

# Dogs Victoria

# Show Stewards Guide

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# **Show Stewards Guide**

## **Introduction**

Stewards form a very important part of the team of officials at shows. This team will include the judge(s), ticket writers and the committee of the club conducting the fixture. It is important, therefore, that people engaged to act as stewards do so in a competent and professional manner.

## **Qualities of a Steward**

A steward must have a pleasant disposition and be presentable in the ring. The person must of necessity, be able to get along with a variety of people. Many exhibitors will be asking the stewards to answer a variety of questions, some of which may seem to the steward to be very basic. Remember, however, that the person asking the question may be a novice exhibitor who is seeking your assistance in learning what is to be done in the ring.

A steward is to assist fellow stewards, judges, exhibitors, the club and its officials alike without prejudice.

A steward must be able to keep confidential any conversations that they have with the judge unless the matter being discussed becomes the subject of a Dogs Victoria investigation (as in the case of aggressive dogs or exhibitors dismissed from a ring for disruptive behaviour etc).

A steward must have a competent knowledge of the rules and regulations as they pertain to shows.

A steward should be able to sort out some problems.

## **Personal Equipment and Appearance of a Dog Steward**

### **Essential Items**

- neat clothing
- suitable footwear
- hat
- sunblock
- wet weather gear
- pens

### **Optional Items**

- bulldog clips
- drink container
- a small carry all to hold your equipment

Regarding the appearance, please remember that stewards are not only representing themselves in a judging ring, but they are representing the club and Dogs Victoria. This is particularly important where clubs are engaging overseas judges to officiate at their shows.

You should also keep in mind the damage that the sun and wind can do to our skin even on a cloudy day in summer and to that end, hat and sunscreen should be considered essential items.

## **Engaging a Steward**

In normal circumstances, you will be telephoned by the club concerned to see if you are available to work. If, after consulting your diary you decide to accept the invitation, ask the club to confirm the appointment by forwarding a work sheet for the show. It is important that this be done, as there have been cases where two people in the club have undertaken the task of engaging show officials and in doing so, double booked stewards and ticket writers.

The work sheet should contain details of the group you are stewarding for, number of exhibits, your judge and ticket writer (if applicable). The work sheet should also advise you of the time you are expected to arrive and the starting time of judging and any special classes you will be stewarding for.

It is usual that stewards will be provided with lunch at all day shows where they are working and in normal circumstances, they will also be provided with an early morning cup of tea and morning tea.

### **Duties on Show Day**

It is your responsibility to arrive at the venue at the time requested by the club. If you wish to arrive earlier than the time stipulated, that will be your choice. In any case, you must ensure that you leave home at a time that will allow you adequate travelling time at a comfortable speed.

If you are likely to travel long distances to some shows, consider asking if there is a contact telephone number at the venue. This is because if you are delayed by traffic, weather conditions etc. which are beyond your control, you can contact the club and advise them of the situation.

On your arrival at the show, you should seek out the club's secretary, show secretary or show manager and advise them of your arrival. The official will either introduce you to your judge and other ring officials, or if you know the judge personally, you may do this yourself. You will then ensure that your judge has, or does sign all the best of breed and challenge certificates and judging sheets (if tablets are not being used).

At this time, you can discuss with the judge what they expect of you in the ring. That is to say, does the judge have any special requests/requirements as to procedure (e.g. do they wish to hand the place ribbons to the exhibitors or do they require you to do this). Remember that judges must hand challenge and best of breed ribbons/sashes etc. to exhibitors.

You should also check to ensure that there is an adequate supply of place ribbons, challenge and best of breed ribbons. It is advisable to determine whether there are any special ribbons or sashes that are to be presented and make sure that you have them when you go to the ring. It is also advisable for you to determine if you are expected to take the in group sashes and trophies/cash with you or whether a member of the committee will be attending to this task (it is usually the later).

Another essential piece of information that you need to know is the time the club expects your judge to break for lunch etc. If you do not keep to the club's timing, then the whole of the show's timing is put out of place.

### **Duties in the Show Ring**

It is your responsibility to ensure that the judge is at the appropriate ring to commence judging at the stipulated time. Ensure that you take water for your judge and yourself.

On arrival at the ring, you should verify with the judge as to the location that he requires the examination table and where the exhibitors are to proceed to once they enter the ring. Does

the judge want the exhibits to go straight to the table of stipulated place for examination or are the exhibits required to complete a circuit of the ring before being physically examined.

It is common practice for the ring steward to mark the judge's book/sheets and be responsible for them. The only exception is at an open show/parade where the judge has to mark that award if the judge does not hold a championship licence.

As you are an experienced steward your advice as to where the judge could be situated for the best advantage may be helpful. For example, try to ensure that the judge has his/her back to the sun during the physical examination and when the judge is looking at the stationary exhibits prior to placing them.

Does the judge want the next class to be formed up in the ring (if there is no clearly defined assembly area) just prior to the completion of the examination of the current class? If so, ensure that there is adequate room to accommodate this to avoid any confrontation or confusion between animals that are being judged or as they enter/leave the ring.

### **Commencement of Judging**

Once you have ascertained the requirements of the judge for these procedures, ensure that you remember them so that you can advise the exhibitors once they enter the ring. If you are giving instructions to the exhibitors on behalf of the judge (e.g. once or twice around the ring then first dog set up in front of the table), make sure that you can be heard and understood by each of the exhibitors.

Before the judging actually starts, introduce the judge to the exhibitors.

