



# ANIMAL WELFARE

THE 4TH JUDGING CRITERIA

*By Emmy Marie Simonsen*

WELCOME!



## Welcome to the first FCI Dog Dancing Judges Conference

Please keep your microphones muted.

You can participate with or without your camera turned on.

Please write your questions in the chat. Petra Funk from the Dog Dancing commission will choose some that will be answered in the end of each presentation.

## THE SCHEDULE



### **Saturday the 22nd January**

10 AM (UTC): Opening and welcome by the President of the FCI Dog Dancing Commission, Emmy Marie Simonsen from Denmark.

10.05 AM (UTC): How to judge the Animal Welfare category by Emmy Marie Simonsen (Denmark)

11.15 AM (UTC): How to judge the Presentation category by Charlie Westrin (Sweden).

1 PM (UTC): How to judge the Content category by Corinne Medauer (France).

2.15 PM (UTC): How to judge the Musical Interpretation category by Susanna Ekblom (Finland)

3.15 PM (UTC): We finish for today – see you again tomorrow.

### **Sunday the 23rd January**

10 AM: Dog Physiology by Carmen Heritier (Germany)

1.30 PM (UTC): Managing bias in judging by Johanna Saariluoma (Finland)

3.30 PM (UTC): Goodbye and thank you by Emmy Marie Simonsen (Denmark)



## WHO AM I?



- Emmy Marie Simonsen
- Owner of 3 dogs – 2 Border Collies and 1 Miniature American Shepherd.
- Have won titles in obedience, agility, herding trials, Canine Nose Work and Dog Dancing.
- Performed in Dog Dancing for the first time in 1998 with my Rough Collie "Kiri".
- Judged Dog Dancing for the first time in 2004 (in Germany).
- Competed in Dog Dancing for the first time in 2005 (in Denmark)
- Took part in the first Nordic Championship in 2009 and the first World Championship in 2010.
- Judged the first OEC in 2011.
- Chairman of the Danish Kennel Club HTM Committee.
- President of the FCI Dog Dancing Commission.

AND NOW...

Let's talk about Animal Welfare...



## WHY?



Why do we even need this judging criteria?

- Because Animal Welfare should have top priority in all dog sports.
- Because we want to send a clear signal that we are not afraid to talk about animal welfare in our sport.
- Because we do not have a set course – the handlers must take on the responsibility.
- Animal Welfare organisations have their eyes on performing animals – which have already been banned in many countries.

ANIMAL WELFARE IS  
IMPORTANT



### 3.3.5 Equal points in “Individual” Competition (page 13 in the rules)

For the dogs tied in the first 11 places, it is required to find a good distinction to avoid, having competitors tied in the same place.

For dogs placed in lower ranks, this avoiding of being tied in the Same place is not required.

**If two or more dogs are tied for any place in the first 11 ranks, the dog with the highest points in “Animal welfare” wins.**

If they still are equal, they share the place.

If, in the finals, 2 or more dogs are tied in the first place, the head judges scores awarded during the finals count for deriving the ranking.



ANIMAL WELFARE IS  
IMPORTANT



### 3.3.6 Equal points in "Team" Competition (page 13 in the rules)

Heelwork to music:

**If two teams have equal points in the "Heelwork to Music" competition, the team with the highest points in "Animal welfare" wins.**

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Content" wins.

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Presentation" wins.

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Artistic Interpretation" wins.

Freestyle:

**If two teams have equal points in the "Freestyle" competition, the team with the highest points in "Animal welfare" wins.**

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Presentation" wins.

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Content" wins.

If they still have equal points, the team with the highest points in "Artistic Interpretation" wins.



## WE HAVE NO BANNED MOVES



Another way to look at Animal Welfare could be making a list of banned moves.

In the FCI we have chosen a different way.

- The list would never be complete.
- Everything not on the list would have to be accepted.
- What is unsafe for one dog can be perfectly safe for another dog.
- We don't want to punish the trainers, who can train spectacular moves to look and be safe.

3 POINTS



3  
points

There are 9 points for all of the other sections – why only 3 for Animal Welfare?

- NOT because it is less important!
- Fewer issues to take into consideration.

NO DEDUCTIONS?



The philosophy behind the FCI rules is that we reward wanted behaviors – not punish unwanted behaviours.

We do not have boxes for deductions if you make this or that mistake – we have boxes for points that you earn for all the good stuff you do.

So you can win 3 points by having excellent Animal Welfare throughout your routine.

If there are small bits that worry the judge, you might get a little less.

## LESS THAN 3 POINTS?



Less than 3 points does not mean that you are not a good dog trainer or that you do not love your dog!

Less than 3 points does not mean that you are not an animal lover

Less than 3 points just means that there were small errors in your routine on the day. Just like in any other section.



