2009 Membership Handbook

www.4rk9s.com

Phone (319) 366-5668

910 Second Avenue SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

"Iowa's First Dog Agility Club"

4RK9s 2009 MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

2009 Officer/Coordinators....3
Important Dates and Deadlines....4
Membership....5
How to become a member....5
Membership Responsibilities & Benefits....6
Additional Active Member's Benefits....6
Where to go for help....7
Class Payment Policy....8
Members Discount....8
Class Certificates....8
Maximum number of students....8
Building Policies & Rules....9
Legal Requirements:....9
General Rules:....9
Building Usage Times:....9
Special Guest – Definition and Rules....10
Weather-Related Cancellations....10
In Case of Emergency....10
Building Keys....11
4rk9s Key Policy rev. 02-04....11
Committee, Instructor or Board Member Access Key Option....11
Key Rental Program....11
Behavioral and Performance Policy....13
Behavior Guidelines....13
Appendix A
Nominating Committee Responsibilities....14
Appendix B
Membership Application Form....15
Appendix C
Trial Helper Duties....17

2009 Officer/Coordinators

Board of Directors

President	Lou Ann O'Malley	president@4rk9s.com
Vice President	Fran Roushar	vicepresident@4rk9s.com
Treasurer	Johnnette Ulch	treasurer@4rk9s.com
Recording Secretary	Jessica Wulfekuhle	recsec@4rk9s.com
Membership Secretary	Sandy Miller	memsec@4rk9s.com
Director	Margaret Plasencia	director2@4rk9.com
Director/Chair of the Board	Helen Venneman	

2009 Trial Committee

Chairperson	Johnnette Ulch	johnnetteulch@netins.net
Secretary	Becky Gilchrist	ebgilly@mchsi.com
Agility Co-Chairperson	Open	
Obedience Co-Chairperson	Liz Drexler	aedrex@netins.net
Raffle	Sandy Miller Margaret Plasencia	sandy@wiscons.com rzp@juno.com
Food	Pat Kramer	pat.kramer@mchsi.com

Building Committee

	Helen and Jim Venneman	

Coordinators

Agility Classes	Diana Pesek	agilitycoordinator@4rk9s.com
Obedience Classes	Peggy Freeburg	obediencecoordinator@4rk9s.com
Newsletter	Jessica Wulfekuhle	mrs.wulfie@gmail.com
Fun Match	Liz Drexler (Obedience) Diana Pesek (Agility)	aedrex@netins.net agilitycoordinator@4rk9s.com
Website	Bryon Wiscons	bryon@4rk9s.com

Important Dates and Deadlines

General Membership Meetings:

2nd Monday of each month
7:30 – 8:30 pm
Meetings are held at the Club building, unless otherwise noted.
Each meeting counts 1 hour towards the 12 hours needed for active membership.
See Weather Related Cancellations for more information.

Board Meetings:

When needed.

Meeting Agenda:

Distributed no later than one week prior to the meeting. Suggestions/requests for agenda topics must be turned into the President no later than one week prior to the meeting. New topics presented at the meeting will be discussed if time allows or may be tabled until the next meeting.

Membership

How to become a member

Each applicant must complete the following (within one year of the applicant's initial meeting):

1. Attend one general club meeting prior to completion of the following. If interested in becoming a member the Membership Secretary will provide the applicant a copy of the handbook and place him/her on the mailing list for the newsletter and other general announcements.

2. Seven (7) week class or seven workouts.

3. Twelve (12) hours of work for the club.
   **If a family is applying, each member of the family must complete twelve (12) hours.
   **If a Junior member applies (person 8-18 years old), they must complete eight (8) hours of work for the club.
   **See Volunteering Opportunities for Applicants for ideas for this work.

4. Complete the Membership Application Form including three (3) signatures from Active Members with at least one (1) year membership each. (See form at end of this document)
   **Two people from the same family cannot sponsor an applicant.

Following completion of the above, applicant shall attend a general club meeting for introduction and the first reading of their application. At least one sponsor must also be present at the applicant's first reading.

