JUDGE IN THE DOG SHOW

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ABSTRACT

A dog show (conformation show) is a competition where purebred dogs are evaluated against an official breed standard rather than against each other. A dog show judge is a licensed expert who evaluates these dogs to determine how closely they match the ideal physical and behavioral traits of their breed. [1, 2, 3]

What is a Dog Show?

Purpose: Originally created for breeders to evaluate breeding stock, modern shows identify dogs that best preserve or improve the health, structure, and temperament of a breed. [1, 2]
Breed Standard: A written description of the ideal specimen for each breed, covering coat, color, head shape, proportions, movement (gait), and temperament. [1, 2, 3]
Levels of Competition:
Breed Level: Dogs compete against others of the same breed and sex in class levels (puppy, open, etc.) to win titles like Winner's Dog or Winner's Bitch.
Best of Breed: Winners advance to compete against champion-titled dogs of that same breed.
Group Level: Breed winners move into one of seven official functional groups (e.g., Toy, Hound, Working, Terrier).
Best in Show: The top winner from each of the seven groups competes for the ultimate event title.
KEYWORDS-judge, dog show, competition,breed, expert,licensed, evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Role of a Dog Show Judge

Evaluation Process: The judge does not just look at the dog from a distance; they physically examine the dog's structure (teeth, bone density, muscle, coat) and watch it trot or gait in the ring. [1, 2, 3]
Licensing & Qualifications: Judges are certified or licensed by national or international kennel clubs (such as the Kennel Club of India or the American Kennel Club). [1, 2, 3]
Specialization Levels:
Single-breed / Group Judges: Certified to judge one or several related breeds.

All-Breed Judges ("All-rounders"): Qualified to judge all recognized breeds across all groups. [1, 2, 3]
Because dogs are judged based on how well they conform to their breed's breed standard, a judge must be intimately familiar with the particular breed's standard and must be able to analyze the qualities of the dog to determine its relative quality.

Usually a license as a dog judge is granted by either a breed association or a kennel club. The license specifies the different breeds over which the judge is qualified to officiate. Judges may study and, over time, apply for a license to judge a single breed, multiple breeds, or all recognized breeds. A judge who has successfully completed the requirements for judging all of the dog groups is known as a group judge. A judge who is licensed to judge all breeds is often referred to as an "all-rounder".[4,5,6]

In some cases the qualification and membership of a National-based organisation is the criteria as to how a judge might operate.[2][3] A few international groups and accreditation also exist [4]
Judges are most commonly licensed specifically to the registry with which they are affiliated (for example, American Kennel Club judges judge AKC shows). However, some registries choose to recognize licensed judges from other registries and organizations. Judging outside of one's country or registry is often an indication of a particular appreciation of that judge's skills and knowledge.
Some judges who are regulars at the larger English or American dog shows become well known among dog show participants and breeders and gain respect from large audiences for their ability to recognise good examples of the breeds that they judge. The reputations of the founder of Our Dogs, Theo Marples, and his son J.W. Marples, are examples of a family of well known judges.[5]

DISCUSSION

A dog show is an animal show; it is an event where dogs are exhibited. A conformation show, also referred to as a breed show, is a kind of dog show in which a judge, familiar with a specific dog breed, evaluates individual purebred dogs for how well the dogs conform to the established breed type for their breed, as described in a breed's individual breed standard.[1]

Dog shows can be in the means of evaluating dogs for breeding purposes. A conformation championship from a recognised national kennel club is generally considered as an indication of merit. Many breeders consider championships a prerequisite for breeding. Some critics argue that the shows can encourage selective breeding of traits and lower genetic diversity.[7,8,9]

The first modern conformation dog show was held in Newcastle Town Hall in Newcastle upon Tyne, England, in June 1859.[2]

Judging

A conformation dog show is not a comparison of one dog to another but a comparison of each dog to a judge's mental image of the ideal breed type as outlined in the individual breed's breed standard. Dog show judges attempt to identify dogs who epitomise the published standards for each breed. Some judgments must be subjective. As an example, what exactly entails a "full coat" or a "cheerful attitude", descriptions found in breed standards, can be learned different.

Judges are generally certified to judge one or several breeds, usually in the same group, but a few "all-breed" judges can judge a large number of breeds.[citation needed]

Winning
Dogs compete at dog shows to earn points or certification towards championship titles.

