Ch every ten years).

<p><b>B. Define your concept of "user friendly" judging –</b></p>
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- Setting up the ring/exercises for success. Truly enjoying judging by making friendly and light atmosphere. Judges that do not crowd the dog/handler team while working.
- After many years of trialing several judges smile and joke a bit in the ring and it helps ease tension .Would it be so bad to say how great a recall was or a wow once in a while a smile or better luck tomorrow helps the novice people. Perhaps novice judges should be just to do novice as they are heading for open and UD Some just seemed soured by how poor novice dogs are instead of encouraging them to be better After all these hopefully will be the stars of the future.
- JUDGES ATTITUDE IN THE RING. A JUDGE SHOULD BE FRIENDLY WITH A RELAXED ATTITUDED TOWARD EXHIBITORS

- A judge that makes a handler and dog feel welcome in the ring and does their best to help them qualify rather than set them up for failure.
- I am really unsure what this is about.....To me, I guess a user friendly judge is someone who makes you comfortable in the ring, that can smile and having something positive to say regardless of whether you've had a great run or a not so great run. Someone who is especially positive with the 'A' people.
- this would be a judge who would interpret in the favor of the dog rather than against
- The ring should be set up to minimize the stress to the team (dog and handler)... Excessive noise such as overhead fans, loud speakers, people hauling carts passed the ring, etc should be avoided.... The judge and steward should talk to the competitor to put them at ease (especially Novice competitors) ..... the best judges I have been under have always talked to me and reminded me to "breathe" and smile....I have too often seen the stewards totally oblivious to what is going on when they should have been asking parents to please control their kids or asking a conformation competitor outside the ring to stop throwing bait towards the ring....
- Pleasant but not chatty. Clearly open to answering questions. Moves along at a good pace and doesn't take a long time on the table either calculating scores or chatting with the ring stewards. Well organized and decisive
- My concept of "user friendly" judging involves a judge who's pleasant and not intrusive into my and my dog's space. I like a smooth heeling pattern. Novice dogs should not, in my opinion, be given a fast or a recall to the open ring gate. I like judges who don't do things like have the dumbbell thrown towards the other ring when the ring separations are not solid. Open and utility exercises should flow, ie. end one exercise and move smoothly into the next without having to hike around the ring. I like a judge who clearly marks where points are lost on the score sheet.
- A judge that is consistent regardless of breed of dog or handler in their ring. I have a non-typical obedience breed and do not want others thinking I got a higher mark because of my breed. I also don't like seeing people marked harder or easier because of 'who' they are. Most judges are great and I'm sure some inconsistencies are more perceived than real, but it still needs to be kept in mind. A judge who has manners – polite, civil and really looks like they want to be there. This includes times when handlers make mistakes – there is no need for the judge to take these things personally and yell at exhibitors for doing something that this judge doesn't approve of (e.g., body language, training in the ring). It should suffice to tell someone what they've done wrong, mark the score sheet appropriately, but no 'attitude' is needed when doing so. Maybe some exhibitors do things on purpose to see if they can get away with it, but most make mistakes because their nerves have gotten the better of them. It doesn't help when a judge implies something more and make a scene of it. Again – most judges are great. It is the minority that seem to forget that exhibitors make mistakes that are not challenges to the judge's authority.
- User friendly implies to me that the judge is helpful and supportive – glad you are there and competing – in some cases the attitude is very businesslike yet not necessarily professional. Some might say even critical and opinionated. As a sport and the many characteristics of a sport are not always viewed as such by a judge. We

all have good and bad days including judges, competitors and even the dog. Judges should be reasonably approachable.

