

INSTRUCTIONS

THE GRADING:

EXCELLENT (red ribbon) = a quality dog. In addition to "excellent" you can award "CC quality", a pink ribbon after you have placed the dogs, which means that the dog is of Champion quality.

VERY GOOD (blue ribbon) = a decent dog but not quite top class.

GOOD (yellow ribbon) = a plain dog.

SATISFACTORY (green ribbon) = pet quality, a really poor specimen of the breed. You can recognise the breed but not much else.

DISQUALIFIED = dogs with faults which are mentioned as disqualifying in the breed standard, also monorchids and cryptorchids. Aggressive dogs are always disqualified, in any breed, as well as overly shy ones. If a dog is disqualified because of aggressive behaviour, a report to the Kennel Club has to be written. The ring stewards have the form for that. If a dog is disqualified three times for his aggressiveness, he will be banned from showing. In very serious cases once may be enough for being banned. Also always dogs with anything that is unsound or abnormal, (like knuckling over, entropic eyes, kinky tails, overshot mouths, clearly undershot mouth in those breeds it is not allowed, canine teeth going into the roof of the mouth, depending on the seriousness of the case, albinism etc.) Also a dog totally lacking in breed type can be disqualified, depending on the seriousness of the case.

CANNOT BE JUDGED (excused) = temporarily out of order, like limping or ill. Also a dog which is in improper clip, or is clipped although it should be stripped, or not trimmed at all, or is so enormously fat that you cannot decide its real quality, or is totally untrained and out of control.

Note all chalking, spraying, dyeing etc. is strictly forbidden, and if you find any foreign stuff put on the coat, the dog must be excused. Only using clean water is allowed.

You can always lower the grading, even if the general impression is excellent, but there are some faults in details, depending on the seriousness of the case.

You may award as many of any of these grades or "CC quality" as you like. Remember withholding the highest grades is no big deal, it happens all the time. If you feel none of the dogs in the breed or the class would be worth becoming champion in any circumstances, you just withhold "CC quality" or award "very good" or "good" to all and they will not come into challenge. In all classes the "excellents" and are placed 1-4, and then you can decide how many "CC quality" you want to give.

All the "excellent and CC quality" dogs, which were placed in their classes return for the challenge, or to the Best Dog or Best Bitch-class as it is called here. You place four of them. So the four best dogs can be from one class, or two from one class, one from another class and the fourth one from another class, or three from one class and one from another etc. **Remember, don't change your previous order of placings in the previous classes unless there are some really significant reasons to do so (if a class winner becomes lame, attacks someone and such things)!** Changing the order is not really against the rules, but it looks stupid. However, if you do so, the reason must be mentioned in the critique. The ring stewards will place the dogs in class and placing order, when they call them in, and they will remind you from which classes the dogs came from.

When a dog has been graded "CC quality" it means that it is worth the champion title, and so the ring steward will hand out the CC to the best placed one who is eligible to compete for it. In Finland the Finnish Champions cannot be awarded any more CCs, nor the dogs who have the required amount of CCs but are not qualified in the required field trials (in hunting and working breeds). You don't need to worry about the CCs, the ring steward will do it. The next best eligible one will get the res CC.

In an international show the CACIBs are given, too. The CACIB (the award for the International Champion title) is usually given to the best one of each sex, with the exception that a dog must be at least 15 months old to be able to get a CACIB. Neither junior class dogs nor the veteran class dogs can take the CACIB. So if the winner is a junior or a veteran, the CACIB goes to the next eligible one, likewise the reserve CACIB. The ring stewards will take care of this, too. Best male and best female then meet for the BOB and BOS, and then also the best veteran of the breed is chosen (must be graded "excellent"), and that one will go to the Best Veteran in Show final.

Certain newly recognised breeds are not eligible to get CACIBs.

Please, don't change the placings unless there is a real reason (dog becomes lame or is misbehaving)! If you for example have made a veteran class male Best of Breed, don't put the female veteran as Best Veteran of the Breed over him, it would't be logic!

The puppy class is unofficial, there are no gradings, you only place them 1-4. You can give "prize of honour" to all those you find very promising, and then choose best puppy of the breed of the male and female puppy winners. If you don't think the puppies are particularly promising, don't award any "prizes of honour"!

The breeder's class consists of four dogs bred by one person. They can be out of different combinations and litters. Each one of the four must be graded at least "very good". The team is judged by its overall quality and evenness, and each team is given a written critique. If you think the team shows that this is a quality breeder, you can award a "prize of honour", and then pick out the best of the teams, if there are more than one in the breed. Only one breeder's team of each breed, the best one, comes to compete for the "Best Breeder's Group of the Show".

