



Kennel Union of Southern Africa

KENNEL UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA REGULATIONS & GUIDELINES FOR MUSICAL FREESTYLE

SCHEDULE 5S (MF)

(Effective 01.03.2024)

1. Definition of Musical Freestyle

- 1.1 Musical Freestyle (MF) is a team sport where one member of the team is a dog.
- 1.2 MF routines should create a visually exciting display which is enjoyable to watch, and which is equally enjoyable to dogs and handlers executing the programs.
- 1.3 The movements of the handler/dog team should be in time with and match the style or theme of the music being played. In some cases, the movements will be in the form of dance steps and body positions. In other cases, as in a theatrical or story-telling routine, the team will be performing interpretive movements, moods, and/or expressions to match the music selected.
- 1.4 All movements performed by the dog (and handler) are to be natural, comfortable and safe.
- 1.5 With each higher level of competition, the team will be expected to perform a higher quality / level of interpretive movements in their routine.
- 1.6 MF can be described as a choreographed musical routine performed by handlers and their dogs. Any move is allowed within MF, as long as it does not endanger the dog or handler in any way. Distance work, weaves, jumps, send-outs, and other innovative new moves are encouraged. Moves may be performed from any position.
- 1.7 There are no required specific move/s at each level of MF, which makes it possible for any dog and handler, regardless of athletic prowess, to compete in MF, and allows full freedom in the creation of imaginative, artistic routines which showcase the bond between handler and dog as they perform and demonstrate the unique abilities of the individual dog / handler partnership.

2. Classes & Eligibility

- 2.1 In order to enter any KUSA Musical Freestyle class, the dog and handler must be a registered with KUSA.
- 2.2 All types of dogs of 12 months old and older are welcome to enter competitions.

- 2.3 Bitches in season are not allowed to enter competitions
- 2.4 In a single competitive titling event, a handler and dog may be entered in multiple classes, provided that they are only entered once in each of the MF style categories in the OPEN Singles division, and once in each or any of the other appropriate divisions with the same handler and dog team.
- 2.5 **Handlers**
- 2.5.1 Handlers are divided into three groups:
- 2.5.1.1.1 Open
 - 2.5.1.1.2 Veteran – 60 years and older
 - 2.5.1.1.3 Handy Dandy – handler with physical and/or mental challenges
- 2.6 **Dogs**
- 2.6.1 Dog are divided into three groups:
- 2.6.2.1.1 Open – 12 months and older
 - 2.6.2.1.2 Veteran – 9 years and older
 - 2.6.2.1.3 Handy Dandy – dog with physical and/or mental challenges
- 2.7 **AWARDING OF CHAMPIONSHIP STATUS**
- 2.7.1 QCs will be awarded at Non-Championship Shows as well as Championship shows in both Live and Video events. Copies of the (three) **'LIVE'** QCs under three different Judges, at Advanced level, to be sent to KUSA, together with the necessary completed form for championship status to be awarded.
- OR**
- 2.7.1.1 2 Live plus 2 Video - under 3 different Judges
- OR**
- 2.7.1.2 1 Live plus 4 Video - under 3 different Judges
- OR**
- 2.7.1.3 6 Videos - under 3 different Judges
- 2.8 **AWARDING OF GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP STATUS**
- 2.8.1 Copies of twelve QCs under four different judges, at Advanced level, to be sent to KUSA, together with the necessary completed form for Grand Champion status to be awarded.
- 2.8.1.1 12 via Live competitions
- OR**
- 2.8.1.2 Minimum 6 via Live and 6 via Video competitions - under 4 different Judges
- 2.8.1.3 (If the Live QCs exceed 6, the balance, to make up the 12 QCs, may be submitted via Video)

- OR**
- 2.8.1.4 15 via Video only

2.9 **AWARDING OF SUPREME CHAMPION STATUS**

2.9.1 Copies of at least ten (10) QCs under four (4) different Judges, at Advanced level, with a score of 9.5 or higher in TM and AI, to be sent to KUSA, together with the necessary completed application form for Supreme Champion status.

2.9.2 10 via Live competitions

OR

2.9.3 A minimum of five (5) via Live and five (5) via Video competitions under four (4) different Judges

2.9.4 If the Live QCs exceed five (5), the balance to make up ten(10) QCs, may be submitted via Video **OR**, otherwise, fifteen (15) QCs via Video only may be submitted.

2.9.5 Only QCs awarded after 1 January 2024 will count towards this title.

2.10 **MF CLASS CATEGORIES**

2.10.1 Routines are done off lead, except for option in Veterans and Handy Dandy classes for blind and/or deaf dogs.

For the Junior Level, Junior 1 and Junior 2 may be done on lead at the handlers' discretion.

2.10.1.1 OPEN SINGLES - entry of one dog and one handler

2.10.1.2 OPEN BRACE - entry of two dogs and one handler

2.10.1.3 OPEN PAIRS - entry of two handlers and two dogs

2.10.1.4 OPEN GROUP - entry of three to eight handlers and an equal number of dogs

2.10.1.5 VETERAN - entry of one adult (60 years old and older), and/or one dog 9 years old, or older.

2.10.1.6 HANDY DANDY - entry of one dog and one handler with physical or mental Challenges – challenges apply to dog and/or handler.

2.10.1.7 JUNIOR LEVEL - entry of one dog and one handler. The handler must be at least eight (8) years of age, but under eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the competition.

2.10.2 Pairs and group classes:

2.10.2.1.1 handler and dog teams may switch partners (or dogs) within the execution of the routine.