The Kennel Club (UK) system, which is also used by the Australian National Kennel Council[3] and in other countries, is considered the most difficult to earn a title under.

Fédération Cynologique Internationale sponsors international shows that differ from other shows in that dogs first receive individual written descriptions of positive and negative qualities from the judge, and only dogs with high ratings go on to compete against other dogs in the class. A dog must receive four international Certificat d'Aptitude au Championnat International de Beauté (CACIB) to qualify for a championship; one must be won in the dog's own country, and at least two in other countries under at least three different judges.[4]
Dog shows in India represent far more than a competitive display of beautiful dogs. They are a structured, scientific, and welfare-oriented platform that celebrates canine excellence, responsible breeding, sound health, correct temperament, and functional conformation. Rooted in internationally accepted breed standards and guided by Indian regulations, dog shows play a vital role in shaping the future of purebred dogs while promoting ethical canine ownership across the country.
In the Indian context, dog shows serve as an important interface between science, tradition, and modern animal welfare principles. They provide an opportunity for breeders, veterinarians, handlers, judges, and dog enthusiasts to collectively evaluate dogs against established standards that emphasize physical soundness, movement, temperament, and adaptability, rather than mere appearance. Each dog in the ring is not judged against other dogs alone, but against the ideal standard of its breed, ensuring objectivity and fairness.[10,11,12]

The importance of dog shows extends beyond trophies and titles. They act as a quality control mechanism for breeding, discouraging indiscriminate mating, hereditary defects, and exaggerated features that compromise animal welfare. Through proper judging and ethical conduct, dog shows encourage the propagation of healthy, functional dogs capable of fulfilling their original breed purpose—be it companionship, guarding, working, or service roles.

In a country like India, where climatic conditions, public health concerns, and animal welfare sensitivities vary widely, dog shows also play a crucial educational role. They help disseminate knowledge on responsible dog ownership, vaccination, nutrition, handling, grooming, and humane training practices. When conducted under the guidelines of the Kennel Club of India (KCI) and the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), dog shows reinforce the legal and moral responsibility of treating dogs with dignity, care, and compassion.

Equally significant is the role of judges in this ecosystem. A dog show judge is not merely an adjudicator but a custodian of breed integrity and animal welfare. Through fair, unbiased, and scientifically informed decisions, judges influence breeding trends, set benchmarks for quality, and uphold ethical standards that resonate far beyond the show ring.

As India's canine community continues to grow, dog shows must evolve as responsible, welfare-centric, and professionally governed events. When conducted in the right spirit, they become a celebration of the human–canine bond, a platform for learning and improvement, and a powerful tool for advancing canine health, genetics, and welfare in the country.

1ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DOG SHOW JUDGE

As a judge, you do NOT select the "best dog" subjectively.

You compare each dog against the official Breed Standard and then rank them.

Your core responsibilities:[13,14,15]

Evaluate dogs strictly as per breed standards
Ensure fairness, neutrality & transparency
Maintain animal welfare and safety
Uphold discipline inside the ring

RESULTS

A dog-show judge is a person that is qualified to judge dogs at a dog show. Depending upon the size of the show, there might be one judge for all breeds and classes. At larger dog shows, there might be as many as 10 judges working.

Usually a license as a Dog Judge is granted by either a Breed Association or a Kennel Club. The license might either show the range of breeds that he or she is able to judge, or otherwise any exclusions. Judges may study for a license to judge a dog group: (She is a terrier judge). A judge who has successfully completed the requirements for judging all of the dog groups is known as an all-breeds judge.

Travelling judges

Historically, the dog judges of the English-speaking world had 'circuits' if they travelled out of their own country. They would carry their license from their country of origin, and usually would be recognised overseas.

Famous judges

Some judges who are regulars at the larger English or American dog shows become well-known and gain respect from large audiences for their ability to recognise good examples of the breeds that they judge.

Simply put, the world is divided into two types of people: dog people and cat people. For dog lovers, the majority treat their beloved animals as companions. Most teach a few basic commands, establish a basic hygiene regimen for the animal and take them for walks every so often. A select few start competing, participating in dog shows, and perhaps they even enter the dog breeding world. It's a whole different realm and involves a surprising amount of intercountry collaboration as Finnish judges Harri Lehkonen and Paula Heikkinen-Lehkonen know all too well. They travel the world to judge at various dog shows and competitions.

