

## CREATION OF NEW SCHEDULE 10 & ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW PROPOSED SCHEME

While the creation of a new Schedule in the KUSA Constitution makes a lot of sense, I feel that more care and thought should be taken not only in its creation, but also in the timing of its creation. It really seems that the cart is being put before the horse.

Some of the proposed changes to the current Schedules dealing with the Judges Training Scheme assume incorrectly (and possibly heedlessly), that the newly created Judges Training Scheme will be accepted in its entirety, and suggests the cancellation of some of the current requirements. As even the creator of the proposed scheme has admitted publicly that her proposals are not yet ready to be implemented, logically, if the new scheme is not accepted and the current scheme has its requirements deleted from the Schedules, any qualifications gained during this period would surely be deemed to be null and void.

In both KZN and Gauteng there seems to be a marked aversion to most of the sections of the proposed new scheme, and while the presenter accuses those who object to the majority of the proposals as being afraid of change, this is quite untrue. It is felt that change for change's sake is never a very good thing.

I know that I and other like-minded souls, feel that we are being railroaded. Where's the fire? Surely it would be better all round to implement a new scheme that has most of the prospective judges' approval rather than one that is being rushed through willy-nilly? There seems to be an unnecessary rush to introduce the new scheme and fairly or unfairly, the suspicion among many seems to be that only two people, namely Miss McFarlane and Mr Eva are driving the scheme forward against the wishes of the majority of both learner and qualified judges, and this also includes some members of the newly appointed NBJSC.

I have therefore taken the liberty of outlining my personal objections to the proposed scheme, which objections I would like to request that you put forward at the forthcoming November Fedco meeting. In essence, judging by the comments, mutterings and head-shakings from the audience at the Gauteng presentation, this new scheme will do nothing but chase away prospective judges.

There was a lady (unknown to me) from one of the Staffie Clubs, who could no longer contain herself. She came around the back of the hall and helped herself to a cup of coffee, saying that her daughter was very keen to commence judging, but that she would run a mile before joining the proposed scheme. Others were saying that they felt that showing, breeding and judging dogs was a hobby, and one that should naturally be taken seriously, but not as a lifelong commitment to study. "I have a life outside of dogs" was heard more than once.

It was generally felt that the proposed scheme was too full of all these "modules", "assessors", "moderators", "levels" and "examiners". I can only agree. It seems that there is a desire to push all South African judges into a little mould, and who can say that that is the correct one? It was also felt that the intimation that all judges who had qualified under the current system were lacking in education was insulting in the extreme.

From my own perspective, this is not the Judge's Training Scheme that I paid to join, (and have spent a considerable amount of money in pursuing), and if it is introduced, I sadly shall not be continuing to try qualifying in any more groups. I also feel that as I have strong reservations about the proposed system, it would be my choice as to whether I would complete those groups that I chose to do under the current system, namely Utility & Working. I am then prepared to call it quits should the new scheme be introduced. As we were assured that we would not be able to complete our nominated groups under the current system, I have contacted my attorney for clarity regarding what recompense would be due to me if KUSA should persist in this draconian decision.

I do agree that the current system is far from perfect and needs to be looked at seriously, and I do have ideas for a new scheme which obviates the necessity of all these extra personnel and the additional burden it will inevitably place upon the KUSA staff. On the principle of keeping things straight and simple, I think I have identified the areas where the current system could be improved. They are in order of importance:

- 1 : Report writing (the biggest bugbear),
- 2 : the exams (it is unnecessary to know the breed standards off by heart),
- 3 : the number of dogs to be judged (entries across the country at Open Shows are falling).

So. To simplify things, drop all these pretentious and patronising levels and lables of "Candidate", "Learner", "Provisional", "Licensed", "Senior" and "All-Breeds" judges. Once you walk into the ring, you are a Judge. You

may be at the bottom end of the scale, but you are still a Judge. There is nothing much wrong or shaming with the current system of listing Judges' names in the categories of non-championship show, championship show, panelled and all-breed judges. It gives everyone a clear understanding of where you are as you work your way through the system of (hopefully) all 7 groups.

