

## A Message from the ARC Board on Obedience Jump Heights

Dear Members:

Below is the second rejection letter from AKC related to the club's application to lower jump heights. The letter is blunt and follows a unanimous rejection vote on the club's original request. The prior rejection letter, along with ARC's letter requesting them to reconsider also follow.

Members need to be aware that while there are breeds similar in structure to the Rottweiler that only jump 3/4 of their height at the withers, they were granted this status when AKC was basically giving "blanket approval" to any that made a request.

At their April 9, 2012 meeting the AKC Board approved a moratorium on jump height requests from Parent Clubs that was effective immediately thru December 31, 2016. Subsequently at their October 22, 2012 meeting they did lift the moratorium and approved the following: *"In the future, Parent Clubs requesting an exception to the standard jump height would be required to complete a form providing background information relevant to the issue."*

So the process now includes a requirement to apply and requires documented proof showing:

***Exceptions to this standard may be granted if a breed has a physiological structure that makes this standard unsafe.***

The ARC Board did submit an excerpt from Dr. Christine Zink's *Jumping From A to Z*; however as noted in AKC's April 30<sup>th</sup> letter, *"the Rottweiler was not specifically identified in this publication."* We also included some anecdotal information, but they do not consider this documented proof.

The membership needs to understand that an exemption means the American Rottweiler Club is saying that the Rottweiler physiologically cannot safely jump its own height at the withers; in other words they are incapable of doing so.

Whether we agree with this premise or not, it is what AKC requires. Is this the perception we want the public to have of our breed? If so, new information and proof, in the eyes of AKC, must be submitted. The last request to reconsider did not even garner a motion or vote by the AKC Board, as noted in the letter.

The BOD is taking a poll\* of members so they can get an indication on where the membership stands on this issue. Should the membership vote to continue our request to lower the jump height, a Committee will be appointed to see if they can find any scientific studies linking the Rottweiler's current height requirement to a statistically significant increase in injuries and that a 3/4 jump height would statistically lower those alleged injuries.

Without such proof ARC cannot make another request to AKC whether the membership is in favor or not.

The ARC Board

\* The poll will be in the 3rd Qtr. 2013 *ARK* and is also available on the "Members Only Section" of this website under "Latest Member News/Announcements & Updates".



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB

June 17, 2013

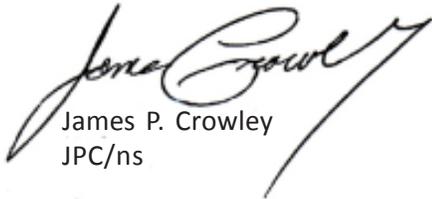
Jeff Shaver, President  
American Rottweiler Club  
160005 Pine Creek Way  
Magnolia, TX 77355

Dear Mr. Shaver:

This concerns the request submitted on behalf of the American Rottweiler Club to have the AKC Board of Directors reconsider the decision it made at its April 2013 meeting regarding the jump height for the Rottweiler in obedience.

The Board did have this letter. However, it saw no new information upon which to base a reconsideration of the unanimous decision it made in April. There was thus no motion made for such a reconsideration.

Sincerely,



James P. Crowley  
JPC/ns

**James P. Crowley**  
Executive Secretary

## AKC Rejects ARC's Request To Lower Obedience Jump Heights For Rottweilers

At their April meeting, the AKC Board rejected ARC's request to lower the Obedience Jump Heights for Rottweiler. The ARC Board has written AKC asking them to reconsider their decision at their next meeting. Both letters follow.



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB

**Pamela Manaton**  
Director of Obedience, Rally  
and Tracking

April 30, 2013

Mr. Jeff Shaver, President  
American Rottweiler Club  
16005 Pine Creek Way  
Magnolia, TX 77355 3351

Via email: [jshaver522@yahoo.com](mailto:jshaver522@yahoo.com)

RE: AKC Standard Obedience Jump Height Exception

Dear Mr. Shaver:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) Board of Directors considered the request of the American Rottweiler Club (ARC) to grant an exception to the standard obedience jump height (the height of the dog at the withers) at the April 2013 meeting. An exception would allow the breed to jump at three quarters of the standard height. The standard jump height for Rottweilers in obedience is 22" to 26".