2.10.2.1.2 the strongest team determines the class – i.e. a Pairs routine with one Veteran and one Open handler, will enter the Open Pairs Division. A group with one Handy Dandy dog, one Veteran handler and one Open competitor would enter in the Open Group category.

2.10.2.1.3 group members may change as long as the members are at the same level e.g. if Team A is at Intermediate level, no new members joining that group may be at Novice level.

2.11 NOT-FOR-COMPETITION CLASS (OPTIONAL)

- 2.11.1 It is at the discretion of the hosting club as to whether or not there will be Not-For-Competition (NFC) classes as part of the program for the day.
- 2.11.2 NFC class is for handlers and dogs of any level. There is no limit to the number of times a team may enter NFC.
- 2.11.3 Judges will make comments on a standard Score Form for teams entering NFC but will not provide scores.
- 2.11.4 Legs and titles are NOT awarded in the NFC class.
- 2.11.5 There are no placements or prizes in the NFC class.

2.12 VIDEO CLASSES

- 2.12.1 The following requirements must be strictly observed
 - 2.11.1.1 10 mx20 m demarcated area, which must be clearly shown on Video.
 - 2.11.1.2 The handler will have an allocated 60 seconds to set up their prop (if one is being made use of).
 - 2.11.1.3 The setting up of the prop has to be videoed for judging purposes.
 - 2.11.1.4 Therefore, 3 video clips can be sent, i.e., Hall video, Set-up of Prop video and Routine video. The Prop and Hall video may be included on one clip, or all may be in a single clip.
 - 2.11.1.5 The Video link must be sent to the email address stipulated on the Show Schedule. This must include: The handler's name & dog's name, Class entered, length of routine, date and name of the show-holding Competition. (Identification of music and artist is optional).
 - 2.11.1.6 All Regulations stipulated under Section 2 of the Schedule - Classes & Eligibility - must be strictly adhered to.
 - 2.11.1.7 The lower Classes (Beginners, Novice & Intermediate) may qualify in those respective Classes via Video competitions, without entry into Live events until qualified out of Intermediate Class. Thereafter the Advanced level in competition will apply. The Qualifications needed for this Class is depicted in Section 2 - Classes & Eligibility - Awarding of Championship Status.
 - 2.11.1.8 Editing of Video is only permitted with regard to area shot and the title. No editing of routine may take place; it must be recorded as a single take.
 - 2.11.1.9 Both handler and dog must be clearly visible at all times.
 - 2.11.1.10 Music must be clearly audible.
 - 2.11.1.11 The same routine may be entered as often as the handler desires, but each Video must be a newly recorded Video, i.e. the same Video may not be submitted more than once.
 - 2.11.1.12 Any Live event, may not be Videoed and then submitted for Video qualification subsequently.
 - 2.11.1.13 Music must be played concurrently with the routine and may not be added in afterwards.

2.12 JUDGES CLASS

2.12.1 Officiating judges on the day may enter for qualification under the following circumstances:

- 2.11.1.1 There is another qualified judge available to judge their routine/s live at the event.
- 2.11.1.2 No judge's routine will be eligible for placements or awards.

3. Scoring System

3.1 MF routines are scored on Technical Merit (50% of total score) and Artistic Impression (50% of total score).

3.2 As this is a creative sport, subjective judging will apply.

3.3 As this is a team sport, the handler and dog are judged as one unit. Consideration is given to both handler(s) and the dog(s) on all scores.

3.4 Some areas of scoring may affect other areas of scoring.

For example:

- 3.4.1 Execution may affect Flow; Difficulty may affect Execution;
- 3.4.2 Content may affect Quality and Creativity of Choreography;
- 3.4.3 Moving/Stepping in Time to Music/Theme may affect Flow and/or Execution.

3.5 Technical Merit (TM)

- 3.5.1 50% of Total Score
- 3.5.2 lowest/10.0 highest
- 3.5.3 Total TM points possible = 10.0

3.5.4.1 **Content** (amount, variety of moves, fullness of routine) – **3.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- 3.5.4.1.1 Different positions the dog is worked on in relation to the handler (within 360- radius of the handler.)
- 3.5.4.1.2 Different body positions/movements (with arms, legs, head, feet, etc. – handler and dog)
- 3.5.4.1.3 Main moves and Transitional moves (moves used as transitions between the main moves).

3.5.3.2 **Precise Execution of All movements** by dog(s) and handler(s) – **2.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- 3.5.3.2.1 How "Precise", synchronized, and together the handler(s) and dog(s) are throughout.
- 3.5.3.2.2 How effective handler's cues are, how quick and well dog responds.
- 3.5.3.2.3 Consideration of mistakes and/or refusals.
- 3.5.3.2.4 How well the handler disguises cues to the dog.