Keep the current criteria of attending a requisite number of seminars; judge at least 3 non-championship shows with 2 full groups; once the Part 2 Exams have been passed only then may you award CCs; drop the requisite number of dogs to 60 as suggested in the proposed new scheme. Retain the panelling system but amend it to one championship show and 100 exhibits to be judged, because at least this way you would have had the experience of judging at a championship show before rushing overseas; re-vamp the exams; but above all, drop all reports.

Radical I know, but unless you have someone breathing down your neck while judging, and who is going to scrutinise your report, they are quite meaningless as we all know. As an alternative for those who insist on a report of some kind (even if it's never looked at in conjunction with the dogs it's allegedly reporting on), why not have the judge list what he/she considers to be breed specific items listed at the top of a report and then justify the placings in each breed? This could be continued on into the groups. Make it a month in which to submit those reports to KUSA. No pass or fail of a report. Just simply, submitted or not. This has the added advantage of simplifying the tasks of the KUSA staff.

To be more specific in my objections, I have retyped the proposals in italics and typed my objections in a regular, bolded font

## 1.1 QUALIFYING CRITERIA

- 1.1.1.4 h) participation in any canine working discipline
- i) club administration, committee work etc.
- j) show organisation
- k) any other Kennel Union-approved canine activity

What do any of the above have to do with learning how to be a breed judge? I think these items should be deleted from any proposal.

## 1.3 INTERVIEW

- 1.3.2 The PBJSC will arrange an interview with the applicant, at which there will be no fewer than two PBJSC members. Allowance is made for PBJSC members from any province to stand in as interviewers.

Why is an "interview" necessary? Presently we either qualify under the requirements or not. I see no reason whatsoever to be "interviewed".

- 1.3.6 ...the Candidate Judge will be allocated a personal judge's number.

A judge's number would destroy any anonymity presently in place. Currently it is only (as far as it is humanly possible) the KUSA office staff who knows the identity of anyone writing either a report or an exam, and I feel very strongly that it should be kept that way. If it is at all necessary to allocate a judge's number, allocate it for use only for qualified judges as they pass through the system.

## 1.3.3 PRACTICAL TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

- 1.4.1.1.1 The Candidate Judge attends a training and assessment workshop initiated and arranged by the PBJSC at a specified date.
- 1.4.5 The assessment will record the Candidate Judge's successful completion of the task according to an objective, standardized series of criteria.

- 1: Who will set the "objective, standardized series of criteria"?
- 2: What are they?

- 3: Who will the "assessors" be?  
 4: Is this an exam before Exam 1?

There could be no possible objection to a mandatory training workshop, but there seems to be every objection to being "assessed" at any seminar.

#### 1.6 EXAMINATION: PART 1 AND 2. LEVEL 2: LEARNER JUDGE

- 1.6.1.1, Anatomy, Conformation & Movement of Dogs (140 marks)  
 1.6.1.2 KUSA Rules and Regulations (40 marks)  
 1.6.1.3 Judges' Ethics (20 marks)

It is proposed that the pass mark be raised to 70% out of the 200 marks given to the three papers. As the KUSA Rules and Judges' Ethics could possibly slant the results, I would like to suggest that the three papers are separated, as they are now, and the pass mark of 70% be given to each of the three papers.

- 1.6.7 Examination papers will be marked by a qualified Examination Officer, as allocated by the Kennel Union or the NBJSC and moderated by at least one qualified Moderator before results are made known.

Who will the "qualified Examination Officer" be, and even more importantly, how will they be "qualified", and who will do the qualifying? Then one has "at least one qualified Moderator" scrutinizing the marked papers. If one thinks about it logically, aside from the anonymity going right out the window with the use of Judge's Numbers, where are all these qualified personnel going to come from?

What is wrong with a KUSA staff member marking the paper, and another checking her/him? How difficult is it to mark or check a multiple choice paper? I also think that only KUSA should allocate the marker, as the NBJSC should have nothing to do with the papers once they have been returned to the Kennel Union by the invigilator.

