

Introduction:

As an aspiring, newly approved or experienced dog show judge, you are an essential part of the fancy and the job of officiating dog shows carries enormous responsibilities. Before applying to judge or accepting an assignment, you should have read as much as possible about the breed, spent many hours ringside observing, and have done all you can to ensure that you have a good, all around knowledge of the Australian Shepherd.

You need to examine your motives for wanting to judge. You should understand canine anatomy and proper gait so that you are able to differentiate between correct and incorrect structure and movement. You must have a thorough knowledge of breed type and be able to identify quality as opposed to mediocrity. You must be able to keep your nerve, maintain a clear purpose and put up only those dogs you feel are the best representative of the breed on that day.

This document has been developed for all ASCA and visiting judges. We hope it makes it easier for you to do your job. You should be thoroughly familiar with this guide, as well as all of ASCA's *Rules* and *Policies* if you:

- are an approved Non-Regular, Provisional, Breeder or Senior level ASCA judge,
- have accepted match, sweepstakes or futurity judging assignments,
- are a visiting judge accepting assignments at ASCA events
- plan to apply for judging approval.

Please be aware that this document cannot cover all situations, nor can it substitute for common sense.

Your Responsibilities and Conduct as a Judge

Code of Ethics for Conformation Judges:

1. ASCA Judges are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with these Guidelines set forth by the Australian Shepherd Club Board of Directors. Failure to comply with these guidelines subjects a judge to possible disciplinary action by the ASCA Board of Directors, including the possible revocation of ASCA Judging privileges.
2. ASCA Conformation Judges carry a tremendous amount of responsibility. They function as a guiding voice of the Australian Shepherd and should represent the highest ideals in terms of honesty, integrity, impartiality and knowledge of the sport and the breed.
3. The approval to judge ASCA events is a privilege and is not a right or reward. Suspensions in other registries relevant to the task of judging will be a consideration in the approval and maintenance of judging privileges.

4. All ASCA and visiting judges and judging applicants must agree to abide by the ASCA Judges Code of Ethics.

5. ASCA has the right to refuse, suspend or revoke the ASCA judging license of any person in violation of ASCA rules, or for the failure to comply with the guidelines set forth in the ASCA Judges Code of Ethics. Failure to comply with these guidelines, or any ASCA rules, subjects a judge to possible disciplinary action by the ASCA Board of Directors, including the possible revocation of ASCA Judging privileges. Judges will be notified if such action is being considered, the reason for its consideration, and given the opportunity to reply.

Responsibilities:

1. ASCA Judges should have thorough breed knowledge, understanding of the Breed Standard and full comprehension of the rules concerning ASCA's Conformation Program. They are expected to demonstrate efficient ring procedure and control. It is their responsibility to keep up to date with current changes in both the program rules and Breed Standard.

2. Judges are expected to continue the education process throughout their career.

3. Judges are to be professional in carrying out their duties and must not allow personal preferences to interfere with the stated guidelines upon which they judge animals.

4. It is essential that exhibitors have complete faith in the impartiality of their judges. A judge's actions and decisions should leave no doubt that they were made based solely on the merits of the dogs presented to them on that day.

Conduct, Conflicts of Interest and Common Sense:

You must both possess and project an unwavering air of **integrity** and **ethical behavior** that protects the reputation of ASCA dog shows. With common sense, judges can easily avoid situations which might raise ethical questions.

Judges are presumed to be honest, competent and dedicated. Nevertheless, it is all too easy to find yourself in uncomfortable or even inappropriate situations. **No guidelines can cover every situation**, but they can help you avoid improprieties or perceived improprieties.

Conduct:

1. The general conduct of judge, both inside and out of the ring, should be above reproach. Judges should avoid conduct and casual remarks that might be misconstrued or misinterpreted such as expressing favoritism or specific criticism of dogs or exhibitors.

2. Prior to the completion of a judging assignment, a judge shall not act as a spectator at the same conformation event at which he is scheduled to judge.