Dog shows may appear odd and confusing to an outsider, but there are specific rules and procedures governing this enduring competition. According to the American Kennel Club, more than 4 million dogs are entered in shows every year, competing in events that include agility, herding, obedience and physical characteristics. Judges are responsible for evaluating dogs and following guidelines to determine which dogs win awards. The ultimate prize, of course, is Best in Show.[16,17]

Dog show judges are responsible for individually examining and observing each dog that he’s assigned during a competition. Some subjectivity is involved since each judge has a different idea of what comprises a great dog. However, judges must observe the breed standards for each dog they evaluate. For example, a doberman will have a different breed standard than a poodle, because of differences in physiology and general temperament.

Breed type is what makes a breed what it is. It is the sum of all specific breed characteristics (hallmarks) that make it different from other breeds. In order for a dog to be “typey”, it must possess all or most of the characteristics as defined by that breed’s standard.

The word “type” is often misused in the context of referring to personal preferences. For instance, exhibitors may claim, “the judge obviously doesn’t like my type of Golden Retriever.” The correct term to use when describing individual differences within a breed, is “style”. There can only be one correct type in a breed, so if it is recognisable as a Golden Retriever, it has Golden Retriever type. However, it is entirely possible to find, in the Golden Retriever ring, representatives of American-style, English-style, working style, and even different styles developed by various breeders, for example – all of which possess type because they are recognisably Golden Retrievers, but possessing several different styles.

Awarding according to a particular style is also a much-debated topic. Generally, judges do prefer particular styles within the breeds, but a good judge never compromises quality and closeness to the breed standard for a style preference. So, if you see a couple of different styles in a judge’s Best of Breed line-up it does not necessarily mean

that the judge was “judging all over the place” – he/she was clearly awarding exhibits that he/she felt most closely represented the breed standard, regardless of style. Recognition of breed type is absolutely essential for a breed judge, only obtained through thorough study and interpretation of the breed standards and through the ability to recognise the characteristics as they appear in real life. A typey dog catches the expert eye immediately. Have you heard the comment, “that dog filled my eye with quality”? A typey dog is a living example of everything embodied in the breed standard. A dog lacking in breed type, regardless of how sound it is or how elegantly it shows itself, has little to offer the breed.

Balance ————

A dog in proportion is a dog with balance. Such a dog will neither have glaring faults nor a single outstanding feature. He pleases the eye because every part of him is in balance – height to length, head to body, skull to foreface, bone to body – everything fitting and moving together properly as described in the standard. Very often, a dog with balance doesn’t need a lot of pulling and pushing to get it into a good stacked position – it tends to stand four-square and solidly, whether as tiny as a Chihuahua or as large as an Irish Wolfhound. When a dog possesses good balance – when everything is in good proportion – it just looks right.[18,19,20]

Soundness ————

This is the word used to describe the manner in which dogs gait. A judge’s task is not only to observe and evaluate correctness of movement – and thereby weigh gaiting faults against the whole picture – but also to evaluate the dog according to the type of gait as prescribed by the breed standard. A Poodle should not move like an Afghan Hound, which should not move like a German Shepherd, which should not move like a Miniature Pinscher, which should not move like a Border Collie, and so on. There is no such thing as a generic
show dog, and judges need to take the greatest care not to be fooled by flashy, uncharacteristic gaiting action or speed of motion around the ring.

Temperament ————

Not all dogs are friendly, tail-wagging happy creatures eager to lick a welcome greeting. Some breed standards call for aloofness, some expect wariness of strangers. Some describe an expectation for action and some present a stoic steadfastness. Temperament is as unique to a breed as its description of type, so judges ought to beware of generalisations.

Condition ————

It is a dog show, after all. Condition refers to the well-being of the dog – its state of being and health as indicated through the sparkle in its eyes, the condition of the coat,

the amount of weight it is carrying, muscle tone – all appropriate for the particular breed, and all presented in a clean and glowing package.

READY, STEADY, JUDGE! ——

You've done all your preparation, you've studied your breed standards, you've memorised your breed hallmarks. Your ring is ready the way you want it, the ring steward is standing by to announce the first class, the exhibitors are lined up at the entrance – you are now ready to pronounce judgement!