3.5.3.3 **Flow of movements from one to another** by dog(s) and handler(s)– **2.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- 3.5.3.3.1 Consideration of set-ups, starts and stops, and breaks in routine.
- 3.5.3.3.2 Flow of main and transitional moves.
- 3.5.3.3.3 Flow of the overall routine.
- 3.5.3.4 **Difficulty of Routine** (intricacy of steps, different paces, difficulty of handler(s) movements with dog(s) movements) – **2.0** points maximum.
Also includes:
 - 3.5.3.4.1 Difficult use of different handler and dog body positions/movements.
 - 3.5.3.4.2 Control of handler's body and movements with dog's movements.
 - 3.5.3.4.3 Complex and/or new, innovative moves and combinations.
- 3.5.3.5 **Stepping in Time to the Music** - staying with the beat – **1.0**-point maximum.
 - 3.5.3.5.1 Includes using the entire body, upper and lower (arms, legs, head, etc.).
- 3.6 **Artistic Impression (AI)**
 - 3.6.1 50% of Total Score
 - 3.6.2 lowest / 10.0 highest
 - 3.6.3 Total AI points possible = 10.0
 - 3.6.4 **Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction** (Bonding) of dog(s) and handler(s) – **2.5** points maximum.
Also includes:
 - 3.6.4.1 Concentration, and readiness of handler(s) and dog(s) throughout.
 - 3.6.5 **Quality and Creativity of Choreography**, layout of routine – **2.0** points maximum.
 - 3.6.5.1 How creative and well all movements are arranged and laid out in the routine.
 - 3.6.6 **Use of 75% Ring Space** (50% for small dogs) – **1.5** points maximum.
 - 3.6.6.1 How fully, completely, and balanced the 75%/50% ring area is covered by the handler(s) and dog(s). Note: A small dog is one that is 33 cms or under at the withers.
 - 3.6.7 **Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation** – **1.5** points maximum.
 - 3.6.7.1 How well the routine matches the music and/or theme that is/are presented.
 - 3.6.8 **Costume Coordination with Music and Routine** – **1.5** points maximum.
 - 3.6.8.1 How well the handler's costume and the dog's adornment match and/or complement the music, theme, and routine presented.
 - 3.6.9 **Spectator Appeal** – **1.0** points maximum.
 - 3.6.9.1 How well the spectators appreciate, enjoy, and respond to the routine.

4. Placements and Equal Scores

- 4.1 Any routine that does not earn a qualifying score is still eligible for a placement and prize.
- 4.2 Tied scores will be broken by Artistic Impression marks.

5. Deductions

5.1 The following table details deductions for violations.

Occurrence	TM score deduction		AI score deduction	
Use of prop as motivator	0.1 - 0.5	Total		
Prop not an integral part of routine	1.0	Total	1.0	Total
Prop setup longer than 60 seconds	1.0	Total	1.0	Total
Excessive talking			0.1 – 0.3	Animation/Interaction
Excessive barking			0.1 – 0.3	Spectator Appeal
Each instance of physical manipulation of the dog (less than 50% of the routine)	0.3	Precise execution	0.3	Animation/Interaction

6. Disqualifications

6.1 A routine will be disqualified for any of the following:

- 6.1.1 Fouling/eliminating in the ring.
- 6.1.2 Leaving the ring (dog and/or handler at any time during the routine)
 - 6.1.2.1.1 The demarcation of the ring must be clear to the dog (e.g. a fence), otherwise any accidental leaving of the ring if the dog is clearly still working will not be considered a disqualification.
- 6.1.3 Food/treats/bait/training aids in the ring.
- 6.1.4 Using/presenting a prop/item extensively during the routine that causes marked change in the dog's drive and/or demeanour.
- 6.1.5 Any additional humans or dogs (outside of competition definitions) in the ring, at any point during the routine.
- 6.1.6 Any violation of dog attire or adornment. Within the execution of all routines, dogs MAY NOT wear the following: -
- 6.1.7 Choke-chain, or slip collars of any shape, style or make
- 6.1.8 Glitter, paint, hair dye or nail colour
- 6.1.9 Snoods
- 6.1.10 Head halters
- 6.1.11 Costume, Music, or Routine offensive or sexually suggestive in language or presentation.
- 6.1.12 Routine too short or too long.
- 6.1.13 Abusive behaviour toward dog, referee, judge(s), or ring steward.
- 6.1.14 Physical manipulation of the dog (i.e. grabbing of collar, tight leash, pushing, pulling, tapping, holding, prodding, etc.) done forcefully or over 50% of routine.

6.2 If a routine is disqualified, no scores, or placements or prizes will be awarded to that specific dog and handler team.

7. How Levels Advance

7.1 RECORD CARDS

7.1.1 All teams will be issued with a record card.

7.1.2 All qualifications must be recorded in the team record card and signed by the officiating judge.

7.2 QUALIFYING SCORES

7.2.1 Teams that achieve a qualifying score at these levels in both TM and AI at each level will receive a QC.

7.2.2 Any routine which earns qualifying scores in both TM and AI within its class is eligible for a QC, regardless of the number of entries in that specific class.

7.2.3 To progress to the next level, teams must collect at least the following number of QCs:

Level	Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required to progress to the next level
		TM	AI	
Beginner	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	7.3	7.3	3
	Veteran	6.7	6.7	3
	Handy Dandy	6.0	6.0	3
Novice	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	8.0	8.0	3
	Veteran	7.5	7.5	3
	Handy Dandy	7.2	7.2	3
Intermediate	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	8.5	8.5	3
	Veteran	8.2	8.2	3
	Handy Dandy	8.0	8.0	3
Advanced	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	9.2	9.2	3
	Veteran	9.0	9.0	3
	Handy Dandy	8.5	8.5	3
Grand Champion	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	9.2	9.2	12
	Veteran	9.0	9.0	
	Handy Dandy	8.5	8.5	
Supreme Champion	Singles, Pairs, Brace, Group	9.5	9.5	10
	Veteran	9.3	9.3	
	Handy Dandy	8.8	8.8	
Junior	Level 1	6.0	6.0	3

	Level 2	6.5	6.5	3
	Level 3	7.0	7.0	3
International		TBA	TBA	TBA

- 7.2.4 Copies of THREE Advanced level QCs under three different judges, need to be submitted to KUSA for approval and the awarding of a Championship Title Certificate.
- 7.2.4.1 To earn the Supreme Champion title, Handlers will enter the Advanced class and will receive a QC if they achieve the qualifying score.
- 7.2.4.2 If a Supreme score is achieved, then this QC will be counted towards the dog's Supreme Champion title.
- 7.2.4.3 To achieve the Supreme Champion title, teams need to earn the required number of QCs and submit them to KUSA for approval.
- 7.2.5 A handler/dog team may choose to move up to the next level immediately once all required qualifications have been obtained e.g. on the next day in back-to-back events. Any scores they receive in any events while remaining at that level will not count towards their next level title.
- 7.2.6 Handler/dog teams may stay at a level for as long as they like. There is no rule stating that a routine should be retired after it has won a title. However, it is recommended that handler/dog teams change their routines, to display their innovation and progression to the best advantage with new routines.