3. When officiating at a show, the judge shall not:
 - a) Discuss the merits or faults of the dogs with the stewards, attendants, or spectators during the assignment. This does not include overall praise of an entire entry of dogs.
 - b) Address handlers or dogs in the ring by name
 - c) Hold, have control of, or groom any dog on the show grounds during his assignment that is not wholly owned or co-owned by the judge
 - d) While officiating, a judge should not ask individuals:
 - Who owns the dog
 - From whom the dog was purchased
 - What bloodlines the dog is out of

4. A judge shall not personally exhibit a dog in Conformation in the same state as his assignment four (4) days prior to his assignment.

5. When attending social functions organized by the event-giving club where exhibitors are present, a judge is expected to exercise particular discretion in discussing individual exhibitors, dogs or breeders.

6. A judge or their family members should never solicit or promote assignments on the judge's behalf.

Conflicts of Interest and Common Sense:

Although a judge cannot directly control who enters under him, he should advise potential exhibitors not to enter under him when he feels there is a possible conflict of interest to avoid improprieties or perceived improprieties. Examples of such conflicts might be but are not limited to:

- your employer or an employee
- a relative
- a person with whom you co-own dogs
- a person with whom you have a recent business relationship with
- a person who has handled your dogs on a regular basis

These are only examples. The key is to avoid situations that are likely to give the *impression* of impropriety, and you must do everything possible to keep your reputation above reproach.

A Handy Rule of Thumb

There will always be those "gray areas" that perplex judges. When faced with such a dilemma, ask yourself whether the situation, however innocent, maintains an outward appearance of propriety. A good rule of thumb is:

If you have concerns about whether something is inappropriate, you probably should avoid the situation.

Accepting Assignments

Never solicit or promote assignments. ASCA will investigate all reports by individuals or clubs that a judge solicited or promoted assignments. Appropriate action will be taken whenever needed.

Written Invitations: It is a good idea to require all clubs to send you written invitations for assignments. Their request should clearly specify the date, time, classes and location where you are being asked to judge. Promptly acknowledge all invitations, **again**, in writing, and keep accurate records of assignments you accept.

Avoid Conflicts You should make every effort to avoid judging conflicts. It is your responsibility to acknowledge judging invitations promptly. Careful record keeping and prompt acceptance (or refusal) of invitations help eliminate unnecessary confusion and conflict for both judges and show-giving clubs.

Traveling to Assignments You cannot do your best work if you are tired from travel or are rushed to meet a departure flight time. Work out your mode of transportation, arrival and departure times with the club well in advance of your assignment.

You should understand that in accepting an invitation, you are committing yourself to the show-giving club for the entire day. Your travel plans should not be predicated on arriving late or on leaving early to get transportation home or to another show. You should not ask clubs to arrange judging programs to accommodate your travel plans.

You should not travel to and from shows or stay with anyone who is likely to be exhibiting or handling under you.

Expenses and Contracts When you accept an invitation, clearly inform club officials what your expenses and fees, if any, will be, so they will not be surprised by a larger than anticipated bill. This is a contract between you and the club. The more specific the details you and the club should be included in a written contract. Do not accept verbal contracts as there is the potential for misunderstandings to develop. Written contracts are an important consideration and a courtesy to clubs as well as to the judges. **If you sign a contract provided by the club, both you and the club are responsible for abiding by its conditions.**

Fitness to Judge/Illness

Fitness to Judge As a dog show judge, you must be capable of performing the functions necessary to properly judge the dogs. You must have:

- the maneuverability to negotiate a ring both indoors and outdoors, with or without mechanical assistance, e.g., a wheelchair, crutches or a cane.
- the flexibility to examine all parts of a dog's anatomy either on a table or the ground

- normal vision (correctable by eyeglasses or contact lenses).
- the capability of doing all the necessary paperwork.

Illness Judges are expected to be physically fit. If you find you cannot fulfill an assignment because of illness or other serious occurrence, immediately notify the Show Secretary and/or the Show Chairperson by telephone, overnight letter, telegram, e-mail or fax. If you are delayed en route to a show, immediately make every effort to contact the Show Secretary or Show Chairperson. If you become ill while judging and it becomes necessary to find a replacement, you may not continue your assignment later in the day if you find yourself feeling better.