Starting the class ———

Most judges prefer to start the class with the exhibitors gaiting the dogs once around the ring. Even if there is only one dog in the class, this is a useful practice because it settles the dog and reduces pent-up excitement or stress. This is an ideal opportunity to gain a first impression of the class and you may even be able to make mental notes of those you find excellent, mediocre or poor. If it is a medium or large breed, always encourage the exhibitor to use the whole ring and ask them to allow sufficient space between each other so that there's no crowding or interference. Occasionally, a novice handler may be confused about which side to gait the dog – be patient, advise the handler in a friendly manner, and allow them to try again. Watch out for bad showmanship, where unsportsmanlike exhibitors go out of their way to distract the dog ahead or run up behind it. Some judges require small dogs (who take a long time to gait around the ring) to go directly to the table for examination. This would be justifiable if time is of the essence, for example if there are many dogs to judge in a relatively short time. However, do try to arrange the route to the table so that there is, at least, a fair amount of movement, if not a full circle. This action is by far not mandatory and will rely on the judge's personal preference and circumstances prevailing, and certainly must not exclude a normal gaiting pattern during the individual examination.

Also remember that a dog show is not purely for your own benefit as a judge. The people at ringside usually show great interest in the proceedings, particularly if you are new to that group/breed, particularly at the beginning of the judging and particularly during the judging of breeds that interest specific spectators. This does not mean that you're allowed to "play to the gallery", where some judges have been known to behave like a ringmaster in the centre of the ring. Take your task seriously, but be aware that people are watching, so allow it to progress in an interesting manner. You can do this by following your set procedure consistently so that spectators and exhibitors know exactly what's going on.[18,19]

First impressions ———-

Before the dogs come into the ring, the Ring Steward would have instructed the exhibitors what to do and where to set up their dogs according to your decision. If there are a few dogs in the class or if you are moving them around the ring once, now is the

time to cast your eye over them collectively and gain a first impression, mentally dividing them into excellent, mediocre and poor categories. If you are at an outside venue, it is hoped that you selected the most level area for setting up so that dogs are not standing "downhill" or showing anything less than a natural position. Ideally, all dogs should face in the same
direction (mostly towards your left, as you look at them, except in the case of certain breeds that are presented frontwards or diagonally), but some judges are lenient when dogs are turned the other way in order to settle a worried dog or to remove distractions. This decision is up to you and you are entitled to request that the handler conforms to your preference. It is rare, these days, that classes will be as large as they were a few decades ago, but should you be so fortunate, it may be necessary to divide your class into one or two groups, send one group out to rest while you judge those in the ring, make a shortlist, then bring in the other group for judging, after which you will narrow it down to your choice for class winner. Your first impressions are about to be modified or confirmed during your examination of the dogs.
Presentation of the dog ——-

The presentation of the dog for examination will generally depend on its size – either on the ground, or on the table. If a table is used, make sure that it is standing firmly and will not wobble as the dog is placed on it. Also check that the surface of the table is not hot after having been left in the sun for a long time. Some Clubs may offer ramps, which are best suited for some middle-sized breeds not traditionally shown on a table. It is your choice whether you would like to have traditionally non-table dogs shown on the ramp and it would also be a good idea to allow exhibitors free choice in this regard. Whether table or ramp, the purpose of showing a dog in an elevated position is to allow clearer vision of the dog as you examine it and also, because a human bending over a little dog is a very frightening thing. (Take that as you will!)

How to approach the dog ————-

Never approach a dog from behind – not on initial evaluation and not later during your decision-making process!
1. Allow sufficient time for the handler to set up the dog where you want it to be stacked for examination. Exhibitors hate it when judges do not give them enough time to do this, so be very aware of this courtesy.
2. Take a few seconds to look at the fully-stacked dog in profile (or diagonal or front-on) to gain an overall impression of the dog's structure. If the dog is in profile, it is at this point that you will determine the height to length ratio, the layback of shoulder, the balance of fore- and hindquarters and, of course, the total silhouette.
3. Most exhibitors prefer an approach from a diagonal front, so, when you have finished looking at the overall presentation, walk purposefully – neither too wimpy nor too forcefully – towards the dog in a curve from your vantage position toward the dog's diagonal front. Some breeds, such as the Chow Chow and Shar Pei have limited peripheral vision, so you need to approach directly from the front.