- 1.6.9 If the candidate is successful, he/she may nominate a breed or group to study and may register for Level 2 studies in that group/breed. &  
 2.1.2 A Learner Judge entering Level 2 for the first time, ie. (sic) a Candidate Judge who has met all the requirements for Level 1 and passed Paper 1, may study only one (1) group (or breed).

Why? Why only one group or breed at a time? Also, why is the Learner Judge only allowed to nominate a breed or a group once they have passed the Exam 1? I would have thought that to shorten the whole process, the current system of nominating two groups when applying to join the system is perfectly adequate.

- 1.6.11 No further correspondence will be entered into once the candidate has been advised of their examination results.

This is one of the areas where the current system gets criticised. At the moment one either passes or fails and the candidate is given no indication of how well or badly they did. No correspondence being entered into is fine if the candidate has been advised of their pass mark and also some indication is given of where they were found to be lacking.

## 2. RING STEWARDSHIP

While a ring stewarding seminar should also be mandatory, the rest of this item should be removed in its entirety as ring stewarding has nothing whatsoever to do with learning to judge dogs. Human nature being what it is Learner Judges will obviously do the barest minimum required. What then is the object of this exercise when one Learner Judge is supposedly learning from another Learner Judge at non-championship show level? Additionally, the observance of a championship show judge, and the belief that they know what they're doing despite possible evidence to the contrary, will only result in cookie-cutter judges, particularly if they observe a judge one week and then judge the same dogs the next. That particular scenario is totally unacceptable.

Equally, how ridiculous and insulting would writing off many years experience of ring stewarding be? The presenter of this system was adamant that previous ring stewarding experience would not count towards this particular module's requirements, and while there are many like him, I give as an example Mr Rob Forsythe with 30 years experience of stewarding across all groups.

2.3.1.4 A Learner Judge who has applied to study a whole group may not use credits gained during this module towards the judging requirements for Breed Specialisation (single breed) modules.

Why not? No satisfactory explanation could be given during the Gauteng presentation of why this rule would be enforced.

2.3.4 At least one of the judging appointments must be outside of the Learner Judge's Provincial Council area; more if possible.

This is ludicrous and would be grossly unfair to people who would possibly enhance our judging panels but who are not, for many reasons including financial, able to travel. The argument put forward that prospective judges living in Gauteng should be penalised because there are not that many shows in the Eastern Cape is ridiculous. There are 3 all breed clubs in Port Elizabeth, 2 in East London, 2 in Grahamstown and 2 in Oudtshoorn, not to mention all the satellite group clubs. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that if for any reason I was transferred to Upington and wished to continue qualifying, I would be expected to travel at my own expense.

The presenter also claimed that to see different dogs in other Provinces would be beneficial as there could be differences. There was an outcry at this statement, as the audience correctly felt that there was not a different breed standard for each province.

2.3.5.1 ...the Learner Judge will be invited to discuss placements made and techniques practiced.

As we are such a small community, I feel that any attempt to impose one person's judgment on someone else would be a grave mistake. We are not living in America where there are many more judges, exhibits and exhibitors, living very far apart and not meeting very often (if at all), and where there is a tradition of "mentorship". What would happen for instance if I gave my honest opinion which perhaps happened to be unflattering, on a dog that I was unaware was bred/owned by my "assessor"? I know that each time I go into a ring I have studied the breed standard, have used the resources on the web to look at illustrated breed standards, and have done my best to try to understand the function of that particular breed. Therefore I prefer that any mistakes that I make are mine alone. After all, there are some judges whose opinions many of us do not value. Are we expected to adhere to their personal interpretation of the standards and not our own?

#### 2.4.1/6 CRITIQUES

There is a note in item 2.4.1 that "typed or computer-printed critiques will not be accepted since the objective of this module is to acquire critique-writing skills".

The presenter has made no secret of the fact that the intention is to introduce graded critiques in a few years, so that we can all go skipping overseas and write critiques. As we are not a country where critiques are a part of our culture, I find this to be totally unnecessary. Nor are we an FCI country; for our sins we are merely members of the FCI, and if the NBJSC is so concerned about everyone's ability to write a critique, I would suggest that they prepare a seminar on the subject.