Applicant shall then attend a second general club meeting for the second reading of their application and to submit their name for election as a Member. Election shall be by written ballet and applicants will be notified by mail within 14 days of acceptance or denial of membership.

Membership Dues

Initiation Fee:	$20 Single	$30 Family	$10 Junior (Age 8-18)
Annual Fee:	$20 Single	$30 Family	$10 Junior (Age 8-18)

A family is defined as anyone living under the same roof.

Annual fee is due on or before January 1st of each year or person will have to re-apply for membership and fulfill ALL requirements before being reinstated.

Members who join on or after October 1st will be considered paid in full for the following year.

Volunteering Opportunities for Applicants

This work can include but is not limited to

- setup/tear down for fun matches or trials
- work as a Steward, Gatekeeper, Timer, Registrar, etc. at fun matches or trial (see Appendix B for explanations of some of these positions)
- work on a committee
- build/repair equipment
- assist in cleaning the Building
- assist instructors with classes

- Audit a class. Write down what instructor says, make diagrams, etc. Write it up and give to Agility/Obedience instructor or Coordinator. They can use it for training material for other instructors. (Make arrangements with Coordinator and with instructor).

Membership Responsibilities & Benefits

ACTIVE MEMBER

Single Member: Donates 12 hours each 6-month block (January through June; July through December). This will be prorated depending on date of membership.

Family Members: Donate 12 hours per person each 6-month block (January through June; July through December). Each member of the family must have completed the requirements to become a member before being allowed family membership status. This will be prorated depending on date of membership.

Junior Member: Donates eight (8) hours each 6-month block (January through June; July through December). This will be prorated depending on date of membership.

Benefits of being an Active Member (see following pages for more benefits)

1. Receives monthly newsletter
2. Eligible to vote
3. Eligible for key rental program
4. Given first opportunity to sign up for seminars
5. Eligible for special "members only" events
6. Access to full-time training facility with classes, fun matches, seminars, and free time available (see key rental program).
7. Eligible to earn Class Certificates. These certificates can be applied toward payment of Classes and/or Key Rental. A single Class Certificate is valued at ½ Standard Class cost (currently $42.50).

NON-ACTIVE MEMBER

A Non-Active Member is a person who has fulfilled the initial membership requirements but has not completed the required hours of work for the club per six (6) month block (see above).

Benefits of a Non-Active Member

1. Receives monthly newsletter
2. Use of full time training facility during open workouts, fun matches, seminars, and classes.

EXCEPTIONS may be granted by petitioning the Board.

Additional Active Member's Benefits

Class Fees - Members receive 25% off class fees. Effective November 1, 2001.

Building Committee Members - Members putting in twelve hours (per six month block) on the Building Committee will receive 2 Class Certificates.

Obedience and Agility Coordinators – will receive two Class Certificates every 6 months.

Open Agility, Obedience or Games Leader - will receive two Class Certificates every 7 weeks.

Instructors - (Responsible for all aspects of instructing a class.)

Standard (6-7 weeks)	Receive two Class Certificates.
Mini-course (3-4 weeks)	Receive one Class Certificate.

Note: Available to Active Members only. Inactive Members (during the first six months of becoming inactive) may instruct a class if they meet the necessary requirements. However, an Inactive Member will only receive credit toward hours and not the certificate.

Assistants - (Works with the instructor. Responsibilities will vary at the request of the instructor.)

Standard (6-7 weeks)	Receive one Class Certificate.
Mini-course (3-4 weeks)	Receive one Class Certificate.

Note: Available to Active Members only. Provisional Members and Inactive Members (during the first six months of becoming inactive) may assist a class if they meet the necessary requirements. However, those members will only receive credit toward hours and not the certificate.

Apprentice - (Someone who is interested in becoming an assistant or instructor. The Apprentice shadows the instructor to learn as much as possible. There is some "hands on" with the dogs.)
Hours credit only

Helper - (Someone who helps setting up & moving equipment per the instructor's request.)
Hours credit only

Observer - (Someone who wants to watch and learn how the class is taught.)

