

PAWS 'N MUSIC NZ RULES FOR COMPETITION

Official categories.

There are two official categories, Heelwork to Music and Freestyle.

- a. **Heelwork to Music.** The principle element in Heelwork to Music category will be the dog working off lead in the heel work position, on the left or right hand side of the handler, facing forwards or backwards, across the front or back of the handler, moving in any direction, at any pace. The dog's shoulder should be approximately level with, and reasonably close to the handler's leg. All other positions are defined as Freestyle. A minimum of two-thirds of the routine should consist of heel work.
- b. **Freestyle.** A Freestyle routine will be the dog working off lead and contain movements in any position. Heelwork as described above is acceptable although such movements must not exceed one third of the routine.

Judges Marking Criteria

There must be three judges for each class. The judges' score for each criteria is totalled then divided into three to obtain the average mark.

Each judge will mark all three sections of the Judging Criteria as follows:

a. Programme Content – 10 marks

1. The programme content conforms to the definitions for Heelwork to Music or Freestyle.
2. The programme should be varied with no excessive repetition of moves.
3. The movements of the dog should have a greater impact than those of the handler.
4. Movements should be appropriate to the structure and conformation of the dog.
5. Degree of difficulty of movements should be taken into account.

b. Accuracy and Execution of Movement – 10 marks

1. Movements are accurately and smoothly executed.
2. The accuracy of heelwork must be taken into account.
3. The bearing and deportment of the handler is appropriate to the routine.
4. The dog should work in a natural and willing manner.
5. The dog responds promptly and appropriately to the cues given.
6. Handler and dog should work as a team.
7. Any props should be appropriate to the routine.

c. Musical Interpretation – 10 marks

1. Interpretation of the music rhythm and phrasing is apparent.
2. The programme flows and is not a series of disjointed movements.
3. Movements are complementary to the programme's concept.
4. Handler's dress is applicable to the programme.
5. Emphasis of interpretation is on the dog's movements although the handler may be expressive.
6. Choreography should be apparent and flowing. The routine should include balance, structure and making best use of available space.

7. The harmony and relationship should show the strength of the dog and handler partnership.
 8. Handler and dog should work as a team.
 9. Choice of music should suit the team.
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- d. In the event of dogs obtaining equal marks in HTM competitions, the Accuracy and Execution of Movement mark will decide the result. In a Freestyle competition, the Musical Interpretation mark will decide the result.
 - e. When assessing a routine the judges should take into account any degree of departure from the Regulations for handlers and dogs.
 - f. Where applicable judges should mark to one decimal place, ie. 7.1
 - g. The dog should work in a willing and natural manner.

Excessive barking must be penalised and a maximum of 4 marks can be deducted from the overall score at the judge's discretion.

Disqualification of Dogs.

A dog shall be disqualified from competition if it:-

- a. Fouls in the ring.
- b. Is a bitch in season.
- c. Is suffering from any contagious or infectious disease.
- d. Is interfering with the safety or chance of winning of another competitor.
- e. Is of such temperament or is so out of control as to be a danger to any person or other animal.
- f. Is likely to cause suffering to the dog by continuing to compete.

The ring will not be less than 15m x 15m.

Dogs may only wear dressed collars or scarves.

Only dogs over 12 months of age are eligible to be entered.

Handlers may enter more than one division but may not use the same routine.

The use of voice and body language is encouraged and handlers **may** make contact with dogs with no penalty incurred.

No food will be allowed in the competition ring for official classes, Starters through to Advanced.

The exception to this is the Elementary or "Fun" class where any food used should be held within a sealed bag/container and must not be given to the dog within the confines of the competition ring.

Each handler must provide their own music track on CD. (The Event Manager must be advised beforehand the music to be used.) The CD must be clearly marked with handler's name and track number. It is advisable to bring two copies (one for backup.)