THE WRITTEN CRITIQUE

It is important, that in the written critique you mention the main virtues and shortcomings of the dog. Start with the general impression, like saying something about the size, proportions and type. Then continue by saying something about the head, eyes, ears, neck, then the body, legs and feet, tail, and then something about the coat and movements, may be the behaviour and if there are some other breed essentials. It is important, that the owner will understand why the dog got whatever it got, and why that one won this one. So, when you award a lower grading, say clearly what was wrong! Our exhibitors are used to hear the real truth, so you don't need to be polite, be honest! And don't be too generous with the gradings! If you don't like the dogs, just say it! Withholding the highest grades is not a big deal, it happens all the time. The experienced exhibitors value the judges, of whom they can see what the judge wants and what he doesn't want. Remember that the written critique is very revealing, the experienced exhibitor immediately sees if you know what you are talking about! Its purpose is to give hint and advise to the breeders. The novice exhibitor wants to get the expert judge's opinion of his dog. Many of our exhibitors realize, that their dogs are no big stars, but they find it interesting to collect different judges' critiques.

OTHER REMARKS

You can explain orally your placings if you feel like it. Also if you need for ex. disqualify a dog, you can tell gently the reason to the exhibitor. You can ask the age of the dog and give instructions to the handlers. The exhibitors are not allowed to talk to you unless you ask something.

Note, that all double-handling is forbidden. If you see somebody trying to attract the dog from the ringside with squeaky toys, throwing balls, shouting etc. stop it immediately.

Don't take into consideration any other veterinary documents than those written on the Finnish Kennel Club official form, and you don't need to take even that into consideration. The exhibitor should give the document to the ring steward who translates it for you.

The judge must check the testicles of all male dogs. Monorchids, cryptorchids and castrated ones are disqualified, but you can give a written critique to them.

Docked and/or cropped dogs are not allowed to be shown in Finland, if they are born after 1.1.2001, no matter from which country they come from. Cropped/docked dogs older than that can be shown. In these breeds it should not have any effect on your judging if the dog is cropped/docked or not, unless the tail or ear carriage is faulty. Nowadays also removing the dewclaws is not allowed, so please, don't penalise dogs with dewclaws!

You can measure every dog if you like. You can ask for the measuring stick, there should be some in the office, in case you feel you need it. We also have the valid current FCI breed standards in the office, if you need to check something.

If there are any problems in the ring, ask for the show committee or show instructor. The ring stewards are usually very experienced and able to solve the problems and they should be familiar with all the regulations. They also have the booklet of rules in the ring.

Dogs coming too late for judging the class can have a written critique and grading, but they cannot be placed. The class is considered to be judged when you have decided your placings.

THE CLASSES

Puppy class (inofficial, from 7 to 9 months)

Junior class (from 9 to 18 months)

Intermediate class (from 15 to 24 months)

Open class (for all dogs at least 15 months)

Working class (for dogs at least 15 months old and qualified in working/hunting trials, also the racing/coursing sighthounds)

Champion class (any Champion title holders)

Veteran class (at least 8 years old)

Breeder's class (4 dogs entered in official classes, bred by same person, all graded at least "excellent" or "very good" in this show)

OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SHOWS

To become a Finnish Champion a dog needs to gain three CCs, one of which must be won when the dog is at least two years old. So no dogs under two years of age can become Champions. In the working and hunting breeds the dog needs to be qualified in field trials, too. In the Champion class, however, the dogs are not necessarily Finnish Champion. A dog holding the Ch title of any country can be entered into Champion class. You don't need to be polite and award "excellent" to the Champion class dogs if you don't feel they deserve it.

To become an International Champion a dog must collect four CACIBs in three different countries, and between gaining the first one and the last one there must be at least one year. In the working/hunting breeds only two CACIBs from two countries are needed, plus the trials. The amount of international shows where CACIBs are awarded is limited by the FCI, according to the number of dogs, shows and entries in each member country. In Finland we have about 40 all-breed shows yearly,

of which 20 are international ones with CACIBs. Besides that, every breed club can have its own breed specialty show, and the local clubs can have shows for one or two groups. The biggest of our shows is the main show of the FKC, the Helsinki International Winner Show, (usually about 8000 entries) and even the smallest ones have at least 1000 dogs. The Finnish Kennel Club has 150 000 members, and yearly we register about 40 000 - 50 000 dogs.

Everybody has the right to exhibit, one doesn't need to be a member to be an exhibitor.

There are no professional handlers in Finland, most of the exhibitors are the owners of the dogs, and there are always many newcomers, so, please, be patient with inexperienced handlers!

The student judges, or trainee judges are usually already judges qualified for some breeds but they are studying some new ones. The main judge is supposed to teach them. They are not writing, but you can discuss with them and tell what do you think about the dogs. The trainee judge must not interfere your decisions. If the entry is big and you don't have much time for the trainee, he/she may just stand there and listen your dictating. You only need then to sign his/her paper. This is part of their education. They will only be qualified for a new breed after passing the final exam organised by the breed club.

In the group finals we have pre-judging. In the pre-judging ring you go over the dogs, and then in the main ring they just come, make a round and you can make a cut, pick out eight or ten dogs (depends on you how many, if the show committee hasn't given any other instructions) for further consideration before making your final decision. You can ask them to go up and down, round or whatever you like. Then you tell the placings to the ring steward, who brings the paper to the speaker. The speaker then announces first the fourth one, then third, etc. and you hand the rosettes to them. We do the photographing immediately in the ring and we ask you to stay with the winner for the photos.