Before Entering The Ring

Be on Time Allow at least one-half hour to report to the Show Secretary. Take a moment to visit the facilities before entering the ring.

The Show Secretary and/or Ring Stewards will provide you with the judge's book, ribbons and other materials necessary to start judging on schedule to the ring. If not provided, ask for disinfectant wipes or hand cleaner to be provided.

Avoid Contacts Do not visit the grooming or exercise areas on the day you are judging. Do not carry or examine a catalog, discuss the merits of the dogs you are judging, or talk at length with anyone who may be exhibiting under you. Do not sit at ringside during the conformation events that you are not officiating. When you have completed all assignments for a show or set of shows, then such contact is permissible, **but be prudent**.

Your friends, if they are considerate, should be discreet in making conversation with you prior to judging. It is your responsibility to remind them to do so.

Proper Dress Avoid inappropriate or outlandish dress. Weather permitting, men should wear business casual to professional attire. Women should not wear skirts that are too short or too cumbersome. Shirts and jackets should not be excessively tight or revealing. Avoid noisy, dangling jewelry or hats unsuitable for the occasion.

Smoking Smoking is permissible only between classes, provided it does not delay judging. You must comply with any non-smoking regulations of the building or club.

Judging The Dogs

You Are in Charge As the judge, you have full authority over all persons in the ring. See Chapter 7, Sections 16 and 17, of the *Rules* for a review of the judge's authority.

With this authority comes the responsibility to be thoughtful and considerate. Be as systematic in your ring procedure from dog to dog and class to class **as conditions permit**.

You should avoid theatrical movements or making inappropriate comments to ringside. Be polite, but generally limit your conversation with exhibitors to instructions on positioning or gaiting the dogs.

If the age of the dog is required, **ask the steward** to check the birth date.

Check the Ring Before starting your judging, quickly inspect the ring you have been assigned. Determine how you intend to use the ring and look for unsafe conditions, whether it is a loose mat or a depression in the grass. If a condition can be corrected, it should be. Moving ring gates, etc., should be discussed with the Show Chairperson.

When judging in sunny weather, assemble the dogs so that the sun is to your back. Do not attempt to judge with the sun in your eyes. On windy days, if possible, line the dogs up facing into the wind so that the coats are blown with the grain of growth. It is difficult to evaluate a topline when the hair is blown straight up and backwards.

Be considerate of your ringside observers. Don't exclude them from the enjoyment of observation or the opportunity to learn by lining up and gaiting dogs where observers cannot watch.

Assembling the Class Never start judging a breed before the time listed in the premium list. A good steward can be a great help in readying a class for the ring. A steward may tell you when the class is ready and what dogs are absent, but **you** are responsible for marking the absentees. Never ask your steward to page individual dogs or exhibitors on the public address system.

There will be occasions when exhibitors have ring conflicts and you may be asked to wait until the exhibitor can appear. There is no obligation for you to do this, but it is courteous to give an exhibitor five minutes grace. Ask your ring steward to inform the other entrants that there is a hold up and the reason why.

Carefully check for the presence of each dog in every class. Compare the armband numbers indicated in the judge's book with the armband numbers of the exhibitors. It may be helpful to make a small check or dot next to the number in the judge's book for entries present to avoid confusion. In marking dogs present or absent, always be certain that all armbands are worn correctly and the numbers correspond to the entries in the class.

Note: It is also essential to verify armband numbers in the Winners and Reserve Winners Classes, and of the Winners Dog and Winners Bitch in Best of judging. Mark absentees in each class

Disabled Handlers ASCA strives to provide the opportunity for all people of various backgrounds and capabilities to participate in its events. In the case of conformation judging, where decisions are based solely on the quality of the dogs, you may modify the regular judging procedure to accommodate a disabled handler.

If a modification of normal judging procedure is required, then you need only to determine that it would not inhibit the ability of other handlers in the ring to show their dogs. A disabled handler may compete using a cane, crutch, or electric-powered wheelchair. However, when gaiting the dogs as a group, you should ensure that a handler who cannot maintain a normal gait for the breed being exhibited, be placed in line where it will not interfere with the ability of the other dogs to gait properly.