Courses Defined

Standard	7-8 weeks	$85
Mini-course	4-5 weeks	$42.50
Special	1-2 hours	fee to be determined

Fun Matches

Judges	Receive two runs at no charge. Any additional runs at current fee. Includes non-members.

Where to go for help

Sometimes it is useful to have an idea what the Officers and Committee Members have for duties when trying to answer questions. Of course, new members can always ask current members for guidance in getting help.

President – The President presides at all meetings of the Club and performs duties normally associated with the office. The President can vote on all questions submitted to the Club and the President may appoint various committees to perform certain duties and cancel such appointments, subject to the approval of the Board.

Vice-President – In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice-President performs all of the President's duties. Additionally the Vice-President maintains correspondence with the UKC, NADAC and other national dog agility and obedience clubs.

Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary keeps a complete record of all meetings of the Club and of any matters ordered by the Club. The record is included in the Club's newsletter. The Recording Secretary gives each member of the Board a copy of the Board's prior meeting minutes prior to each Board meeting.

Membership Secretary – The Membership Secretary keeps a complete record of all membership applications. The Membership Secretary notifies each new member of acceptance into the club, and makes available to all members a current copy of the By-Laws and a list of membership, its Officers, Directors and Committees. The Membership Secretary keeps a complete roll of members and their contact information. The Membership Secretary is responsible to see that members are notified of all meetings.

Treasurer – The Treasurer collects and receives all moneys due the Club, makes receipts and records all transactions. The Treasurer holds all passbooks and pays all bills and expenses of the Club. The Treasurer gives a report at each meeting and makes that report available for the Club's newsletter.

Class Payment Policy

Payment holds your spot in a class. No exceptions. Payment may be in the form of a check and/or Class Certificates (see section on Membership Responsibilities & Benefits as well as following section for additional information on Class Certificates). Payment will be accepted on a first come first serve basis. In the event that in one day's mail, more payments are received than spots left available, the envelopes will be drawn at random until the remaining spots are filled.

Payment must be mailed directly to the coordinator. If payment is mailed to the club building by mistake, you must notify the appropriate coordinator so it can be picked up from the building. Note that this may delay your opportunity of reserving a spot in a class.

Notification that a class has filled will be emailed (or mailed) as soon as it fills.

Once the class is full, a waiting list will be kept in the event someone is unable to attend the class and a spot opens up. Payments from those on the waiting list will be returned within a week of the start of the class unless otherwise requested by the student. Those people on the waiting list will be notified (via email or mail) of a future class of the same or similar type one week prior to the official announcement of that class. This notification does not reserve a spot in the class, but gives that person an opportunity to mail in payment prior to the official announcement.

Checks are held until the class has started unless otherwise requested by the student.

Members Discount

Active, Inactive and Provisional Members receive a 25% discount for classes.

Class Certificates

Members can earn Class Certificates. (See section under Membership Responsibilities & Benefits). Class Certificates are valued at ½ Standard Class cost (currently $42.50). You can redeem as many certificates for a class as you desire but you **do not get any money or credit for unused dollars when you redeem a Class Certificate.** You can apply your unused dollar credit to another dog in the same class or toward another class if taken at the same time.

Class Certificates are to be sent together with the registration forms. If you want to use a certificate you have not yet received for a class, send dollar payment as normal with a note indicating your desire to swap the coupon for the check at a later date but prior to the start of the class.

Maximum number of students

For Beginner Level Classes there is a maximum of 5 dogs per instructor/assistant (including Beginner Agility, Advanced Beginner Agility and Basic Obedience). For all other classes total size is determined by the Instructor.

Building Policies & Rules

Legal Requirements:

By law the Club must keep up to date shot records of all dogs that have stepped into our building for one year. There is a four drawer file cabinet at the North end of the Building and the top file is for these records. There are monthly files (Jan, Feb, Mar, etc) for registration forms and shot records of dogs who have taken classes during that month. Each year during February the previous records get tossed as new records get added for the current year classes. People that just come to open workouts must fill out a liability form and their shot records gets stapled to it and it get put in the first month they come to an open workout and that stays on file for a year.