- Some one who appears as if they are actually enjoying themselves. Dogs are expected not to snarl.....Judges shouldn't either. I don't like it when a Judge is 3ft from me in the ring following me around.
- To me "user friendly" comes from attitude. A judge that enjoys judging, welcomes competitors into the ring, and doesn't take competition too seriously is user friendly. Still I know chatter can annoy the serious competitors that come back time and time again, so I don't think you can make everyone happy. Possibly the question becomes how can we ease people into competing, and maybe the fault lies in the lack of PR obedience people do for their sport. Educated and prepared competitors can deal with a serious judge, that someone who is not prepared could not deal with. Maybe there needs to be more guidelines for the Novice A class for explaining what is going on. While it has been a long time since I first entered Novice A, recently I entered my first agility trial. I found it rather scary. Understanding ring stewards help a lot. Right now I am considering entering an AAC agility trial, and more than worrying about how my dog is going to screw up, I am wondering what social norm I am going to break and get barked at by an organizer. I think we have to be careful of trying to please everyone, because you end up pleasing no one. Some people love the challenge of obedience and many do not. For those who do not, then there is always agility and rally.
- A judge that makes me feel comfortable in the ring. Clearly informs me of their requests and the exercises. I particularly appreciated a judge who informed me of the nature my handler error as I was able to correct it for the next trial. If you just fail one exercise and the dog has worked really well it is comforting to have the judge tell you that your dog was working well with that one exception.
- Pleasant, business like manner. Pleasant and smiling helps exhibitors feel comfortable while they are in the ring regardless of their performance. Business like ensures the ring moves efficiently, which facilitates maximum performances of the handler/dog teams.
- MOST OF THE JUDGES THAT I HAVE HAD TO GOOD FORTUNE TO TRIAL UNDER BOTH IN ONTARIO AND NOW ON THE ISLAND HAVE BEEN VERY DECENT, THERE HAVE ONLY BEEN A COUPLE OF SOUR NOTES AND THAT'S DUE TO INCONSISTENCY IN THEIR OPINION ON DOGS BARKING DURING THE ROUTINE. THOUGH I DID HAVE ONE JUDGE THAT COMPLETELY THRU ME IN UTILITY, WHEN I WAS NOT ASKED AT ALL 'ARE YOU READY' PRIOR TO EACH EXERCISE. I WAS NEW THE UTILITY BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT BEFORE EACH EXERCISE, THIS QUESTION IS MANDATORY AND IT REALLY THRU ME OFF MY GAME.
- Someone who makes you feel comfortable in the ring, who can smile and who has something positive to say after a performance regardless of how good or bad it was. Someone who is patient and kind with the 'A' handlers.
- Trying to make the exhibitor comfortable. Good, efficient flow throughout the patterns of each exercise and between exercises too. Friendly judges, but not too "chatty".

- Someone who is pleasant and welcoming speaks loudly and clearly during exercises. marks fairly but clearly wants people to succeed. when doing ribbons, is friendly with the audience. runs an efficient ring
- It has more to do with attitude of judge than actual judging. To me, a user-friendly judge is consistent in judging (ie: clear definition of heel position) and has a relaxed demeanor in the ring. Tries to make competitors feel comfortable, is open to request for excusal etc. Mike Calhoun offers the 'ultimate' personality for a user-friendly judge – competitors love him because he is personable, approachable, loves the sport and hopes teams do well.
- Judges that make the exhibitor feel at ease whether they pass or fail. Sometimes dogs just aren't ready that day or the handler is very inexperienced and just needs some positive reinforcement..
- User friendly is when the judge is easy to understand (speaks loudly and clearly) and score sheets are clearly marked.
- A judge that is friendly and fair. Somebody who wants the team to succeed, but isn't going to "give away" points either. A judge that actually enjoys what they're doing. And finally, a judge that gives some feedback at the end of the performance. More than just "Good job" or whatever – either something the team did really well, or an area that could be improved (idealistic, aren't I?)
- Define your concept of "user friendly" judging
- Judges should appease and welcome the handler. After the routine the judge should comment and give out tips to help the handler. If the dog doesn't do the exercise we should be able to complete the exercise and we should be able to give a second comment. Be able to encourage and praise the dog between exercises. In classes, instructors should talk about what to expect and how to act in the ring. This would make the handler less nervous to go in the ring.
- Defining clearly what is the dog has to do to pass an exercise.
- A judge that just does the work – socialize later
- Obedience is a sport made up of mainly people who have one maybe two dogs that are household pets.. Lets put these people at ease when they enter the ring. Talk to the exhibitor and ask if they have any questions. It is not a life and death situation . there is always another trial. Try to encourage those that fail and point out the strong points of the dog.
- Leave it. It's currently very professional
- I believe that the obedience ring is much more user friendly than it was 30-40 years ago. Judge now are (mostly) friendly, warm and really want you to pass.
- Mr. Calhoun --- !