8. Description of Levels

8.1 ROUTINE LENGTH AND JUDGING TIME

- 8.1.1 A time length requirement (min and max) for all routines is listed for each of the classes. The routine must be executed within those times. If the routine time is shorter or longer than the allowable time, the routine will be disqualified.
- 8.1.2 The judging time of the routine begins when either the dog or handler begins to move, (not necessarily when the music starts). The time will stop when both the dog and handler have stopped moving (the ending pose of the routine).

8.2 CUES

- 8.2.1 Within the execution of the routine, the handler may use verbal cues, as well as physical cues. However, excessive use of using hands to lure the dogs will result in lower scores.

8.3 BEGINNERS LEVEL QUALIFYING EXPLANATIONS

- 8.3.1 Routine Length = 1:15 – 2:30 minutes **plus 10 seconds leeway on maximum time**
- 8.3.2 **Technical Merit (TM):**

- 8.3.2.1 Content - There is a basic amount and variety of main moves and transitional moves (65% full). The dog is worked on at least 2 sides of the handler. The balance of the amount of moves between the dog and the handler is 65%. (*Meaning 67%/33% ratio)
- 8.3.2.2 Precise Execution - All moves are executed with 65% (fair) precision. Some hand cues are noticeable. The dog responds to the first or second cues. The handler and dog are fairly synchronized throughout the routine.
- 8.3.2.3 Flow - The routine flows fairly well (65%). There is some setting up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves are fairly smooth.
- 8.3.2.4 Difficulty of Routine - Most of the steps, moves, and body positions are simple. There is a very small amount of complexity. The routine has basically one pace. There is 65% control in the routine.
- 8.3.2.5 Stepping in Time to the Music - The handler and dog move with 65% (fair) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.3.3 Artistic Impression (AI):

- 8.3.3.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) - There is 65% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between the handler and the dog is 65% (good).
- 8.3.3.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine - The choreography of the routine is laid out and done fairly in the ring space that is used, showing 65% (fair) creativity and balance.
- 8.3.3.3 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) - The handler and dog team cover a fair amount of the 75%/50% of the total ring space.
- 8.3.3.4 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation - The routine matches the music/theme fairly well.
- 8.3.3.5 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine - The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme fairly well.
- 8.3.3.6 Spectator Appeal - The routine is appreciated and enjoyed fairly well.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required to progress to Novice
	TM	AI	
OPEN Singles	7.3	7.3	3
OPEN Brace	7.3	7.3	3
OPEN Pairs	7.3	7.3	3
OPEN Group	7.3	7.3	3
Veteran	6.7	6.7	3
Handy Dandy	6.0	6.0	3

		TM	AI	KUSA Title
Beginners	Singles; Pair; Brace; Group;	7.3	7.3	MF - BEG
	Veteran	6.7	6.7	
	Handy Dandy	6	6	
	Singles; Pair; Brace; Group;	8	8	

Novice	Veteran	7.5	7.5	MF-NOV
	Handy Dancy	7.2	7.2	
Intermediate	Singles; Pair; Brace; Group;	8.5	8.5	MF-INT
	Veteran	8.2	8.2	
	Handy Dandy	8	8	
Advanced	Singles; Pair; Brace; Group;	9.2	9.2	MF-ADV
	Veteran	9	9	
	Handy Dandy	8.5	8.5	

8.4 **NOVICE LEVEL QUALIFYING EXPLANATIONS**

8.4.1 Routine Length = 1:30 – 2:45 minutes plus 10 seconds leeway on maximum time

8.4.2 **Technical Merit (TM):**

8.4.2.1 Content - There is a moderate amount and variety of main moves and transitional moves (75% full). The dog is worked on at least 3 sides of the handler. The balance of the amount of moves between the dog and the handler is 75%. (*Meaning 62%/38% ratio)

8.4.2.2 Precise Execution - All moves are executed with 75% (nice) precision. Few hand cues are noticeable. The dog responds nicely on the first cues most of the time. The handler and dog are nicely synchronized throughout the routine.

8.4.2.3 Flow - The routine flows nicely (75%). There is a limited amount of setting up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves flow nicely.

8.4.2.4 Difficulty of Routine - There are some intricate steps, moves, and different body positions. Some of the moves are fairly complex and original. There is a pace change in the routine. There is 75% control in the routine.

8.4.2.5 Stepping in Time to the Music - The handler and dog move with 75% (good) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.4.3 **Artistic Impression (AI):**

8.4.3.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) - There is 75% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between the handler and the dog is 75% (nice).

8.4.3.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine - The choreography of the routine is laid out and done nicely in the ring space that is used, showing 75% (good) creativity and balance.

8.4.3.2 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) - The handler and dog team cover a nice amount of the 75%/50% of the total ring space.

8.4.3.3 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation - The routine matches the music/theme nicely.

8.4.3.4 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine - The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme nicely.

