



Martin Tait

AHWSG Report for the ALC

(following meeting held on 16 September 2021)

The AHWSG meeting was as always very informative and interesting, giving an insight into general issues as well as other discipline specific issues, There were four main areas of discussion in relation to agility, covering the A-FRAME, SEESAW, Funding research projects, and Fitness research. I have provided further detail below on each relevant topic and a separate item has been placed on the ALC agenda regarding funding.

A-frame

Following research into the working trials scale I raised a query as to whether the results from the research into the scale could be transferred to relate to the angle of ascent onto the A-frame into agility and the resulting impact forces. It was confirmed that it would not be possible to extrapolate relevant data from the working trials research but that a separate project would be necessary, using a different pool of dogs, to be drawn from agility competitors, as the two obstacles were very different in make and dogs' approach.

The objective of the proposed research regarding the A-frame would be to ascertain whether it would be beneficial to remove the necessity for a dog to touch the contact area on the upward part of the obstacle, thus allowing them to enter it at a different upward angle than was currently possible. There was no intention to reduce the angle of the A frame. It was believed that some relevant research may already in place and Dr Boyd undertook to carry out a literature search, with assistance from Mr MacDonald.

I agreed to seek the views of the Agility Liaison Council as to whether it would support this research. If so, the topic would be placed on the 'Opportunities for Investigation'

Funding

A suggestion was made that some equipment should be funded by The Kennel Club for use in various projects as this would be a useful investment and would greatly assist the Sub-Group in its work. It was agreed that this would be helpful.

(see additional proposal ITEM 12.c. on the ALC agenda)

Fitness research

Myself and the reps from working trials, and heelwork to music all confirmed their support for the proposed heart rate research, noting the importance of fitness and good body condition of dogs competing in any discipline.

A query was raised as to how fitness would be measured across the disciplines. This had not as yet been determined but would be considered as part of the methodology, although it was acknowledged that it may be problematic as there was currently no baseline information as to normal heart rate ranges in dogs when competing. Further, it may be necessary to measure fitness differently for each discipline.

See-saw Ongoing research

The Sub-Group had agreed that Dr Doyle and Dr Wills would liaise to progress research on absorption of forces on the see-saw, which would be suitable for a student at Hartpury. However, it had noted that there had been difficulties in experimental data collection due to Covid-19. It was hoped the research would be able to proceed in the near future.

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