Delete this horror in its entirety. The art of writing a critique is no part of learning to judge a dog. If, by the time you have been panelled, if you do not know what you're doing, then no amount of "critiquing" is going to make a judge of you.

While the substitution of critiques for reports met with qualified approval, I am of the opinion that it was only because report writing is so universally loathed, that nobody gave any thought to the greater implications. Pity the poor show-holding club who would now have to allocate between 6 to 8 minutes

per dog per judge. Pity the poor exhibitors and exhibits who would have to endure standing in the blazing heat or rain while the hapless judge writes a critique in his/her "best" handwriting (and then has a month in which to submit it).

- 2.4.4. Should a Learner Judge require only a small number of exhibits to complete his/her critique quota for that group or breed, he/she is nonetheless required to write critiques for at least the first- and second-placed exhibits in every class judged at a subsequent judging appointment.

This is a carry-over from the current scheme which has always struck everyone as being absurd. If you only need to write 4 reports to complete your quota, and you have been appointed to judge an entire group, then for heaven's sake write your report on 4 dogs, not the first & second in each class for the entire group.

## 2.5 OBSERVATION

Delete in its entirety. This would be very dangerous especially as far as Specialty Shows are concerned. For instance, as an example, I can just imagine someone wanting to learn about Truffle Hounds and attending a Truffle Hound Specialty run by Club A. The observer would come away with the impression that only the 20 exhibits present at Club A (from one kennel), are correct to the standard. There may well be other kennels of excellent Truffle Hounds who were not present at Club A's Specialty Show. We are too small a community, and our Specialty Shows are also becoming too small to entertain this idea.

As for observations in the ring, I have also not yet met or heard anyone I respect who would be willing to act as an observer, and should this be true, no one will be able to qualify, and even more time would be wasted in training our future judges.

### 2.6.3.4 Private Breed Discussions.

This item should also be deleted in its entirety as should item 2.6.2.2. for obvious reasons. Where would you get someone who would in fact go to more than one person in order to qualify?

### 2.8.4 & 2.8.5 Portfolios

If thus far people had not been put off the proposed new scheme, this would surely do it. I overheard one lady saying that she worked a fulltime job and had three school-going children whose homework she oversaw each night. She wondered when she would find the time to create all these "assignments", "assessments", and "portfolios" and furthermore to quote "I'm damned if any of the so-called assessors are going to tell me that I haven't put enough work into it, or to get a look at my private study papers!" I personally couldn't agree more. There are also prospective judges who are not yet very conversant with computers and spreadsheets etc. or who do not have access to their own computer at home. Imagine how laborious it would be to do the suggested kind of exercise by hand.

### 2.9.9.2/3/4 Re-writing the Part 1 Examinations

This was felt by most people in the room not only to be a ridiculous waste of time, but insulting to the prospective judge as well. Rampant bureaucracy. I am not surprised that quite a few people chose to leave the presentation early. Nothing is going to change as far as anatomy is concerned and ethics are ethics. As far as keeping up with any rule changes, if there have been any they could be circulated to all judges via email.

## 3. LEVEL 3 : PROVISIONAL JUDGE

Delete in its entirety. If one has completed all the requirements and passed Exam 2, like it or not, one may be regarded as a licensed championship show judge. With most of the larger shows appointing only overseas judges, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a newly qualified judge to get appointments. It is degrading to be labelled a "provisional" judge after one has done all that work.

### 4.2 A Licensed Judge may accept appointments outside South Africa and Namibia.

What is this? Merely a desire to accept an overseas appointment as fast as possible? Wait until after panelling as that argues a little more experience.

4.3 If the Licensed Judge has an interest in guiding future judges...

After one group? Is this because so many of our all breed judges have indicated that they will have nothing to do with this scheme?

#### 7. OBLIGATIONS OF LEARNER JUDGES

It was made clear at the Gauteng presentation that no clubs would be allowed to sponsor a Learner Judge if they so wished. I cannot understand how a Judge's Training Scheme could possibly be allowed to dictate to a club committee how their funds should be spent. I feel that in many ways the NBJSC has exceeded its mandate, and I earnestly hope that this scheme will not be implemented.

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