- As a competitor it would be nice to know no matter who is judging I'd get the same mark off for a not sit, for example.
- Have no idea what this means! Are exhibitors confusing obedience with agility ring, where retrieves and extra commands are permitted?
- A judge who is professional and happy to be in this role. One who is competent and fair.
- A request to be excused be automatically granted and not questioned.
- Routines/patterns set up to give all dogs a fair chance to pass.
- Judge teamwork and obedience response, not just sits. I worry about "user friendly". Don't let it mean a reduction of standards. Please read Doug Coulter's column in the June 05 Front and Finish. I believe Diane Bauman is right on the mark.

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## **10. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER CHANGES**

### **In your opinion, what other areas are in need of change?**

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- Should be allowed to verbally and physically praise your dog more inbetween exercises. I would like to see obedience be more flashy and exciting with a more happy light atmosphere. Don't penalize dogs for the occasional happy exciting bark in the ring....I think this is awesome as it shows a happy working dog.
- Some where along the way the 170+ scores became awful instead of being 170 out of 200 it is considered just barely passing perhaps we could look at this at a percentage for giving our scores so while the score is still the score the judge could say this dog earned 80% rather than making the lower scores feel so bad whispering 170.5 saying 80% sounds so much better while changing nothing. Perhaps making a bigger emphasis on new leg or title may also help and the attitude of ring stewards and judges and the pro trainers should be encouraging to all . Perhaps too much emphasize on qualifying and not enough on enjoying your dog
- HOUSEKEEPING (Brought to my attention by Joe Pownall)
 

According to rule 15.3.7 - Unofficial Graduate Open  
Delete first two lines? Dog and handler are already in the ring.  
According to rule 10.5.1 - All Open class are done off leash.

According to rule 8.13.1 - Training in the ring not permitted.  
What would be the penalty to the exhibitor?
- I would like to see the broad jump exercise changed so that the dog is not required to do the sharp turn to the right each and every time. Perhaps it could be mixed up so that sometimes the dog goes

to the left, sometimes to the right, sometimes straight across, etc. It could be left up to the judge to decide how it will be for all dogs that day.

- I would have to say that in my opinion, the open group sits/downs are the big thing. These really must be changed to a new SAFER format ASAP!

The other change I would like to comment on, is regarding the possible change to utility by bringing in an A and B class, and a mixed up order. I think that the A classes should be as they are now – for everyone with a green utility dog. The dog s/b allowed to remain in these classes without any mixed up order until they have gotten their title. Once they have titled, they can move to the B classes, where a mixed up order occurs. I have many friends in the U.S. who compete in areas where the competition is really tough. They have stated to me, that they are seeing very nice dogs, go down the tubes when they have to compete in the mixed up order. Not so much in open, but definitely as green utility dogs. The result is a drop in obedience entries because people don't want to continue to try to work with a dog that is obviously struggling with the mixed up order, and feel their money is better spent in something that they and their dogs can enjoy, like agility. I would say that if this is being considered in Canada, that right from the get go, we should give the DOGS a break for a change, and allow them to get consistent and develop some confidence in utility by having the order stay the way it is now until they at least have a UD under their belts.

That being said, I'm also fine with utility if it stayed the way it is now!

- Consideration similar to akc for lowering jump heights for some of the larger breeds. Is it really necessary for a big dog to have to prove they can jump high or is the fact that they accomplish what the actual exercise is, ie directed jumping.
- More training for stewards..... Stricter application to the rules for excusing dogs not under control in the off leash exercises (healing and recall)
- Included in my comments already.
- I would like to see an equipment requirement that the rings be made up of something that extends down to the floor. I used to trial a sheltie and at one set of trials, the ring separation was a rope tied to the top of pylons. My sheltie had no concept of where his ring ended and invariably ended up in the other ring looking for his glove. As well, this type of ring set up really invited dogs to come into other rings for their dumbbells or to otherwise interfere with dogs in the other ring. I would also like to see it mandated that judges provide clear comments for what they are marking on their score sheets. Most judges do this but some don't. It can be frustrating to think that you had a very good round and see a substantial deduction for something that you have no idea about. Often the judges don't remember what they pointed by the end of the class. I'd like to know what happened so I can try to work on the problem.
- Availability of rule books – they are sold quickly at a show and we're always told – order direct from CKC which – of course – takes a bit of time – and the one time I ordered direct from CKC – they sent me the previous version! Or possibly a book could be publicly (perhaps tied to the table) made available. Or even better a summary of the rules for a particular level – for example the new Novice competitor could pick up the sheet for novice and review the rules. Rules could be posted/available near ringside for reference.