Members are required to put their shot records in alphabetic files in the same drawer. Members replace their files as their dog's shots are updated. Once a year in January the Members files are checked and a request for new records is sent to all members.

General Rules:

- The use of shock collars in the building is PROHIBITED.
- Bitches in season (in heat) will NOT be allowed in classes or workouts. One exception: Members with keys may train at the building with a bitch in season ONLY IF (1) the female is wearing doggie panties, and (2) no one else is in the building working out at the same time.
- NO physical abuse of the dog will be tolerated. You may be asked to leave. The instructor's ruling is final.
- Aggressive dogs will NOT be allowed on the grounds. The instructor's ruling is final.
- Do NOT allow your dog to sniff or closely approach other dogs unless you have permission from the other dog's owner.
- Clean up after your dog(s) inside and out. Cleanup material is available. Ask for them if your dog has an accident.
- Do NOT allow your dog to go on any equipment they have not been properly trained on.
- NO personal property may be left on the premises without permission.
- Only club members may keep their crate(s) in the building on a regular basis. There is a limit of two crates per member and three crates per family membership allowed to be kept at the building. Members need to be considerate in the fact that there are several members with several dogs and not a lot of crating space in the building.
- The Club shall exclude any wolf or wolf hybrid from any club function. This exclusion shall not apply to functions where the sanctioning body, such as UKC, allows wolf or wolf hybrid participation.

Building Usage Times:

Group Classes & Other Scheduled Events

Scheduled Events including classes take precedence over all other uses of the building. The current schedules are available on the Calendar page at **www.4rk9s.com**.

Private Training Lessons
It is 4rk9's policy to provide the majority of training opportunities in-group classes, however if a club member deems that a dog and handler can best be served through private lessons, the following procedures should be followed.

- Dog must be taking classes or enrolled in an upcoming class of 4RK9's for these lessons.
- Every effort should be made to assure safety of the dog, handler and instructor.
- No one is required to offer his or her services as an instructor.
- Instruction time should be scheduled for a time when the building is not normally in use.
- Club members should be notified by e-mail **48 hours** in advance that the building would be in use at a specific time.
- Private instruction time will be limited to a half-hour costing $45. The instructor will collect the fee.
- The number of private lessons will be kept at a minimum.
- The goal of private instruction is for the dog to be able to return to group classes, whenever possible.

Individual Usage by participants in the Key Rental Program and their Guests
See the Handbook section regarding the Key Rental Program for guidelines of Building Usage by Individuals.

Special Guest – Definition and Rules

1) Handler who is not a club member of 4RK9s Dog Agility Club.

2) Eligible to use the building only under the following conditions:
   - During Scheduled Workouts at the current training fee. Fee is per handler. Multiple dogs allowed.
   - As a guest of a Key Rental Member. See the Handbook section regarding the Key Rental Program for fees and other guidelines.

3) Must have a signed Liability Waiver and current vaccination records (or equivalent) on file prior to use of the building (see Legal Requirements).

Weather-Related Cancellations

Any 4RK9s class or meeting will be canceled if Kirkwood Community College has canceled its classes due to threatening weather.

Only exception is if Alliant Energy shuts the school down due to excessive heat. In this case assume the class or meeting is being held unless you receive an e-mail (or phone call) canceling the event

In the event Kirkwood Community College is out of session, assume the class or meeting is being held unless you receive an e-mail (or phone call) canceling the event.

A make-up class will be arranged by the instructor who will contact each student.

Meetings that are canceled due to weather will be postponed one week (to the 3rd Monday).

In Case of Emergency

If notice a problem with the building such as the roof leaking badly or broken plumbing contact the Club President and report the matter. If you can not get the President contact other officers or experienced Members until someone acknowledges that matter will be taken care of.