8.4.3.5 Spectator Appeal - The routine is appreciated and enjoyed very much.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required for title	KUSA Title
	TM	AI		
OPEN Singles	8.0	8.0	3	MF Nov
OPEN Brace	8.0	8.0	3	MF Nov-BR
OPEN Pairs	8.0	8.0	3	MF Nov-PR
OPEN Group	8.0	8.0	3	MF Nov-GR
Veteran	7.5	7.5	3	MF Nov -V
Handy Dandy	7.2	7.2	3	MF Nov -HD

8.5 INTERMEDIATE LEVEL QUALIFYING QUALIFICATIONS

8.5.1 Routine Length = 2:15 – 3:00 plus 10 seconds leeway on maximum time

8.5.2 Technical Merit (TM):

8.5.2.1 Content - There is a high amount and variety of main moves and transitional moves (90% full). The dog is worked on at least 4 sides of the handler. The balance of the amount of moves between the dog and the handler is 90%. (*Meaning 55%/45% ratio)

8.5.2.2 Precise Execution - Most of the moves are executed with 90% (great) precision. Rarely are visual cues noticeable. The dog responds efficiently to all cues. The handler and dog are mostly synchronized throughout the routine.

8.5.2.3 Flow - The routine flows greatly (90%). There is a rare amount of setting up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves are very smooth.

8.5.2.4 Difficulty of Routine - There are many intricate steps, moves, and different body positions. Complex and/or original moves are apparent. There are a few pace changes in the routine. There is 90% control in the routine.

8.5.2.5 Stepping in Time to the Music - The handler and dog move with 90% (great) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.5.3 Artistic Impression (AI):

8.5.3.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) - There is 90% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between handler and the dog is 90% (great).

8.5.3.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine - The choreography of the routine is laid out and done with great quality in the ring space that is used, showing 90% (great) creativity and balance.

8.5.3.3 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) - The handler and dog team cover a great amount of the 75%/50% of the total ring space.

8.5.3.4 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation - The routine matches the music/theme greatly.

8.5.3.5 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine - The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme greatly.

8.5.3.6 Spectator Appeal - The routine is appreciated, acknowledged and enjoyed greatly.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required for title	KUSA Title
	TM	AI		
OPEN Singles	8.5	8.5	3	MF Int
OPEN Brace	8.5	8.5	3	MF Int-BR
OPEN Pairs	8.5	8.5	3	MF Int-PR
OPEN Group	8.5	8.5	3	MF Int-GR
Veteran	8.2	8.2	3	MF Int -V
Handy Dandy	8.0	8.0	3	MF Int -HD

8.6 ADVANCED LEVEL QUALIFYING EXPLANATIONS

8.6.1 Routine Length = 2:45 – 3:40 minutes plus 10 seconds leeway on maximum time

8.6.2 Technical Merit (TM):

8.6.2.1 Content - There is an extensive amount and variety of main moves and transitional moves (95% full, with no dead spots). The dog is worked on more than 4 sides of the handler (up to full 360-degree radius). The balance of the amount of moves between the dog and the handler is 95%. (*Meaning 52%/48% ratio)

8.6.2.2 Precise Execution - All moves are executed with 95% precision. No visual cues are noticeable. The dog responds efficiently to all cues. The dog and handler are "as one" throughout the routine, with constant synchronization.

8.6.2.3 Flow - The routine flows almost perfect (95%). There is no setting up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves flow almost flawlessly.

8.6.2.4 Difficulty of Routine - Intricate and complex steps, moves, and different body positions are expected throughout the routine, with original and innovative moves present. There are pace changes. There is 95% control in the routine.

8.6.2.5 Stepping in Time to the Music - The handler and dog move with 95% (extreme) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.6.3 Artistic Impression (AI):

8.6.3.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) - There is 95% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between handler and the dog is 95% (wonderful, "as one") throughout the routine.

8.6.3.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine - The choreography of the routine is laid out and done with extensive quality in the ring space that is used, showing 95% (extensive) creativity and balance.

8.6.3.3 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) - The handler and dog team completely cover the 75%/50% of the total ring space.

8.6.3.4 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation - The routine matches the music/theme identically.

8.6.3.5 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine - The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme exactly.

8.6.3.6 Spectator Appeal - The routine is appreciated, acknowledged, and enjoyed extremely.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required for title	KUSA Title
	TM	AI		
OPEN Singles	9.2	9.2	3	CH(MF)
OPEN Brace	9.2	9.2	3	CH(MF-Br)
OPEN Pairs	9.2	9.2	3	CH(MF-Pr)
OPEN Group	9.2	9.2	3	CH(MF-Gr)
Veteran	9.0	9.0	3	CH(MF-V)
Handy Dandy	8.5	8.5	3	CH(MF-HD)

8.7 SUPREME LEVEL QUALIFYING EXPLANATIONS

8.7.1 The routine must be done off-leash (except for option in Veteran or Handy Dandy (deaf / blind / physically handicapped) divisions).

8.7.2 Routine Length = 2 mins 45 secs – 3 mins 40 secs with ten (10) seconds leeway

8.7.2.1 Technical Merit (TM):

8.7.2.1.1 Content – There is an extensive amount and variety of main moves and transitional moves (97% full, with no dead spots). The dog is worked on more than 4 sides of the handler (up to full 360-degree radius). The balance of the amount of moves between the dog and the handler is 97%.

8.7.2.1.2 Precise Execution – All moves are executed with 97% precision. No visual cues are noticeable. The dog responds efficiently to all cues. The dog and handler are "as one" throughout the routine, with constant synchronization.

8.7.2.1.3 Flow – The routine flows almost perfect (97%). There is no setting up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves flow almost flawlessly.

8.7.2.1.4 Difficulty of Routine – Intricate and complex steps, moves, and different body positions are expected throughout the routine, with original and innovative moves present. There are pace changes. There is 97% control in the routine.