- This comment is not related to technical changes, but more to attitude, stress both for handler and dog. What I am about to say is also not at all a criticism, only an observation.....I think that professional trainers could teach more about stress in the ring as related to handlers, but also the dog....what to look for and how to deal with it. It appears that because it is a competitive sport every edge counts but at what cost to the dog. If in the sit/down line up a dog is stressed because of disappointing marks in the earlier exercises and maybe the trainer has responded to the dog in a negative manner, and my dog is sitting beside it, I know that my dog is sensitive enough to pick up on that dog's energy, so to speak, and my dog acts accordingly, for example goes down on the sit. Yes we need to proof our dogs, however if we as people encounter a negative situation, more than not we can excuse ourselves. But what does the dog do?
- Since we only do two dumbbells anyway, we should take out the wooden articles, and just have metal and leather. I think that will make us consistent with the AKC. The advantage is speeding up the class, and I don't think it will take down the challenge that much. The leather and the metal articles are the more challenging articles to do.
- Is there a reason for having people as posts in the figure eight? If the purpose is to see the dog speed up and slow down to keep with the handler this could be achieved just as well with standards. If is to see the dog perform the exercise ignoring the people then it should remain with stewards as posts..
- Handler position on the broad jump as in the current novice intermediate class and have the dog return to the handler from either the right or the left being the judge's discretion of the day. More challenging heeling be required of the Open and Utility classes. left about turns, side stepping, dropping or sitting dog from heel. Handler keeps moving a few paces, calls dog into heel drop or sot dog from heel, handler walks around the ring and picks the dog up in heel position as they walk past the dog. halts and turns from slow and fast paces
- CLUBS NEED TO ENSURE THAT VENUES ARE BOOKED IN WRITING AND CONFIRMED PRIOR TO SENDING IN THEIR EVENT REQUEST FORM, AND YET AGAIN PRIOR TO PRINTING THE PREMIUM LIST. IN CASES WHERE VENUES ARE CHANGED AT THE LAST MINUTE, REGARDLESS OF REASONS, ENTRANTS SHOULD BE CONTACTED TO ENSURE THE NEW VENUE IS ACCEPTABLE AND IF NOT THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN THE CHOICE OF A REFUND IN FULL, OR IF POSSIBLE, SUBSTITUTING ANOTHER DOG IN THAT CLASS OR ANOTHER CLASS, AND IF IN FACT THE CKC ALLOWS FOR DOGS TO BE POST ENTERED THEN THE SUBSTITUTION OF ANOTHER DOG WOULD BECOME A MUTE POINT. AT THIS POINT IN TIME THERE ARE NO RULES GOVERNING THIS CHANGES IN VENUE. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED UNACCOMPANIED INTO THE TRIAL PRECINCTS AS THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY INCIDENTS OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR. THIS HAPPENS A LOT AT POINT SHOWS WHERE WHO KNOWS WHERE THE PARENTS ARE BUT THEIR KIDS ARE ALLOWED TO GET INTO A LOT OF MISCHIEF AT THE EXPENSE OF THE COMPETITORS IN THE RING. I AM AWARE OF AN INCIDENCE WHERE A CHILD WAS USING A PEA SHOOTER AT DOGS IN AN OPEN GROUP EXERCISE AND EVEN THOUGH THE STEWART WAS ADVISED, NOTHING WAS DONE AND DOGS FAILED THEIR GROUP SIT WHEN HIT WITH THE PEA AND THE CHILD WAS FINALLY HINDERED FROM CONTINUING HIS ACTIONS WHEN