The Board reviewed the information submitted by the club. During their discussion, it was noted that since July 2012, AKC has recognized schutzhund titles earned by Rottweilers as part of the Parent Club Performance Event titling program. In those events, Rottweilers retrieve a dumbbell and jump over a 39½" solid jump and climb over a steep 71" A frame wall from which the dog jumps off during the decent.

The American Rottweiler Club submitted an excerpt from the book, "Jumping from A to Z" written by Dr. Christine Zink, which states the weight:height ratio of a breed provides an objective index of its suitability for jumping. Information regarding the Rottweiler was not specifically identified in this publication. While this information was reviewed, it should be noted that at the time of publication the standard obedience jump height was one and one quarter (1.25) the height of the dog at the withers; which is not the requirement today.

The Rottweiler is commonly acknowledged as a one of the World's great working breeds. The first paragraph of the breed standard describes the breed as having great strength, agility and endurance.

After consideration of the information submitted by the club and the topics discussed above, the AKC Board of Directors voted unanimously to deny the American Rottweiler Club's request.

Yours truly,  
The American Kennel Club, Inc.

Pamela Manaton

cc: Doug Ljungren, VP Companion & Performance Events  
Peter Piusz, AKC Delegate, ARC  
Via email: [ppiusz@nycap.rr.com](mailto:ppiusz@nycap.rr.com)



## *American Rottweiler Club*

16005 Pine Creek Way, Magnolia, TX 77355-3351

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To Whom It May Concern:

The American Rottweiler Club on behalf of members who voted in a referendum, request that pursuant to AKC requirements for lowering of jump heights for the Rottweiler in obedience, you reconsider immediately the decision refusing such request .

It has come to our attention that the AKC Board has unanimously voted to reject the Club's request to lower jump heights for the Rottweiler. On behalf of the membership we respectfully disagree with this decision and request immediate reconsideration by the American Kennel Club of our request to lower jump heights. The American Kennel Club has in recent years been attempting to increase participation in obedience and other activities for all dogs from puppyhood through adult life. This is not only a source of revenue for the American Kennel Club but also a way to increase participation for owners of purebred and other dogs in various AKC venues. Because of this it appears the AKC expects dogs to be able to continue to work and in this case jump throughout their life.

We are aware that the American Kennel Club has previously provided jump heights exceptions for numerous breeds including from the Working Group: Akita, Bernese Mountain Dog, Black Russian Terrier, Bullmastiff, Dogue de Bordeaux, Great Dane, Great Pyrenees, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, Kuvasz, Leonberger, Mastiff, Neapolitan Mastiff, Newfoundland, and Saint Bernard. Why has the American Kennel Club allowed certain breeds to lower their jump heights to three-quarters their height at the withers but in this case refused the request of the American Rottweiler Club to do the same? Why have some breeds been granted exemption from the current standard jump height requirement while our Club members have been rejected such a request?

The AKC Board minutes indicate that one of the reasons for refusal related to the innate ability of the Rottweiler to participate in various strenuous activities including but not limited to Schutzhund, where jump heights are in excess of the minimum requirements for AKC obedience. It is not the dog's innate ability, but the effects that such jumping over the life of a dog might have, especially considering the surfaces used in most AKC rings, namely concrete covered by thin show matting. While there is no doubt the Rottweiler is one of the best working dogs to ever grace human-kind, in our opinion, innate ability and physical prowess is not the issue at question.

The issue is how do you minimize the stress on a 100+ lb. dog from a life time of jumping while allowing the dog to participate and compete and show its natural ability?

The Officers and Directors, on behalf of those members voting to lower the jump heights, request the American Kennel Club to immediately reconsider its decision and vote to approve the Club's request for an exception in lowering of the jump heights for the Rottweiler.

Sincerely,

Jeff Shaver  
President, American Rottweiler Club