4. Your demeanour should exude confidence and quiet control. Never let a dog sense you are nervous through jerky or hesitant movements and never back off in a state of nervous anxiety – some breeds like Afghan Hounds and Salukis will play up to this and that will be the end of a trouble-free examination.
5. Avoid rushing over to the dog aggressively or gruffly and don't grab the dog's head in a forceful manner.[19,20]
6. As you approach the dog, greet the handler (regardless of how many times he/she enters the ring with different dogs), and ask if you may examine the dog. You may also ask the age of the dog. Insist that the handler answers you because the purpose of talking to the handler is not to strike up a conversation, but rather to indicate to the dog that the handler approves of the stranger touching him.
7. If you are judging some of the traditionally more protective breeds, like some of those in the Working Group, you may ask first if it is okay to touch the dog. You don't have to place yourself in a dangerous position, and if a dog does try to go for you or does actually make contact, you may excuse him from the ring, whereafter you need to report it to the Show Manager and sign the Judge's sheets accordingly. This rarely happens, however, since most are well socialised and accustomed to being handled.
8. Avoid eye contact initially, especially males – look at the dog just south of his eyes and set him at ease first before you examine eye shape and colour.
9. It is really not necessary to stick your hand out like a wet fish in order for the dog to smell you. The dog smelt you when it came into the ring and, in any case, it has already identified all the dogs and other items you have touched up to now. A wet-fish, slack hand indicates to the dog that you are nervous, which may even be true! If you really want to put your hand out to them, pretend you have a treat in your hand, then extend your fingers palm upwards.
10. With your right hand, touch and warmly massage the dog's cheek or neck, as you talk to him and give a few encouraging words. Your touch must be firm, without being harsh, and it should exude control and confidence. Too soft a touch is wishy-washy and could send a message that you are nervous.
11. Speak pleasantly to the dog in a reassuring manner until he settles, then proceed to examine the dog in silence.

INDIVIDUAL EXAMINATION ———

A hands-on examination is essential, except on a couple of breeds, such as the Azawakh, where touching is traditionally not required, and the Fila Brasileiro, which is a one-man dog that won't allow touching. The eye often misinterprets the impression, but the fingers can adjust that illusion. With coated breeds, hands-on examination is imperative, while with smooth-coated breeds it will probably only be necessary to touch certain areas and feel the muscle tone, since everything else is clearly visible.

Where you place your hands, how you touch the dog, and what you touch, will be indicators for exhibitors to judge your competence. Are your touches meaningful? Do you know what you're looking for, or are you merely stroking the dog pointlessly? Competent hands check each characteristic with speed and accuracy. There's no need

to prod every last inch of the dog, especially if it's a short-haired breed, but neglecting to go into the coat of long-coated breeds is negligent. Rough treatment – especially at the mouth – can frighten a dog and cause huge problems for the exhibitor in the future. An excessively light touch sends the signal that you are nervous of touching the dog. Best is a firm, but gentle, touch that exudes confidence and control.[19]

The head ———-

The head is usually a feature of great importance – it is the head that generally defines breed type. For this reason, the head usually contains the most detailed descriptions in the breed standard and there's plenty to look at and evaluate. Work systematically through all the features of the head in whichever order suits you. Place your hands and fingers meaningfully where they need to be to measure skull to foreface ratio, the shape of the
head and skull, the length and breadth of muzzle, texture and set-on of ears, the stop, the underjaw, and every other detail. Look at the head from the front, from the top down and in profile, working in a 'check-list' order that you will have determined previously. Take note of the eye set and colour as well as the expression, and observe if the facial coat colour and markings are correct. Exhibitors don't generally appreciate having their dog's ears pulled forward towards the muzzle, unless it is required. Be gentle at all times. When evaluating dentition and the bite, make sure you know the standard procedure for evaluating these and to what level of detail you need to examine dentition. Dobermanns, German Shepherds, Rottweilers and most Working breeds, for example, must have full dentition, so counting teeth is a prerequisite. In some breeds, like the Rottweiler, you also need to examine the colour of the gums and palate, or the colour of the tongue, as in
Chow Chows. Very often, handlers prefer to show you their dog's teeth, which they will do very efficiently. Health wise, this is a sensible pattern to follow since judges could easily pass infection from one mouth to the next. In many other breeds, judges usually only open the front lips to look for a scissor, undershot or level bite (as the standard predicts) and in some breeds, such as Pekingese and a few other Toy breeds, examination of the teeth is not necessary at all. Learn the conventions of each breed and know what you need to look for. Know in which breeds missing teeth are a cardinal sin and in which breeds it's not that important. Know what problem bites look like, and be on the look-out for occlusion problems, such as impacted canines, which can cause agony for the dog.
The neck and forequarters ——————————