At the start of judging, announce clearly and in a loud voice that it is the start of judging for the particular group and call for the first breed to be at the assembly area. Again, announce the first breed and the first class then call the relevant exhibit numbers in a loud and clear voice. Remember that the previous class must be complete and each exhibit in the next class must be called at least three times before the steward can declare it absent. It is sufficient for the Ensure that the judges sheet (tablet) is clearly marked with the absentees (e.g. the letter **A** beside their number and preferably a line through the exhibit number).

The steward will ensure that the exhibit number worn by each exhibitor entering the ring is the correct one for the class. If time permits, check that exhibitors who have an entry in the next class have it ready at ringside.

Once the class has been handed over to the judge by the ring steward (who has announced "This is your intermediate bitch class" or similar), no other exhibit can enter the ring and compete.

For in-group and in-show classes, judging officially does not commence until the last exhibit has entered the ring and the steward has advised the judge (e.g. "All your best of breeds are now in the ring" or similar).

Following the judge's decision, announce in a loud clear voice the exhibit number and placing. Ensure that you have entered the correct placing's against the correct exhibit numbers. It is very embarrassing for you if you do make a mistake no matter how innocent it may be. Having said this, we all do make mistakes from time to time and hopefully the judge and exhibitors will keep this in mind.

At the conclusion of judging of all classes in a particular sex, ensure that you have every unbeaten class winner (except baby puppy) ready for judging of the challenge (or best dog/bitch in the case of an open show). Remember that if an exhibit has been entered in more

than one class, it must win each class it is entered in to be eligible to compete for challenge / best dog or bitch. Clearly mark the challenge winner, call in the second place dog of the class from which the winner came and then mark in the reserve dog/bitch as per the judge's decision. Ensure that the appropriate number of challenge points is entered in the relevant space on the judge's sheet or tablet.

Follow the same procedure for the bitches.

For best of breed, have both the challenge dog and challenge bitch in the ring for the judge's decision and have the reserve for each waiting outside of the ring.

Mark the judge's sheets with the winning exhibit for each relevant class (i.e. best open, intermediate etc). Keep in mind that the best of breed is automatically the winner for its class and if runner up to best of breed is from a different class, then it is automatically the winner of its class.

For the remainder of the classes, there will be a "**RUN OFF**" of the dog vs the bitch with the winner's exhibit number entered in the appropriate space on the judge's breed sheet and also on the judge's group sheet or tablet.

You must be aware that there will be a number of exhibitors that will be showing a number of dogs and will need to change their exhibits between classes. You should try and place a small dot/mark on the judge's sheet against the exhibit numbers for which this will occur. The exhibitors cannot, however, cause undue delay of the judging of the next class and if they should try and do this, they should be warned that they risk being declared absent if they do not enter the ring at the appropriate time.

It is the exhibitor's responsibility to have the correct exhibit in the assembly area when needed.

If at any time there is to be a break in judging, then you must announce this and the length of break to the exhibitors.

It is most essential that stewards do not allow exhibitors to enter a ring with an incorrect number or no number displayed. Challenge the exhibitor and sort out the discrepancy prior to them entering the ring.

### **Judging for the Group Awards**

Prior to the judging of the group, the ring steward must state the group judging will take place in however many minutes (both you and the judge may appreciate a short break for whatever reason i.e. to ensure that you have your group card/sheet appropriately filled in).

At the commencement of judging the in group winners, announce in a loud clear voice that this is to take place and call all the best of breed winners and runner up to best of breed to the ringside.

Call the best of breed's into the ring in the manner that the judge requires (i.e. one at a time or all together) and ensure that the first exhibitor knows where to move the exhibit too. (The class is in the ring when the last exhibit enters the ring for judging).

Once all the best of breeds are in the ring, collect the sash and trophy/cash for the best in group and be ready to hand it to the judge when it is required. When the judge indicates which exhibit has won the best in group, announce the following:

***“THE BEST IN GROUP GOES TO (the Breed and Exhibit number) WHICH COMES FROM THE (whichever) CLASS AND IS AUTOMATICALLY BEST (whichever) CLASS”.***

Call in the runner up to that best of breed, collect the sash and trophy/cash for the runner up to best in group and follow the same procedure as for best in group.

Following these two awards, run offs are held for each age class for which the best in group and runner up to best in group **do not** come from starting with baby puppy. Again follow the requirements of the judge for bringing in these exhibits. The judge may wish to alter the method slightly especially if it is a very hot or wet day.

Ensure that all the results are entered and at the conclusion, announce:

***“THAT CONCLUDES THE JUDGING FOR GROUP (whichever). WOULD YOU PLEASE THANK YOUR JUDGE (title and name of the Judge)”.***

Collect all your paperwork, unused ribbons etc. and go with the judge to the club's rooms and deliver the relevant paper work to the secretary. You are expected to complete the in show sheet for your group.

If there have been any problems during the judging of your group, you are to advise the club secretary of all the details, and if necessary, complete a written report for their information and that of Dogs Victoria if required.

### **Judging for the in Show Awards**

The procedure for this part of the show is identical to that of the group awards.

### **Conclusion**

Stewarding at dog shows is a very rewarding undertaking. You are a vital part of the **TEAM** for the club's day and your conduct, ability and professionalism will reflect not only on you, but also on the club and Dogs Victoria.

**We hope that you will take an active part in stewarding and remember you can contact members of the Dog Stewards Association for help at any time - whether it is on a matter of procedure or the provision of names of people who are willing to steward for clubs.**