Blind handlers may have a second person assist them in individual and group gaiting of the dogs. If the ring surface or terrain makes it difficult for the assisted handler to gait the dog at a normal speed, you may adjust where the dog is placed in line to give all handlers an equal opportunity to show their dogs. Blind handlers may have the second person assist in placing puppies onto tables. The primary function of exhibiting the dog is the responsibility of the handler and not the second person in the ring.

Change of Exhibitors A change of exhibitor is permitted at your discretion up until the time all dogs in the class have been individually examined and individually gaited. After that, no change of exhibitor is allowed.

Late Arrivals It is your decision to allow a late arrival into the ring. In the strictest sense, a late arrival may be allowed to enter the ring until the judge's book has been marked. However, many judges establish the cut-off point when all dogs have been individually examined and gaited. If a single class entry arrives late, it is your decision whether or not to judge the dog.

Rules and Breed Standards You are responsible for your own interpretation of the *Rules* and the *ASCA Breed Standard* in effect on the day of your judging assignment. If your decision depends on the exact wording of a *Rule* or the *ASCA Breed Standard*, **do not hesitate to refer to these documents.** You may also discuss the *Rules or Breed Standard* with the Show Secretary or Ring Steward but should not rely on their verbal confirmation. Investigate the answer to your question by examining the documents yourself.

Speed of Judging Delays and difficulties sometimes occur. While you should never rush an assignment, your officiating should be conducted with efficiency. Generally, a new judge will be somewhat slower in their job than an experienced judge, so clubs should take this into account when scheduling subsequent or concurrent events. As a Non-Regular or Provisional judge, it is your responsibility to inform the clubs that you may need some extra time to complete an assignment.

Conditions may cause your judging to take longer, include:

- judging the breed for the first time
- judging in a dimly-lit building
- inexperienced or no ring stewards
- emergencies such as weather or class conflicts

Take all the time needed to properly judge a class. At the same time, use efficient methods to keep to the schedule. A situation that significantly delays judging should be briefly noted in your judge's book.

Large Entries, Small Rings You may occasionally find yourself with very large classes. Keep only as many dogs in the ring as can be conveniently accommodated for individual examination and gaiting. Divide classes into roughly equal portions. Divide a Best of Breed class that is too large for the ring by separating dogs and bitches, assuming the entry in each are roughly equal. Otherwise, divide the class into roughly equal groups.

In dividing a class, remember it is your responsibility to determine absentees. First have all the dogs assembled in the ring so that preliminary paperwork can be completed, then divide the class, calling dogs into the ring in catalog order. When judging very large classes with many sections, write down the armband numbers of the "keepers," and let them leave the ring while you judge the next sections. Tell the exhibitors you will be calling them back into the ring after you have completed all sections.

If a class is divided, it is permissible for a handler to take an exhibit into more than one section.

When judging divided classes, other than Best of Breed, you must select a minimum of four dogs from the first section and any number from succeeding sections. There is no point in keeping too many dogs from any section. You have only four ribbons to award. However, never leave yourself with only four dogs.

When judging Best of Breed at a National Specialty with a specified number of Premier Awards, keep at least that number of dogs from the first group and any number from succeeding sections. It is important that you keep and award an accurate number of awards to the Premier Dogs/Bitches. Do not forget that Best of Breed, Best Opposite Sex and Best of Winners will also need to be awarded in addition to the Premier Awards.

Judging The Dogs

Step confidently into the middle of your ring and ask that the first class be admitted to the ring. Stand and take a good look at the dogs both in motion and when standing. Observe outline, balance, style and type of the group as a whole before beginning individual examinations. Make a mental note of who the first and last exhibitors are so that you do not lose your place during the examinations. Perform your individual examinations and individual gaiting patterns, and when that is completed, have the exhibitor and dog join the end of the line. Repeat the process until all dogs have been individually examined.

Individual Examination of Dogs Examine every dog in approximately the same systematic manner, even if a poor specimen may clearly be out of the ribbons. Approach dogs calmly. Examine with gentleness of touch and with no sudden, surprising gestures. One satisfactory approach is to begin with the mouth and head, then systematically work

down the neck, front, shoulders, body, and hindquarters. It is not necessary to determine soundness by forcibly raising and dropping front or hindquarters, leaning on the back or applying undue pressure on the spine or hocks.