Building Keys

4rk9s Key Policy rev. 02-04

Active members with twelve hours of recorded **approved* volunteer time during a six-month period are eligible for key rental. First time key rental requires a $20 key deposit, which will be refunded upon return of the keys. Key rental must be purchased in a six-month block, January-June or July-December. Only the active member who is renting the key is eligible to use the key. Guests and non-active members cannot use these keys.

*Approved volunteer time is considered instructing, class coordinators, cleaning the building, helping at trials, helping at any 4rk9s sponsored event or match, attending a monthly meeting, holding a position which requires ongoing work at the building, or serving on the executive board. Volunteer hours not listed above will need the board's approval, exceptions will be granted if you email any board member and gain the boards approval.

Committee, Instructor or Board Member Access Key Option

Any active member sitting on the board, committee member, class coordinator or instructor is eligible for an "access only" key. These keys allow the active member the ability to perform their tasks without requiring them to "rent" a key. You may use the key for access to the building for training purposes *only if* you pay the five-dollar training fee for each training session used. Only the assigned member can use the access key, with the exception that they temporarily loan it out for another member to perform duties required at the building. The keys cannot be loaned out for others to train.

To acquire an access key you will need to contact the membership secretary or the agility/obedience class coordinators who will disburse the keys and track them for security reasons. If you have a duty that is not listed above you may email any board member and ask for board approval to obtain a key.

Key Rental Program

Who: 4RK9's Active Members Only. Junior Members must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian or responsible adult approved by the parent/legal guardian.

Guests Active members who have not rented a key may be admitted as guests by an Active Key Member but each active member guest is required to pay the current Workout training fee ($5.00).

Non-members are also allowed to work their dog as a guest of the Active Key Member but they required to pay the current non-member Workout training fee ($7.00).

Non-members are also allowed to "view" the building or visit with the Active Member while the Active Member is training. No fee is due if the Non-member is not working a dog.

Responsibilities: It is the Key Member's responsibility to ensure that Proofs of Vaccinations (rabies) and signed Liability Waivers are available for every dog using the facility. Member dogs will have their proofs/waivers on file. Guest dogs must have their proof/waiver with them.

It is also the Key Member's responsibility to ensure that any training fees collected from guests are sent to the treasurer.

When: The Active Key Member (with or without guest) may use the building at no additional fee during any unscheduled building hours (i.e.: classes, seminars, fun matches, etc.).

Deposit: Twenty dollars ($20). There will be a full refund upon return of key.

Purchase Requirements: Keys are only rented in two 6-month blocks: January through June, July through December. Cost for new key membership will be pro-rated based on the month started. New members may elect to purchase a key anytime during their first six months of membership. After the first six months, key must be purchased for the regular six-month blocks noted above

Monthly Fee: Single Membership: $120 per 6-month block

Family Membership: $120 per 6-month block for first member
$60 per 6-month block for each additional member

Junior Member independent of a Family Membership:
$60 per 6-month block

Payment is due in full prior to the start of each 6-month block. Separate post dated checks for each month may be given to Treasurer who will deposit these checks on the first of each month.

Fee Refund: Only available in the case of an injury or severe illness to the handler or dog disabling either from training for more than one month period.

EXCEPTIONS may be granted by petitioning the Board.

Behavioral and Performance Policy

Behavior Guidelines

A non-contact incident of aggression with a person or dog will result in a written warning regarding the dog being disciplined from a 4RK9s activity. After 2 (two) written warnings, the membership will decide if the dog is to be:

- Banned permanently
- One-year suspension
- Muzzled
- No action taken

A dog that has a contact incident of aggression will be immediately suspended from all club activities until a meeting of the general membership, where a course of action can be decided upon. Options same as above.

A bite is any contact with the skin.

Any bite incident will result in the instructor suspending the dog immediately, writing up an incident report and having all parties involved write up an incident report.

Copy of written warnings and incident reports are to be kept with the Recording Secretary and club President.

Appeal Process:

One appeal allowed
Simple majority rules
2/3 vote to overturn the decision

Class instructor guidelines:

Club profile to be refilled out prior to each class. No exceptions.
Instructors will read guidelines/class rules to each class the first night.
Incident report forms will be kept in box with the instructors.