While still in front of the dog, check the skin on the throat – whether or not loose skin or a dewlap is required, and then extend your hand down the front to feel the prosternum and the space between the forelegs. This should give you a good idea of the chest development and the structure of the forequarters.[20]

Then, move to the side of the dog and examine the length and set of neck. Some judges do this by placing one hand at the base of the skull and the other at the withers –

this to gain a clearer vision of the neck length. With your right hand, stroke down the neck and over the withers to examine the smoothness of the withers and where they are positioned. In some breeds, you also need to measure the distance between the shoulder blades at
the withers with your fingers. From your view on the side, you ought to be able to imagine a plumb line dropped from the withers down to the ground. If the elbow and the back of the forelegs are in line with the tip of the shoulder blade, you are generally looking at a well-laid shoulder. Use your hands to measure and examine the angle of shoulder and the length of shoulder blade and upper arm. Run your hands down the forelegs to feel for bone and spring of pastern if required. Gently lift the feet to examine the pads underneath and take careful note of the shape of the feet, the length of nails and the arch of the toes.

The body —-

Test the spring of rib by placing your hands either side of the rib cage and gently pressing. There should be a
springy firmness. Looking down on the body, you should examine the shape of the rib cage and then the length
of loin, which you can test by marking the end of the ribs and the start of the pelvis with your fingers. Gently
feel the muscle tone over the loin, but avoid pressing down too hard on the dog so that it places strain on the
joints.

Feel the texture of the coat with your fingers and part the hair slightly to find undercoat. For most breeds, the
best place to check for undercoat and coat texture is on the side of the ribcage, but in some breeds, like the Shar Pei, the best way to feel texture is to stroke against the lie of the coat on the back just in front of the tail. (There you go – some free specialist information, the likes of which you will collect during your studies!)

Hindquarters and tail ——

Standing behind the dog, examine the lay of croup with your hands and the set of tail. Beware of pulling tails into strange positions – you must never uncurl a curly tail and it is totally unnecessary to pull a tail under the dogs body to make it reach the hip bone. Most breed standards expect a long tail to reach to the hock, but you would not do this to, say, an Afghan Hound’s tail.[17,18]
If it is a male, quickly and deftly feel the testicles. They should both be there and apparently normal. Don’t dilly-dally in this area!
Run your hands down the thighs to feel for good muscle tone and take note of the bend of stifle, especially in coated breeds where you may need to part the hair. Check the length and strength of hock and, finally examine the hindfeet in the same way you did the forefeet.

Once the hands-on examination is finished, you will probably want to step back and look at the total picture again. Then, you are ready to gait the dog.

CONCLUSIONS

When judging the Group, you may wish to draw a shortlist of potential winners. If you do so, take care to announce that you will be pulling a shortlist, but that it will be in random order, lest exhibitors believe that first pulled forward means first-placed. If you need to place 4 dogs, it is unwise to shortlist more than about 8 dogs, but never 5 (which would mean that one unplaced exhibitor will be left standing). Call them to the centre of the ring and politely excuse the rest of the exhibitors, with thanks for their entry.

Most judges prefer exhibitors to take their places at the place markers, from where their numbers will be marked in the judge's sheets and signed by the judge. In Group judging, most exhibitors prefer announcements to be made in reverse order, and in this case, you can stand ready at the place markers to congratulate the winners and hand over prizes as the Ring Steward makes the announcement. Remember to thank the Ring Steward,preferably at the same time that the Steward announces thanks just before the final awards. Finally, if the Ring Steward has been recording your placings, you need to check that all is correct and you must endorse them as such. Remember, the recording of results is your responsibility so, even if the Ring Steward may help in this regard, ultimately, you are responsible for any errors, so best you check each placement carefully before signing.

Then, gather together all your belongings and the ring equipment, thank your Ring Steward again, privately, and make your way back to the Clubhouse for a well-deserved rest and some refreshment. Well done! As buoyant as you will be feeling at this stage, avoid discussing the merits and demerits of the dogs you judged. It's not fair to the exhibitors and, to other judges, it doesn't leave a good impression. Remember to thank the Club Committee for inviting you.[20]

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