8.7.2.1.5 Stepping in Time to the Music – The handler and dog move with 97% (extreme) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.7.2.2 Artistic Impression (AI):

8.7.2.2.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) – There is 97% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between handler and the dog is 97% (wonderful, "as one") throughout the routine.

- 8.7.2.2.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine – The choreography of the routine is laid out and done with extensive quality in the ring space that is used, showing 97% (extensive) creativity and balance.
- 8.7.2.2.3 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) – The handler and dog team completely cover the 75%/50% of the total ring space.
- 8.7.2.2.4 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation – The routine matches the music/theme identically.
- 8.7.2.2.5 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine – The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme exactly.
- 8.7.2.2.6 Spectator Appeal – The routine is appreciated, acknowledged, and enjoyed extremely.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required for title	KUSA Title
	TM	AI		
OPEN Singles	9.5	9.5	10	SUPCH(HTM)
Veteran	9.3	9.3	10	SUPCH(HTM-V)
Handy Dandy	8.8	8.8	10	SUPCH(HTM-HD)

8.8 JUNIOR LEVEL QUALIFYING EXPLANATIONS

- 8.8.1 Level 1 Routine Length = 1 min 15 secs – 1 min 30 secs with 10 seconds leeway
- Level 2 Routine Length = 1 min 15 secs – 1 min 45 secs with 10 seconds leeway
- Level 3 Routine Length = 1 min 15 secs – 2:00 mins with 10 seconds leeway

8.8.1.1 Technical Merit (TM): JUNIOR LEVELS 1, 2 AND 3

- 8.8.1.1.1 Content – There is a basic number and variety of main moves and transitional moves (65% full). The dog is worked on at least 2 sides of the handler. The balance of the number of moves between the dog and the handler is 35%. (*Meaning 67%/33% ratio)
- 8.8.1.1.2 Precise Execution – All moves are executed with 65% (fair) precision. Some hand cues are noticeable. The dog responds to the first or second cues. The handler and dog are fairly synchronised throughout the routine.
- 8.8.1.1.3 Flow – The routine flows fairly well (65%). There is some setting-up of the handler and/or dog for the main moves. The transitional moves are fairly smooth.
- 8.8.1.1.4 Difficulty of Routine - Most of the steps, moves, and body positions are simple. There is a very small amount of complexity. The routine has basically one pace. There is 65% control in the routine.
- 8.8.1.1.5 Stepping in Time to the Music – The handler and dog move with 65% (fair) accuracy in time to the music/beat/rhythm or theme.

8.8.1.2 Artistic Impression (AI):

- 8.8.1.2.1 Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding) - There is 65% attention, concentration, readiness, and animation from the dog and the handler throughout the routine. The interaction between the handler and the dog is 65% (good).
- 8.8.1.2.2 Quality and Creativity of Choreography, layout of routine – The choreography of the routine is laid out and done fairly in the ring space that is used, showing 65% (fair) creativity and balance.

- 8.8.1.2.3 Use of 75% Ring Space (50% for small dogs) – The handler and dog team cover a fair amount of the 75%/50% of the total ring space.
- 8.8.1.2.4 Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation – The routine matches the music/theme fairly well.
- 8.8.1.2.5 Costume Coordination with Music and Routine – The handler's costume and the dog's attire complement the music, routine, and/or theme fairly well.
- 8.8.1.2.6 Spectator Appeal – The routine is appreciated and enjoyed fairly well.

Class Minimum qualifying score QCs required to progress.

Class	Minimum qualifying score		QCs required to progress to next level
	TM	AI	
Junior Level 1	6.0	6.0	3
Junior Level 2	6.5	6.5	3
Junior Level 3	7.0	7.0	3

8.9 JUNIOR LEVEL GUIDELINES

- 8.9.1 Junior competition age is open to competitors between the ages of eight (8) and eighteen (18). However, if the handler has earned at least one (1) qualification in Level 3, a six-month leeway will be given to the handler to earn their MF Junior title.
- 8.9.2 When moving up to the Adult classes after competing in the Junior levels, they enter the Adult division at the Beginner level.
- 8.9.3 Entry forms for the Junior level must be signed by a parent / guardian.
- 8.9.4 The music, costume and dance movements at Junior Level must be appropriate for entrant's age.
 - 8.9.4.1 Music should portray the relationship between the dog and handler and show personality of the dog.
 - 8.9.4.2 Discretion should be used in selecting music. Music must show good taste and should not be offensive or suggestive in language.
 - 8.9.4.3 Costumes should be done in good taste, showing the theme of the music and routine. The following is discouraged: short shorts and skirts; tight sweaters, low necklines or bare midriff. Costumes should not distract, limit, or hinder the Judge's view of the dog.
 - 8.9.4.4 The dog must be trained by the Junior for the routine that is entered. Routines should be choreographed and be age-appropriate. Junior handlers may not use any sexually suggestive body movements during the routine.
- 8.9.5 Juniors are encouraged to promote the joys and fun of responsible pet ownership through the sport of Dog Dancing.
- 8.9.6 Juniors receiving a qualifying score will receive a Qualifying Certificate for that level.
 - 8.9.6.1 Juniors who have received a qualifying score three times in Level 1 may move to Level 2. However, the Junior may elect to remain in Level 1 following receipt of their third qualification, but once they elect to move to Level 2, they will not be able to return to Level 1, regardless of whether they have earned a qualification at the higher level.
 - 8.9.6.2 Juniors who have received a qualifying score three times in Level 2 may move to Level 3. However, the Junior may elect to remain in Level 2 following receipt of their third qualification, but once they elect to move to Level 3, they will not be able to return to Level 2, regardless of whether they have earned a qualification at the higher level.
- 8.9.7 Once a Junior has received 3 Qualifying Certificates in Level 3, they will receive the title of Musical Freestyle (MF) Junior.
 - 8.9.7.1 Upon reaching Level 3, Juniors will continue to compete in this class until eligible to move to Adult Beginners.