Appendix A

Nominating Committee Responsibilities

From our By-Laws:
SECTION V.
Nominations. No person may be a candidate in the Club election who has not been nominated. To be nominated for an office, a member must have attended 1/3 of the regular meetings of the Club in the previous 12 months and be an Active Member in good standing with a minimum of one year membership. During November, the Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) Active Members. The Board shall name a Chair of the committee, whose duty shall be to call a meeting on or before December.

(a) The Committee shall nominate at least one candidate for each open position on the Board.
(b) The Committee shall notify each nominee.
(c) Additional nominations may be made at the meeting prior to the annual meeting by any member in attendance provided that the nominee does not decline when his/her name is proposed.
(d) All nominations for office must be distributed to each member of the Club at least ten (10) days prior to the Annual Meeting and/or shall be included in the Club newsletter, which follows such nomination.

Preliminary Ballot
This ballot can be included in the December newsletter or mailed to each member with the candidate names gathered so far.

Explanation / Instructions for Final Ballot
Must be distributed to each member at least ten days prior to the Annual Meeting AND with enough days allowed in which absentee ballots can be returned to be included.

Final Ballot Mailing:
One Ballot (or two if family membership applies)
One Ballot Only Envelope (or two if family membership applies)
One Self-Addressed Envelope
Reminder of Annual Meeting & Agenda

Only ACTIVE members (min. 12 hrs each from July – Dec 2001) who are in good standing are qualified to vote. This means no outstanding money owned to the club and membership dues are paid.

Ballot Instructions:
1. Mark an X in the box for your selection of candidates for the Board positions.
2. Enclose Ballot only in small Ballot Only envelope. Seal. Do not write anything on this envelope.
3. Enclose Ballot Only Envelope in larger Self-Addressed Envelope. For family memberships, enclose both Ballot Only Envelopes in the larger Self-Addressed Envelope.
4. Your return address must be on the larger Self-Addressed Envelope. This applies to absentee as well as ballots brought to the meeting.
5. Mail envelope to the club building or bring to the meeting.

At the meeting:
1. Note – the absentee ballots will be collected from the building late on date determined and brought to the dinner.
2. Envelopes with Return Addresses will be marked against the list of Active Members to ensure no duplicates. The outer envelope will be opened and thrown away. The Ballot Only Envelopes will be placed in a box.
3. The Ballot Only Envelopes will be opened and votes tallied.
4. Final results will be announced by the President.

IF YOU MAILED IN THE "PRELIMINARY" BALLOT,
IT WILL BE THROWN AWAY AND WILL NOT COUNT.

Appendix B

Membership Application Form

4RK9s Dog Agility Club

Membership Application Form

Name _____ Application / Renewal Date: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail Address _____

Occupation _____ Work Phone (optional) (_____) _____

**** If filing a RENEWAL application, skip to "jobs" interested in. ****

What levels of obedience training have you completed / titles earned? _____

What levels of agility training have you completed / titles earned? _____

What breed(s) of dogs do you own / train? _____

What are your goals with your dog(s)? _____

_____

What are your goals with the club (how would you like to contribute)? _____

_____

Are you or have you ever been suspended/fined by any national dog club? ____ No ____Yes

If yes, explain: _____

Initiation Fee:	**$20 Single**	**$30 Family**	**$10 Junior (Age 8-18)**
Annual Fee:	**$20 Single**	**$30 Family**	**$10 Junior (Age 8-18)**

Club Sponsors (only Active Members with at least one year membership are eligible to be sponsors)

Signature: (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

Please check three of the following "jobs" you are interested in learning about and/or doing for the club:

___ administration	___ stewarding	___ fun match committee
___ teach obed/agil classes	___ training coordinator	___ trial chairperson/co-chair
___ class coordinator	___ hospitality	___ building maintenance/cleanup
___ equipment maintenance	___ publicity	___ other: _____

I agree to abide by the By-Laws of this club. Signed: _____

Any misleading information shall be subject to immediate dismissal.

