

UKA Rules & Regulations 2017 Summary of Amendments and Clarifications

UKA Rules & Regulations 2017 will shortly be released and available on the UK Agility Web Page.

The main rule changes for 2017 are stated below.

Jump Heights

- Maxi and Standard jump heights have been reduced by five centimetres (5cm). Maxi jump height will now be at 600mm and Standard 500mm. All other jumping obstacles have been reduced in line with this change
- The maximum lengths of ascending spreads have been reduced and measuring instructions are now included

Minimum and Maximum Distances

- In compliance with recent research that suggests that a five metre (5m) minimum distance between obstacles will reduce the risk of injuries to dogs, this minimum distance will now be mandatory in all classes including set sequences in Games
- With the belief that longer distances between obstacles result in greater speeds and may therefore increase injury risk due to impact and tight turns, and to fall in line with worldwide trends in course design, a maximum distance has also been introduced:
 - In Jumping, Agility, Power and Speed and Time, Fault and Out classes, the maximum distance will be eight metres (8m) between obstacles. Out of tunnel exits the distance to the next obstacle may be ten metres (10m)
 - In the Snooker closing and set "gamble" in Gamblers, the maximum distance is 10m
 - In the Steeplechase class the maximum distance is 10m
- In the Snooker opening, Gamblers opening, and Snakes and Ladders these minimum and maximum distances do not apply as handlers devise their own courses
- Minimum and maximum distances will be measured on the perceived line of the dog by the judge. Judges are therefore encouraged to measure the course twice. The centre to centre method will still be used to calculate course times. Measuring a dog's perceived line will ensure courses are within the minimum and maximum distance

Equipment Specs

- The collapsible tunnel and table have been removed from the equipment list
- 3 metre pipe tunnels are now included in the equipment list to help with diversity in course design and are to be used where, in the past, a judge would have used a collapsible tunnel
- Pipe tunnels may only be curved if the tunnel is at least 4.8 metres long. 3 and 4 metre long tunnel pipes must be used in a straight line
- S-shape pipe tunnels are not allowed

- It has not become a mandatory regulation but the following has been added to pipe tunnel specifications
 - Show Managers and equipment suppliers are encouraged to use tunnels made from light colours
- Seesaw tipping weight has been clarified
- Seesaw central bracket height range has been removed, with the height now stated as 610mm
- There is now clarification that the tyre should be taken in a straight line approach for the dog
- There is now clarification that spreads must have an approach angle of no more than 45 degrees

NFC

- Competitors cannot run not for competition (NFC) in any Masters class
- For health and safety reasons, equipment cannot be altered by a competitor running NFC. This includes putting something on, in, over or under a piece of equipment.

Start Lines

- Dogs must start within the ring rope. Failure to do so will result in an elimination.
- Handlers may start their dog from the other side of the start jump if they so choose

Games Clarifications

- Running past the start jump and taking another piece of equipment will result in elimination and game over
- Taking the start jump again in Snooker will be time wasting but not faulted
- In Snooker, faulting a colour or in a combination but then completing or reattempting the obstacles is time wasting but not faulted
- In Power and Speed the Power section is measured from the centre of the first obstacle to the centre of the first obstacle on the Speed section
- The rules concerning a dog taking consecutive contacts/weaves in Gamblers have been clarified

Heat Rules

- The 3 metre straight pipe tunnel and ascending spread are now mandatory pieces of equipment in both Masters classes
- Dogs showing any form of aggression or chasing an opponent in the Circular KO will be eliminated and dismissed from the event
- A dog may only run in one height in the Circular KO at a show even if different heights run on different days
- Any dog qualifying for the Grand Finals that was due a measure when they ran will lose their place if the subsequent measure moves them into a higher height category

Course Approval

- Competitors have the right to request sight of course approval forms
- Any changes from the approved course must be made in agreement with the Show Manager

Collars

- Dogs may wear a 2nd collar if it is needed for veterinary treatment and complies with the collar rules, e.g.. a flea collar

Handlers Delaying Progression from the Novice Performance Programme

- To counteract the issue of handlers staying in a lower level by not competing in a specific class in order to gain points for leagues or to qualify for lower level finals, the following rule has been introduced
 - Once a dog has achieved 36 points in a particular Novice class but does not have the other requirements to move up, they must run NFC in the class where they have achieved 36 points

Refusals on Contacts and Tunnels

- In the refusal guidelines for contacts and tunnels it has been clarified that a dog may stop or even reverse without fault. However, if a dog turns 180 degrees before the refusal point on a contact, a refusal will be called

Smoking

- On request from many competitors smoking is prohibited within 5 metres of a ring entrance or exit

Judges

- An additional sentence has been added stating the judge's decision is final but a competitor may ask for clarification on the rule by which they have been faulted. Video evidence cannot be used to ask a judge to overturn a decision
- The following has been added to judges responsibilities; Ensure ring ropes/boundaries are kept in place

Course Design

- An obstacle may not be used more than 3 times in a course with the exception of a pipe tunnel
- Start and finish jumps in all classes must be placed a minimum of 5 metres from the ring boundary

Formal Complaints

- A Show Manager, Show Secretary, or judge may make a formal complaint to UK Agility without the required fee
- The following has been added to the list of offences for which a handler can be reported;
 - Using social media to impugn or undermine a judge's decision or to bring the name of UKA into disrepute

Timing

- A handler stopping the timing either deliberately or accidentally will incur an elimination

Dog Aggression to Handler

- The rule addressing signs of aggression in the dog now contains the words "including biting handler"

For further information please see the 2017 Rule Book.

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