8.10 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

8.10.1 Rules for the International Level will follow FCI Regulations

9. Props

- 9.1 Props may be stationary or movable.
- 9.2 Dogs and/or handlers may carry or retrieve a prop.
- 9.3 Dogs and/or handlers may carry and/or retrieve a stationary prop or retrieve a prop immediately after being thrown as long as it fits the theme of the routine and is not used as a motivator. This action will be evaluated by the judge(s), and if it is determined to be a motivator, 0.1 to 0.5 point may be deducted from the TM score for each instance.
- 9.4 Props must be an integral part of the routine and must be used by the handler and dog team. A violation of this will result in a deduction of 1.0 point from the Total Technical Merit (TM) score and 1.0 point from the Total Artistic Impression (AI) score.
- 9.5 Time allotment for set up and taking down of props at live events is 60 seconds and must be done by the handler only. A violation of this will result in a deduction of 1.0 point from the Total Technical Merit (TM) score and 1.0 point from the Total Artistic Impression (AI) score.
- 9.6 However, if the prop is too big or heavy for the handler to pick-up or manoeuvre, the handler may ask permission from the judge and organizing body for someone to help him/her with the setting up and taking down of the prop.
- 9.7 No Human or Animal Props are allowed in competitive classes. A violation of this will result in the routine being disqualified.
- 9.8 A prop or other item should not aid the dog and/or handler in the execution of a move. Ring gating, barriers, or other items should not be used to aid movement(s) in the routine.
- 9.9 Prop or other items used/presented in the routine should not markedly change the dog's demeanour and/or drive. However, if a dog/handler team demonstrates animation, connection and harmonious interaction (bonding), they will not be penalized if the dog's head or eyes follow the movement of a prop.

10. Costumes

10.1 **Handlers**

- 10.1.1 Handler costumes are permitted and should be suited to the theme of the music. If the music does not have a theme, costuming is at the discretion of the handler.

10.1.2 Costume chosen should conform to generally accepted rules of decorum and not be offensive or sexually suggestive in its presentation.

10.1.3 Costumes should not interfere with the performance of the dog and handler and may in no way distract the dog from the execution of the routine.

10.2 **Dogs**

10.2.1 Within the execution of all routines, dogs may wear the following:

10.2.2 Neck scarf, bandana, collar

10.2.3 Standard strap harness (without large plates), standard Julius K9 or similar harnesses are not allowed.

10.3.4 Decorated ankle bands, on any number of the four legs, placed low on each foot, covering no more than 1 cm of the leg

10.3.5 Any violation of these rules will result in disqualification of the routine.

11. Music

11.1 Music within the public domain is acceptable, as long as it is not offensive or sexually suggestive. The music shall reflect a respect for the judge/s, the dog, the audience, and the sport of Musical Freestyle.

11.2 At the event, handlers must submit their music CD or flash drive to the music desk at least 45 minutes before the start of the event, and a sound check must be done with each CD / flash drive.

11.3 **CDs / flash drives MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED, AS FOLLOWS:**

11.3.1 Name of handler

11.3.2 Name of dog

11.3.3 Class entered

11.3.4 Title of song

11.3.5 Artist of song

11.4 A final sound check will be done in the ring before each routine. The handler has the opportunity to adjust the sound to suit the team.

11.5 Competitors are responsible for picking up their music CDs and/or flash drives at the end of their performance. The organizers will not be held responsible.

12. Licensing and Show Rules

12.1 The Regulations relating to licensing and to all other matters to do with shows as set out in Schedule 3 (Championship Shows), Schedule 3(A) International Dog Shows (FCI) and Schedule 4 (Non-Championship Shows) of the Constitution of the Kennel Union of Southern Africa shall apply to competition for Musical Freestyle Shows so far as they can be relevant to Musical Freestyle Shows and so far as they do not conflict with the specific terms of this Schedule.

12.2 Scope of Licence

Any club affiliated to the Kennel Union of Southern Africa and is eligible to hold either Non-Championship or Championship shows may apply for and be issued with a Licence to hold Musical Freestyle Classes with any show or separately there from, but may not hold Championship Musical Freestyle Classes more than once in any one (1) calendar year.

13. Management of Musical Freestyle Classes

13.1 Musical Freestyle Show Manager

The management of Musical Freestyle classes shall be entrusted to the Musical Freestyle Show Manager who shall be a Member in good standing with KUSA and appointed by the Committee of the Club holding the show.

13.2 Disputes

Any disputed matter requiring a decision on the ground shall be decided by the Musical Freestyle Show Manager. No competitor shall impugn the decision of the Judge. The Judge's decision is final.

13.3 Complaints

Complaints lodged by competitors will be dealt with in accordance with the KUSA Regulations.

13.4 Other Matters

Any matter not provided for in these Regulations or in the Kennel Union Constitution and Schedules shall be decided upon by a simple majority of all the Judges and the Musical Freestyle Show Manager. In the case of an equality of votes, the Musical Freestyle Show Manager shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote and the decision made shall be final.

13.5 **Officials**

The appointment of all Officials may be approved/confirmed by the Musical Freestyle Sub-Committee of the local Provincial Council in conjunction with the Show Holding Club.
Minimum Officials required as follows: Judge, Scribe, one (1) Timekeeper, one (1) Music co-ordinator and one (1) Steward.