## A PERFECT SCORE



You rarely get a perfect score in the 3 other sections.  
In Animal Welfare a perfect score is **not** unheard of!

At a Championship with all the best dogs and handlers in the world, a majority of the teams will get a perfect score.

**Don't be afraid to give a perfect 3 in this section.**

You do not give a lower score just because you need room for a higher score if someone later on the day performs better.

You only give a lower score, if you see a specific animal welfare problem in the performance.

## WHAT DOES THE RULES SAY?



The routine emphasizes the qualities of the dog (breed, personality, physical abilities, mental abilities etc.)

Health and safety of the dog.

Partnership.

## WHAT DOES THE FCI DOG DANCING JUDGES GUIDELINES SAY?



**The routine emphasizes the qualities of the dog (breed, personality, physical abilities, mental abilities etc.):**

The handler has considered the dog's body structure and temperament while choosing the moves.

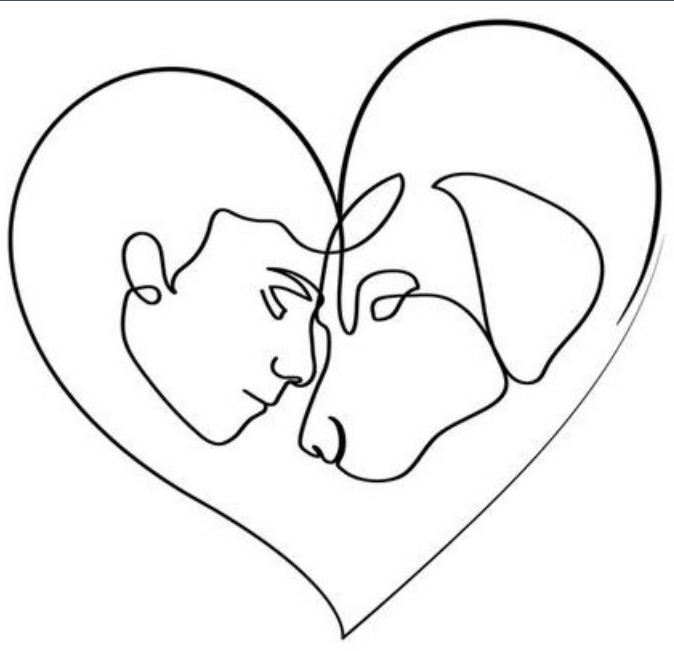
A Miniature Poodle is does often choose to stand on hind legs just because it can... A Bernese Mountain Dog should not stand on hind legs without support at all.

One size does not fit all!

The dog's physical and mental characteristics are portrayed in a good light in the routine.

- Choreograph the routine, so that a slower or heavier dog has time to perform the moves and is not rushed.
- Does the dog have time to respond to the cues or does it appear rushed?
- Does the choreography make the dog look like a great dog for this sport just because everything they do make the dog shine?

# WHAT DOES THE FCI DOG DANCING JUDGES GUIDLINES SAY?



## Health and safety of the dog.

- When putting together a routine, the handler has considered the capabilities of the dog and does not demand of it anything that would cause it harm or discomfort.

Does the heelwork dog consistently struggle to keep a parallel position when moving sideways and does it look physically difficult for it?

Does the freestyle dog struggle to jump high enough?

**Carmen Heritier will give you a lot more tools to judge this tomorrow.**



## THE DOG SHOULD WALK IN A NATURAL MANNER



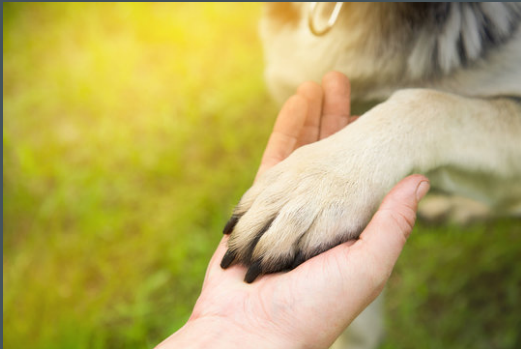
- The rules page 14:

**The dog should work in a natural manner.**

RULES & GUIDELINES for OBEDIENCE TRIALS  
describe this in more details:

“The dog walking in an unnatural position i.e. looking up at the handler so that the angle between the neck and spine is 90° or even less (looks straight up in an exaggerating way), should result in a severe drop in points. This could even lead to a zero, if there are other mistakes involved. The dog looking sideways (in an unnatural, exaggerated way) is an equally serious mistake. Thus the movement in heelwork must take place in a natural way. This does not mean that looking at the handler and keeping “eye contact” is wrong. It is the exaggeration and the dog walking in an unnatural position which are the mistakes.”

# WHAT DOES THE FCI DOG DANCING JUDGES GUIDLINES SAY?



- The dog is physically and mentally able to easily perform all the moves asked. None of the moves are repeated excessively or performed for substantial periods at a time.