Thorough and complete individual examination is not *excessive* examination. Do as much as necessary and no more.

Always judge dogs solely **on the basis of their condition as they are presented in the ring on show day**. Give absolutely no consideration to what a dog's quality may be at some future time, or what a dog's condition might have been were it not for some disease or accident. In reviewing a class, avoid excessive rearranging of a dog's coat, whistling, gesturing or baiting. However, do not hesitate to feel out a suspected fault beneath a highly groomed coat.

When judging Best of Breed, you may give Winners Dog and Winners bitch a cursory examination since they were judged in a more thorough manner earlier.

Evaluating a Dog's Mouth For sanitary reasons, many exhibitors prefer to open the dog's mouth themselves. However, you have full authority to insist on personally examining the dog's bite yourself.

Do not forget your personal safety. All dogs are not handled by experienced exhibitors. **Do not kneel in front of a dog.** To the extent possible, examine a dog's mouth, from the side. If personally opening the dogs mouth to examine bite and dentition, clean your hands between individual dogs so as not to spread anything potentially contagious.

Gaiting In the first class in which a dog is judged, you must individually gait and observe the dog going away, from the side and returning. Thereafter, either in evaluating that class or in Winners, regaiting is optional. Depending on the breed being judged, the ring, weather or other conditions, you may have to vary the way in which the dogs are gaited. When mats are available, dogs should be gaited only on the mats. Gait all the dogs in a class in the same pattern. Regait only the dogs you actually need to see move again, using the same pattern.

Do not allow the dogs to be moved at excessive speed. Do not hesitate to tell an exhibitor exactly how you want a dog moved and controlled. Be sure your instructions to exhibitors on how to gait their dogs are clearly understandable.

It is not recommended that two dogs be moved on a down and back together. Not all dogs get along, not all handlers are equally experienced. Doing this endangers the dogs and exhibitors. A competent judge should be able to recall the movement of a particular dog long enough to compare it to the next dog moved.

Placing the Dogs As you examine and gait the dogs, sort them out and form decisions on exact placements. Some judges rearrange the dogs in a class as they are examined and gaited. In a large class, this is usually the best way to group the dogs you are considering.

Once you have individually examined and gaited all of the dogs in a large class, it is best to **excuse those not under consideration for placement**. There is no point in requiring an exhibitor clearly out of the ribbons to wait while the dogs under consideration are sorted out and final placements are decided. In a very large class, you may have to sort out dogs through two or three eliminations. However, never reduce the number of dogs under consideration in a class to only four, as one of the final four may become lame.

Once you have decided on the placements, indicate them clearly to the exhibitors so that each dog placed will be taken to the proper marker. Mark your book **from the armbands** of the exhibitors at the markers and **then** hand out ribbons and prizes.

Designating Class Placements Be especially careful in pointing to your placements. Misunderstood placement indications can result in tangled leads, confusion, etc. The safest procedure is to realign your class, putting the four dogs to be placed in proper order at the front of the line. Do not make placements as the dogs are moving, unless the dogs have been put in placement order. **In judging Best of Breed, you may mark the book before indicating the Winner.** If you use this procedure, do not move the dogs again after marking the book.

Withholding Withholding an award or placement occurs when you are faced with a dog or bitch that fails in many essential characteristics of the breed, such as grossly lacking type, unsound, showing aggression or obviously suffering from some illness. You have the clear authority to withhold any and all awards at any point in the judging process. You may award one placement in a class and no other placement, or you may withhold all awards. You may award class firsts and then withhold the Winners ribbon, and you may excuse any dog for lack of merit. **The decision is yours alone based on the merits of the dogs.** When you withhold or excuse, note the reason in the judge's book and initial your comments. Clearly and diplomatically explain your decision to the exhibitor(s) involved.

In Winners competition, if you feel none of the dogs are of championship quality, i.e., deserving of championship points on that day, you should withhold the Winners ribbon. This is also true for Reserve Winners. It is not appropriate to award a dog Winners or Reserve simply because it is the best specimen available on that day.

