

Jump Height Committee Report: April 6, 2014

At this time, the Jump Height Committee has found no conclusive evidence to support what AKC is looking for. There is no study about the impact jumping has on Rottweilers. There are a few studies on other breeds, which we feel are relevant. While the studies mention agility rather than obedience, they focused on having dogs jump repeatedly over 1 or 2 jumps.

We will continue to work on this as we firmly believe having the jump height reduced is in the best interest of our beloved Rottweiler.

A few points which we have found:

1. Part of AKC's reply to ARC - "The first paragraph of the breed standard describes the breed as having great strength, agility and endurance."

The breed standard is irrelevant to the request for lowering jump heights in obedience as dogs do not need to meet the breed standard in order to compete in performance & companion events, which would include correct structure, great strength, agility, and endurance.

2. AKC claims as a core value: "We protect the health and well-being of all dogs," but it routinely permits events involving jumping without regard for the security of the area or consideration of the surface used, or the repetition involved. If we are to be the Guardians, it is time we give consideration to the surfaces and landing impact and insist on equal treatment with other breeds who have petitioned for lowering of jump heights and had their petition readily accepted, where ours for the Rottweiler has been repeatedly rejected, despite majority vote of the ARC membership.

The majority of the ARC Members who voted regarding this issue was in favor of having the jump heights reduced. AKC should not ignore this request from the parent club.

By rejecting ARC's request, it appears that AKC does not follow its core value. Since dogs do not need to meet the breed standard, nor be members of ARC to compete in AKC events, how many are from questionable breeders that do not necessarily breed for structure? How well are the Rottweilers conditioned to compete? What about the veteran dogs?

3. AKC Health Foundation is looking into the impact that repeated jumping has on dogs. Seems obvious AKC is concerned about this issue.
4. Conclusion from The Veterinary Journal 198 (2013) ...

"An increase in fence height results in significant changes in the angles of joints in the forelimb and vertebral column, which correspond to sites of common injuries identified in previous agility dog research. Dogs that are marginally within height requirements, and are required to move from the KC midi to the KC full height category, may have a greater risk of developing injuries. Those dogs likely to be at most risk within the current height categories are those with heights at the withers that are just above the KC midi category (431 mm), but which are required to jump full height (650 mm). Further research is needed to confirm the sites and frequencies of injury in relation to the heights at the withers of agility dogs and the jump height category they are competing at."

5. From Shannon Budiselic - Physical Rehabilitation Veterinarian (CCRT, CERT)

<https://equilibriumvrc.wordpress.com/2013/03/21/part-1-canine-shoulder-rehab-perspectives-agility/>

"They found that the forelimbs of dogs jumping at high speed over high obstacles experienced an extremely high peak vertical force on their forelimbs (4.5 X their bodyweight!) with acute (steep) landing angles. Not a shock to anyone reading this, but here's the clincher – this means the average sized male Border Collie (let's say a fit 20 kg, or 44 lb dog for you standard measurement folks) would be driving 90 kg (that's 198 lbs!!!) onto their front limb upon landing. Ouch!"

JHC note: Hmmm ... that would be for a 100 lb. Rottweiler would be driving 450 lbs!

6. Loss of exhibitors at AKC Obedience Trials - without having time to do a poll to obtain numbers, there are many exhibitors who refuse to jump their Rottweilers at full height due to their perception of the injury it would cause them. In the public eye, sometimes perception becomes truth. They do not wish to jump their dogs on hard floors covered with thin mats.

Another loss of exhibitors will come from those with veteran dogs, and those who have rescue dogs.

7. United Kennel Club recognizes the concerns of its exhibitors and does allow 3/4 jump height for any breed. Rule change posted 11/2/06 - Excerpt from UKC – “These changes have resulted **directly** from the questionnaire Rather than make exceptions for just a few, it was decided to allow any exhibitor to elect to jump the three-quarter jump height.” This is also easier on the trial secretaries.

Obviously none of this information is to be submitted to AKC.

Best regards,

The Jump Height Committee
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