Walking on hind legs can be nice – but does the dog have to do it all the way across the ring?

## WHAT DOES THE FCI DOG DANCING JUDGES GUIDELINES SAY?



### **Health and safety of the dog.**

- The handler has also considered the surface of the ring and the speed of the dog: if the floor surface doesn't allow performing some move safely, the handler has removed it to adjust the routine to the conditions available.
- Moves don't look wobbly or unstable. The dog looks in control of its body and movements at all times.  
If one team can perform a certain move in a controlled manner, then we do not mark it down. But if a different team performs the same move in a wobbly or unstable manner, then we do mark it down. So it is not the move we mark down, but that it is not performed safely.
- Props are stable and without any danger so that the exercises can be performed safely.
- The handler's costume and the handler's movement are also safe for the dog.

## WHAT DOES THE FCI DOG DANCING JUDGES GUIDELINES SAY?



### Health and safety of the dog.

- The dog doesn't show signs of excessive stress or significant signs of physical exertion.

Barking is not judged in this section, but if barking is a symptom of frustration or stress, then the stress or frustration can be judged in this section.

The dog should look as keen when it leaves the ring as when it enters the ring.

- It is important that the Dog Dancing Judges be able to differentiate when a dog is over-excited and happy from when the dog is over-excited and stressed and begins to struggle in their confident performance.

Does the keen and eager dog look “happy keen and eager” or “stressed eager”?



## PARTNERSHIP



### **Does the dog and handler appear as one team?**

The handler should never ignore the dog's visible discomfort.

The dog should want to be in the ring with the handler – and not try to leave the ring.

Does the handler stop to make sure the dog is okay after a minor accident (eg if the handler steps on the dog or have a bad landing after a jump)?

Can you see the love between dog and handler?

Can you see the love of performing?

## WHAT DO WE NOT JUDGE IN THIS SECTION?



- Avoid wild theories...  
*"If the wind comes from that direction and the handler gets blinded by the sun, then this could be dangerous"*  
  
Judge what you see – not what you fear you could see under different circumstances.
- Barking just because it is barking (this goes in Presentation)
- "Shit happens" - accidental mishaps is not an animal welfare issue.
- If you should disqualify the team.

## WHEN DO WE DISQUALIFY RATHER THAN JUDGE ANIMAL WELFARE



### 3.2 DISQUALIFICATION (page 11 in the rules)

The following items will lead to disqualification:

- A different handler or dog participating
- An attempt to mislead the judges
- Cheating
- Not obeying doping rules
- Bringing food or other motivational objects into the ring (these can be e.g. toys, clickers etc.)
- If the dog is out of control and leaves the ring. If the dog accidentally steps outside of the ring while continuously working, points will be deducted.
- If the dog urinates or defecates in the ring.
- If the handler explicitly turns the routine into a training round (the music will continue until the end).
- **Any form of harsh handling (verbal or physical) is never tolerated.**
- If the dog attacks another dog or person in the venue or on the show grounds.
- The dog being on the leash in the ring during the competition.
- Double handling – assistance from outside the ring.
- **Touching the dog in order to control it. The handler is not allowed to initiate the touch. This should be done by the dog.**
- Any other violation of these rules may lead to disqualification.

## THE JUDGES GUIDE ON DISQUALIFICATION



### **The rules:**

Any form of harsh handling (verbal or physical) is never tolerated.

### **The guidelines:**

Any form of harsh handling (verbal or physical) is never tolerated. Clear cases will lead to a disqualification, milder cases result in deductions.

### **The rules and the guidelines:**

Touching the dog in order to control it. The handler is not allowed to initiate the touch. This should be done by the dog.



## WHAT IF THE DOG IS UNWELL/INJURED?



### 1.3.3 Health (page 6 in the rules)

Dogs which suffer from contagious diseases or infections or have hookworms, scabies or any other vermin, may not participate in FCI International Dog Dancing competitions. Dogs that are taped, stitched or bandaged are also not allowed to participate.

### 1.3.4 Anti-doping and vaccination regulations ((page 6 in the rules)

The national vaccination regulations and anti-doping regulations must be followed according to the country that the dog represents and those of the country where the competition takes place. These should be published on the website of the country in which the competition takes place.

### **The Dog Dancing Judges Guidelines say (page 7):**

In the case of injury: if the dog is injured during the routine, the head judge can stop the routine. The panel of Dog Dancing Judges may discuss on how to proceed in each individual case.

## LINKS / SOURCES



- [http://www.fci.be/en/Dog-Dancing-1352 .html](http://www.fci.be/en/Dog-Dancing-1352.html)
- <https://www.dkk.dk/uploads/documents/Aktiviteter/Lydinghed/FCI-KL-1-2-og-3.pdf>