Impact of Withholding or Excusing You should not be concerned about the impact of withholding or excusing.

Winners and Reserve Winners Classes Regaiting in Winners and Reserve Winners classes should be kept to a minimum and limited to dogs in contention. Winners and Reserve Winners are two separate classes. Unless the Winner comes from a class of one, the judge's book must be marked and the ribbon and trophies presented to the Winner before judging Reserve Winners.

Best of Breed Judging After marking the judge's book, do not regait the dogs.

Non-Regular Competitive Classes Non-regular classes often involve puppies under the age of six months, Stud Dog, Brood Bitch, Veterans and Brace classes. The show-giving club has the option of awarding ribbons and prizes for first place only or for four places. The option selected must be indicated in the premium list. The winner of these classes is not eligible to compete for Best of Breed. A champion may occasionally be entered both in a Non-Regular class and Best of Breed. In such cases, if the dog is defeated in the non-regular class, it may continue to compete for Best of Breed or for Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed. If there is a special event for Puppies, Veterans, Stud Dog, Brood Bitch, Brace, or Team Class, it is the responsibility of the show-giving club to advise the judge of the correct judging procedures.

Altered Judging ASCA is unique in offering regular Altered shows in which neutered and spayed dogs compete for championship points. Some of these dogs are neutered for medical reasons, others for the owners convenience and still others are champions whose breeding careers are complete but who are not ready to be retired from competition. This event is to be judged with the same care and consideration given to the intact dogs. These dogs, although neutered, still represent a breeding program and the potential of their sire and dam. You should adhere to the Breed Standard when judging these individuals and give them the same respect and consideration deserving of any breeding dog. It is inappropriate to discuss with the exhibitor any reasons why the dogs have been neutered. The information is not relevant to your judgment on that day.

Breed Judge's Book

The Judge's Book You alone are responsible for the judge's book. When you finish your assignment:

- sign your book(s).
- fill in the times and dates.
- initial all changes and notations.
- personally return the completed judge's book to the Show Secretary.
- check with the Show Secretary before leaving the show.

Marking the Judge's Book Always be thorough, neat and careful in marking your book. If awards are not correctly marked, the entire purpose of the show is defeated. In all regular classes, mark your placements as first (1), second (2), third (3), and fourth (4), opposite the armband numbers in the judge's book. For Winners and Reserve Winners, as well as Best of Breed, Best of Winners and Best of Opposite Sex, you must record the actual armband numbers of the winning dogs on the appropriate lines.

Once the book is marked, the class is over. **Do not re-judge a class.**

The full responsibility for the accuracy of the judge's book rests with you. **Never rely on the ring steward to advise you of the armband numbers of your placements.**

Any change in the judge's book must be initialed. Only the judge or Show Secretary may

make notations in the judge's book; only the Show Secretary may move a dog from one class to another or make corrections to entries.

Double-Checking the Book Review your book at the end of an assignment to be sure that:

- all placements being awarded are marked correctly.
- all absentees are marked.
- Reserve Winners Dog and Bitch are correctly indicated.
- Best of Winners is either the Winners Dog or Winners Bitch.
- Best of Breed and Best of Opposite Sex are of different sexes.
- withheld placements, excusals and disqualifications, with the reasons for them, are noted and initialed.

Take the extra time to double-check all markings in your book. Some errors, if not caught on the spot, can never be satisfactorily resolved.

Excusals and Disqualifications Be thoroughly familiar with the current **Breed Standard** and the *Rules*. When called for, you **must** disqualify a dog. When you excuse or disqualify a dog, you must mark your book "excused" or "disqualified," as the case may be. State briefly the condition requiring your action. The notation must be initialed.

A dog which has been changed in appearance by artificial means, except as specified in the standard for its breed, may not compete at any show and any awards will **withheld**.

A dog is considered changed in appearance by artificial means if it has been subjected to any type of procedure that has the effect of obscuring, disguising or eliminating any congenital or hereditary abnormality or any undesirable characteristic, or anything that improves a dog's natural appearance, temperament, bite or gait.