BYSTANDERS WHO HAD WITNESSED THE ASSAULT, STOOD IN FRONT OF THE OFFENDER TO PREVENT HIS FROM CONTINUING. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT WHEN DOGS ARE DISTRACTED BY BIRDS WHO LIVE IN THE BUILDINGS WHERE THE TRIALS ARE BEING HELD, WHEN THE BIRDS LAND RIGHT AT THEIR FEET, THEN CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ALLOW THAT DOG TO REDO THAT PARTICULAR EXERCISE IF THEY HAVE FAILED DUE TO EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES. THERE SHOULD BE A 3 FOOT DEAD SPACE BETWEEN THE RING AND THE OBSERVATION CHAIRS TO ENSURE OTHER COMPETITORS KEEP THEIR DOGS FROM INTERFERING WITH THE DOG IN THE RING AND THERE SHOULD BE A NO PEOPLE FOOD RULE IN THE FRONT ROW. I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT MOST COMPETITORS WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING DETRIMENTAL TOWARDS THE COMPETITOR IN THE RING, THOUGH SOMETIMES, ONE HAS TO WONDER.

- I don't think that the novice A and the Novice B stays should ever be put together. This is unfair for the Novice B handles and dogs. The same goes for Open A and Open B. I don't agree that the ring is held back for a participant that is showing a totally different dog in the conformation ring.....very inconsiderate of the other obedience exhibitors.
- As already stated, GROUP STAYS need to be formatted differently to be safer for our dogs. I would also like to see more clubs request the HIT dog to do a demo after presentations are over.
- We would like to see handler's allowed to encourage and praise their dogs more effusively between exercises. In other words, breaking up the 'robotic' requirements of allowing "a word of praise" in the ring. No need to have 3 types of articles in Utility. Add a Utility B class. Judges must title a dog at least every 5 years to maintain their judging license.
- While using signals to handlers in the ring, judges MUST be aware of every movement made that handlers could interpret as a signal.
- Seek Back in Utility: Replace it with an exercise that is more interesting and challenging. Right now it's pretty much a "gimmie" exercise – nowhere near the same level of challenge as other utility exercises. The U.S. Directed Retrieve is fun to teach and despite many people expressing concerns about copying the U.S we have already 'copied' them in virtually everything else in our obedience rings. The similarity is what makes it realistic for people to go to the States and enter at special events such as a National Specialty even though that may be their only time going south of the border to compete.  
Replacing our Seek Back with a Directed Retrieve would remove the second heeling exercise in Utility (dogs have already done lots of heeling in lower levels of competition) and would take less time to judge. It is also a fun exercise for the dogs to do.
- I think there are some old judges who haven't competed themselves in forever & forget what it's actually like to train & compete. I think there should be some stipulation of being 'current'. (Even if judges are required to have competed within the past 5 years, that would help.)

- Run-offs: They should always be off leash healing for everyone. Even Novice dogs have off leash healing in their independent exercises. The second-to-go dog should be allowed to wait outside the ring where they can continue to work with/warm-up their dog.
- Consider opening Obedience and other performance events to non-CKC breeds and/or mixes. Participation would likely increase.
- Encourage praise and/or play between exercises.
- None at this time.
- I think more effort has to be put into recruiting people into obedience at the Novice A level. Once people hit the “B” classes, they are usually already hooked and willing to continue. When I took my last set of puppy socialization classes, the instructor didn’t even mention competitive obedience as a possibility, and we had several purebred dogs in the class. I know it’s not for everybody, but unless people know it’s out there, they can’t try it.
- Have Open C class : This would be for UD dogs that wish to continue on trailing. I would like to see a fence, a rope or something like it that would keep the spectators 3 or 4 feet away from the ring.
- Post entries could help entries a lot. I’m not sure how you would do it but having incentives for Novice A people to enter obedience.
- Having discounts for people who show in obedience and confirmation, special awards for dogs with titles at both ends.
- We would like to propose that the Open Broad Jump Exercise be changed so it would be like the exercise currently described in the Intermediate class. We propose this primarily for the safety of the dog as this allows the dog to continue in a straight line for a stride or two after landing from the jump, rather than the current Open exercise where the dog must turn immediately after landing from the jump. Dogs frequently slip and sometimes fall when executing this part of the current exercise.
- Mandatory check in & organization of class BEFORE the first dog in that class goes in. Conflicts and Absences should be resolved before the class begins.
- Open Long Sit and Down overall are pretty good.
- Obedience is too sterile and boring. Perhaps we should allow praise during exercises and more “whooping it up” in the ring. Right now, there is nothing in it for the dog. If the handlers could be more emotional, then perhaps we would see less of these “extreme” temperaments necessary to stay “up” through 6 or 7 exercises.
- A big step would be to improve stewarding. There has been a big change in recent years. When I was judging most stewards were local obedience people – often instructors and they were a great help. Present day with few exceptions need training.
- Consistency in judging is the big one for me.