Office use:

Date of Initial Meeting: _____ First reading _____ Second reading: _____

Mail to Membership Secretary: 910 2nd Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Appendix C

Trial Helper Duties

This information is not meant as a statement of the official duties but rather as guidelines to allow a new member to decide if they would be willing to volunteer for these positions.

The information was copied with slight modification from www.Agilitystewards.org.

Gate Steward

Job Requirements

- Strong Voice
- Confident nature
- Some idea of what is going on

Synopsis

The Gate Steward is responsible for getting the dog and handler teams into the ring in an orderly fashion as quickly as possible and making sure the scoring table (Scribe, Assistant Scribe, Timer) all know who is coming into the ring and in what order.

Detail

Typically while the walkthroughs for a particular class and range of jump heights are going on the Assistant Scribe and the Gate Steward figure out what order the teams are going into the ring. This is done in part based on who has checked in (all the while the Gate Steward is calling out to the exhibitors that are doing their walk through to check in) and noting any known absentees.

Once you are confident that everybody has checked in, any conflicts have been resolved the Gate Steward and Assistant Scribe order the scribe sheets in the order the teams are going to run.

Another piece of information you need to get is from the Judge. Find out when the Judge wants the next dog on the line during the run of the dog in the ring. Usually an easy to spot obstacle half way through the run or more is the "marker" where you are going to tell the dog "on deck" to take the line.

Scribe

Job Requirements

- Good Attention Span
- Reasonably Good Eyesight (must be able to see Judge's hand signals)

Synopsis

This can be an awfully tough job for people whose attention tends to wander. The scribe's job is to keep their attention on the judge during all runs and mark down whatever the judge signals. If the judge signals it, it gets marked. If the judge doesn't signal it, it doesn't get marked even if the scribe or a bystander sees it.

Before the first dog runs

Make a point of getting signals straight with the judge. Each judge may or may not have their own wrinkle to the signals that are pretty much standard in AKC agility. There are similar signals in NADAC but with slightly different meanings.

How to scribe

The teamwork that happens between the Scribe and the Scribe Assistant is crucial to the smooth running of a trial. That partnership along with the partnership between the Scribe Assistant and the Gate Steward if it is good then the part of the trial where the team is working will work very well.

Before the runs begin for a given class, the Scribe and Assistant Scribe need to work out between them who is writing times on the scribe sheets. Normally it is better for the Assistant Scribe to do this. On occasion I have seen one person fill all three positions (Scribe, Assistant Scribe and Timer) but this is definitely not ideal!

As a dog and handler team comes up to the line, the Assistant Scribe and the Scribe need to make sure that the Scribe has the correct scribe sheet. The Timer, after checking in with the Scribe and Assistant Scribe will give the team the "go ahead" and the run begins.

If the judge makes any hand signals, the Scribe marks the scribe sheet as appropriate.

There are two methods of marking a scribe sheet.

1. On the scribe sheet on the left side middle of the sheet there are "F","R","E" and "T" for AKC and "5","10" and "20" for NADAC. Some folks put "hash marks" next to the appropriate score for each penalty the Judge assesses.
2. Or... you can mark the appropriate penalty on the sheet.

For AKC method #2 seems to work the best, and for NADAC method #1 **definitely** works the best.

CPE works differently. Work with your judge to get your "signals straight" for the class you are scribing for.

Once the run is over, the scribe sheet gets marked with the time and the scribe sheet is then given to the Score Runner to take to the score table.

Timer

Job Requirements

- Good situational awareness
- Ability to use stopwatch

Synopsis

With the advent and near universal use of electronic timing this job has become a very easy job indeed.

Occasionally this job has been combined with the Scribe or Assistant Scribe position, but this is not an ideal situation as those two jobs are very busy jobs.

Pre Run

Before the first dog is run, and after the Judge has "wheeled" their course, get the standard course time for the course being run. This, doubled, is the maximum amount of time allowed in the ring for a dog and handler team before they are whistled out. Some judges will ask the timer to not do the actual whistling of the team and just signal to the judge when max course time has been exceeded.