In addition, the insertion of any type of apparatus in the mouth of a dog renders that dog ineligible for competition in dog shows and subjects anyone who exhibits, or causes to be exhibited, such dog to disciplinary action.

You have the clear authority under Chapter 7 and 9 of the *Rules* to **remove, excuse or disqualify** a dog from your ring.

Shy and Vicious Dogs Excuse any dog that, in your opinion:

- menaces,
- threatens, or
- exhibits any sign that it may not be examined in the normal manner.

When you **excuse** the dog, mark your judge's book "Excused," stating the reason in the judge's book. A dog so excused shall not be counted as having completed.

Disqualify any dog that, in your opinion, attacks any person or another dog in the ring. Mark your book "Disqualified, attacked." A dog disqualified for attacking may not compete at any future show until the owner officially requests ASCA to reinstate the dog. Reinstatement requires the dog to be examined by a three ASCA Breeder Judges, after which the owner must receive official notification from ASCA that the dog's show eligibility has been reinstated.

Be certain to clearly communicate your decision to the exhibitor of the dog using either the word "excused" or "disqualified."

After disqualifying a dog for attacking, take a moment to write a short description of the circumstances. The ASCA Board of Directors may contact you at a later date.

Disqualifications for attacking are different than being disqualified under the breed standards or other parts of the **Rules**. It is of the utmost importance to use the word "excused" or "disqualified", as appropriate, when dismissing an exhibitor whose dog is shy or vicious.

Disqualifying Faults Each dog must be examined for disqualifying faults as specified in the breed standard, as well as for violations of Chapter 9 and 10 of the **Rules**. **This applies to judging at all regular levels.**

Protests Only exhibitors **in the ring** have the right to protest dogs competing. Protests are not allowed after every dog in the class has been individually examined and gaited and the judges book marked.

When a verbal protest is made, it is important to remain calm. If, after examining the dog, it is your opinion the dog does not possess the disqualifying fault, advise the exhibitor who made the protest and mark your judge's book "Verbal protest, (stating the reason for protest), not sustained." On the other hand, if the dog has a disqualifying condition, you are to mark your book "Verbal protest, (stating the reason for the protest), disqualified."

Misconduct Be prepared to deal with any misconduct in a calm, professional manner. Do not engage in arguments or debates over your decisions. Ask the Ring Steward and Show Secretary to remove any exhibitor whose behavior is disruptive to other exhibitors and dogs.

Photographs Try to accommodate exhibitors who want photographs taken; however, judging should not be unduly delayed to take a picture. It is often best to delay picture taking until all judging within a scheduled time period has been completed. There is no need for pictures to actually be taken in the ring. Pictures may be taken in an appropriate area of the show grounds at a time mutually convenient for judges and exhibitors

Judge's Checklist

- Arrive at least one-half hour prior to your judging assignment.
- If you are a new breed judge be prepared to take extra time to complete your assignment.
- Mark all absentees in each class in the book, including dogs entered for Best of Breed.
- Take the exhibits as a class, or individually, around the ring.
- Examine each dog in approximately the same systematic manner. Know and utilize only the **ASCA Breed Standard**.
- You must always make an individual examination of each dog for lameness.
- Be systematic in your ring procedure, but do not be afraid to make adjustments when conditions warrant it.
- Make all your instructions to exhibitors absolutely clear.
- Line up the dogs first, second, third, and fourth in front of the markers before marking the judge's book or handing out the ribbons.
- As a judge, only you may mark your judge's book and hand out ribbons.

- Ribbons must be presented only in the ring. If an exhibitor leaves the ring before ribbons are presented, have the steward call the exhibitor back into the ring. Make a note in the judge's book pertaining to the incident.
- In judging Winners, always double-check armbands. After the ribbon has been awarded, excuse the winning dog. Call into the ring the dog that placed second to the dog awarded Winners, judging Reserve as a separate class.
- In the Best of Breed competition, award Best of Breed, Best of Winners and Best of Opposite Sex.
- Do not forget to sign the judge's books to certify that judging has been completed in accordance with the requirements. Initial all notations you made in the books.