- Only typos or errors in rulebook. There should be a moratorium on NEW rules for 2-3 years, let the dust settle.  
Respondent "A" – I recently saw a judge have the ring steward transfer exercise totals from his worksheets to another scoresheet which was given to exhibitors while retaining the originals. No other information was provided. The exhibitors can get this information from the posted copy of the judge's book. This was not the intent of rule change (8.10.1) to provide meaningful marked scoresheets.
- One comment that I would like to make is as follows: My concern with obedience trials has been that this is the only CKC event that once you go into the ring you have to be so precise and show no emotion. Conformation you can bait with food, use your voice to get your dog up. Then there is agility. What a great way to have fun with your dog. Calling and running and coaxing and motivating. Yahoo! How that there is Rally O too and Freestyle how great are these? We need to make obedience fun also and not so competitive.
- Some judges have a personal policy of judging and how often close to an area – i.e. only one trial in Alberta in a year. Others will do 2 Edmonton shows within 3 month period. This can lower entries for the second assignment.
- Most of the exercises are still relevant but out of sight work has no place in today's society.
- Perhaps a split in utility might be good to give new showers an equal chance at placing against dog who already have an OT Ch i.e. utility A for dogs going for UD/OT Ch and utility B for dogs going for higher titles, ex: G MOT Ch. Same kind of split for open – Open A as it is now ie green dog/green handler Open B for dogs handled by people who have put an OT Ch on previous dog i.e. green dog/experienced handler and Open C for campaigning dogs going for M OT Ch, etc. i.e. seasoned dog/experienced handler.

**NO COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE PROVIDED –  
BUT RATHER SUBMITTED COMMENTS ON ONLY SPECIFIC ITEM (S):**

RE:OPEN GROUP STAY EXERCISES

Before any changes are made to the performance of these exercise perhaps some consideration should be given to the regulations/ rules as they currently read; and the direct impact or contradictions they would have on any negative situations that could arise from the manner in which Open Stays are currently performed.

6.4 Dogs Must Compete

6.4.1 “Any dog entered and received at an obedience trial must compete in all exercises of all classes in which it is entered,”

My understanding of this rule as it applies to the open group exercises is that a dog must compete in the Open Stays if it has been entered in the Open A or Open B class.

8.2 Disqualification & Reinstatement of A Dog.

8.2.5 “All persons must exercise care and control of any dog in their possession while attending an event.”

The way this rule currently reads raises some very serious concerns for “all” the parties involved. If there was any type of negative situation or altercation during the performance of an open group exercise who would be deemed to have the dog in their possession? Who is responsible for the care and control of the dogs while performing an open group exercises? And more importantly what are the legalities and liabilities in regards to this exercise?

An exhibitor would surely argue that in order to comply with 6.4.1, there ability to comply with 8.2.5 was directly effected and manipulated; by the physical removal of the handler/owner during this exercise they no longer had physical care and control of the dog or more importantly the physical possession.

1. Is the Trial giving club then responsible for the dogs performing a group stay exercise where handlers have been removed?
2. Are the Judges, Stewards and Show Officials responsible?
3. What obligations and responsibilities do we have to a spectator if they were to become involved in some way?
4. Is the Canadian Kennel Club responsible? (In asking this I am assuming everyone has read pages 94 & 95 of the 2005 Rule book as they relate to 21 Participation and 22 No Liability)

No matter what changes result from this invitation for comment I hope we can resolve some of the contradictions between the rules/regs and the current manner in which this exercise is conducted. These are just two of the current rules/regs that came to my mind, but it will be interesting to see if any other contradictions between the rules /regs and the performance of these exercises will be identified.

1. If the performance of the exercises remain unchanged - then I would hope the rules and regulations will be changed to clarify responsibility and possession of the dog during open group exercises.
2. If the exercise is changed in some way – the way in which the exercise is performed will comply with 8.2.5 and all of the other present rules/regs.