Run the dogs!

When the first dog and handler are on the line, the show can begin. The timer checks in with the Assistant Scribe and Scribe and makes sure all is set to go. Next, a quick visual check of the course to make sure there aren't any spare people standing around, such an exhibitor chatting with the judge or a Bar Setter adjusting the second jump. It is also helpful if the Timer hollers out to the handler "Is that Phydeux?" or "who's this on the line, please?" to help the Assistant Scribe and Scribe be sure that the correct dog is actually on the line. Often a handler doesn't answer, but when the Scribe and Assistant Scribe indicate all is ready the Timer tells the dog and handler team in a clear voice: "You may go when ready".

Special note: Most electronic timer systems have a mechanical voice that is activated by a push button that does that job!

Another special note: Some judges prefer that you say "Timer is ready" to the Handler/Dog team.

Once the team has left the start line and before they clear the third obstacle, the Timer should check to make sure the clock is running.

Clock isn't running! Auugh!

In the event the clock does not start and the Timer notices this before the team has cleared the third obstacle the Timer should blow a whistle alerting the judge to this fact. Depending on how the run progresses from there (if it progresses) the Judge may elect to either put no time on the scribe sheet or have the team re-run for time.

Leash Runner

Job Requirements

- Must be able to walk back and forth repetitively
- Must be able to bend over to pick up a leash

Synopsis

This is a good job for a young child who is old enough to follow instructions, but not quite sophisticated enough to be a Timer

That being said there are lots of adults out there who would rather do this job than any of the other ringside positions.

The Leash Runner's job is to pick up the leash (and collar sometimes) left behind by a handler after they have started their run. The leash is then taken to the exit gate where the handler can pick it up in order to exit the ring with the dog under control

Often at times when a trial is organized the exit gates will have a leash stand where the leashes can be hung. A leash stand can simply be a fence post in the ground or at some trials clubs has used an object that sort of looks like a shepherd's cane (curly at the top with a hook, straight shank). Other clubs use a bucket for this purpose.

Some do's and don'ts of being a Leash Runner

- **Don't** block the Scribe's view of the Judge! This can result in a missed signal or other frustration.
- **Do** wait for the dog and handler to leave the line before picking up the leash
- **Don't** pat, talk to or otherwise distract the dog on the line! This won't make you very popular with the handler and really isn't fair.
- **Don't** jangle tags on collars when you pick up the leash and collar. This falls under the "don't distract the dog" heading above. Dogs can pick up on the sound of their collar and decided to investigate instead of pay attention to their handler.
- **Do** be aware of what is going on in the ring. For intance: if there is a lengthy delay of start (conversation with the Judge going on, malfunctioning timer unit needs a correction, papers and butterflies blowing about the ring, etc.) you the Leash Runner might suggest to the handler that the leash go back on their dog and that they "stand down" from the line to relieve stress.

While a Leash Runners might be considered "entry level" there's a lot of pride that can be take here for doing the job well.

Bar Setter (AKA Ring Crew)

Job Requirements

- Know what "jump heights" are and how to set them .
- Be able to bend a lot in order to pick up bars.

Synopsis

This may be an entry level position, but it is an important one. The smooth running of an agility trial can hang on how smoothly the Bar Setters get those bars where they belong.

Still, this is a job that youth or newcomers to the sport can be taught to do. Trials that make use of volunteer organizations like breed rescue, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts or 4H can leverage those bodies by having the Chief Ring Steward or designee spend some time teaching them how to set bars.

The Bar Setter is responsible at the beginning of each jump height division to set the bars on all jumps to the appropriate height as well as setting the table (AKC Standard) to the appropriate height.

If there is a chute on the course, one of the Bar Setters should be designated as being the "chute straightener" to make sure the chute does not become entangled on the next dog going through it.

As each jump division changes, the bars (and table) need to be changed to reflect that.

Additionally at trials where electronic timing is used care must be taken to make sure the "eyes" for the timer are set correctly.