13.6 **Misconduct at Shows**

Physical disciplining of a dog or serious uncontrollable behaviour of a dog at a Musical Freestyle Show may be penalised at the discretion of the Musical Freestyle Show Manager by excluding the dog and/or handler from further competition at the Show and/or by ordering the exhibitor of the dog to forfeit any Musical Freestyle Awards, positions or qualifications gained at the Show.

13.6.1 Harsh handling or unseemly behaviour will be severely condemned and will result in immediate elimination, independently of any complaint that could be lodged against the handler.

13.7 **Number of Dogs to be Judged**

No Judge shall be required to judge more than a total of thirty (30) dogs in one day. If the number of entries in Classes to be judged by one (1) person exceeds these limits, the Committee of the Club holding the Show shall appoint an extra Judge(s) and shall allocate competitors as equally as possible among the Judges by draw.

13.8 **Order of Judging**

The order of judging is at the discretion of the show-holding Club.

13.9 **Handler of Dog**

13.9.1 A competing team may be either the owner and the dog, or one or more deputies and the dog. Once the team has been issued a record card the handler of the dog may not change.

13.9.2 A change in handler requires a new record card to be issued and the new team starts from the lowest level.

13.9.3 An owner must not interfere with his dog if he has deputized another person to handle it.

13.10 **Competing Dogs**

13.10.1 All dogs are eligible to enter a Musical Freestyle competition unless they are:

- 13.10.1.1 Pregnant bitches
- 13.10.1.2 Apparently ill or hurt.
- 13.10.1.3 Doped

13.10.2 Dogs coming from or going to a region infected with rabies must have a valid inoculation certificate against rabies which shall be produced to the Judge or Musical Freestyle Show Manager. Any dog not possessing such a certificate shall be ineligible to compete.

13.11 Conditions

It is the responsibility of the Musical Freestyle Show Manager and of the Judge(s) to ensure that all dogs competing in a class compete under the same conditions as far as this is practical.

13.12 Weather

When any Musical Freestyle event is held at any open air venue, it shall be at the sole discretion of the Judge whether or not competition in any Musical Freestyle Class should be interrupted on account of inclement weather. Cancellation of a Musical Freestyle Show shall be at the discretion of the Musical Freestyle Show Manager in consultation with the Judge(s).

13.13 Starting Times

All competitors and dogs shall be present at the site of the show at least thirty (30) minutes before the starting time. The Judge shall have discretion to postpone the starting time of a class and the draw for order of competition for a reasonable period if competitors in the class are delayed through competition elsewhere in the show falling behind schedule. Such postponement shall be made known to all competitors in the class who are present. Any competitor who is not present at the end of such postponement shall be regarded as having withdrawn from the Show and shall not be allowed to compete. The Judge has the discretion to commence a test without all competitors being present.

13.14 Briefing of Handlers

Before commencing the competition, the Judge will brief the handlers. He/she may draw their attention to some of the regulations, explaining the nature of the competition and the manner which the competition will be graded.

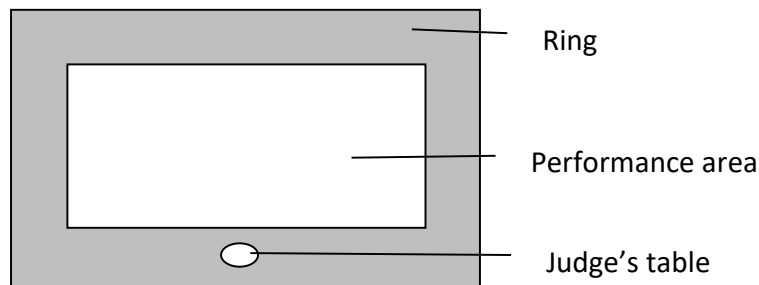
13.15 Exhibit Number

On entering the ring, a handler needs to display his/her exhibit number, in order to be positively identified. However, it is not necessary to wear the exhibit number while in the ring.

14. Ring Size & Demarcation of Performance Area

14.1 The performance area for all events is to be a minimum of 10m x 20m, clearly demarcated and housed within a larger demarcated ring, ideally 20m x 40m.

- 14.2 Where possible, the judge/s will sit within the ring but outside the performance area on a long (20m) side as shown below.



- 14.3 The routine executed must start, continue and finish within the confines of the performance area.
- 14.4 It is the responsibility of the hosting club to draw up the running order, displaying the order in which the routines are to be performed, and this running order must be clearly displayed for competitors outside the ring.
- 14.5 No spectators or dogs are allowed within the ring. Only the currently performing team is allowed in the ring or performance area.
- 14.6 Spectators are expected to adhere to general rules of basic good manners, and not intentionally distract the dog in any way, or throw anything into the ring. Should this occur, the organising club reserves the right to request that particular member of the audience to vacate the premises
- 14.7 Ideally there should be an allocated practice area for competitors. This practice area must be safe, and out of sight of the main ring, so as to not distract or interfere with a competitor whilst executing his / her routine.
- 14.8 KUSA, the organising club, and the judge/s present will ensure that each competitor receives a fair, complete and un-interrupted performance of their routine.

15. Judges

15.1 Qualification of judges

15.1.1 A prospective Judge needs to complete the following sequence to the satisfaction of KUSA:

15.1.1.1 Attend a Judging Workshop / Training Course and be allocated a Mentor (who shall be a Senior Judge) provided by the appropriate KUSA Sub-Committee.

- 15.1.1.2 After a recorded meeting with their Mentor to discuss the process, they will be considered Learner Judges and be eligible to move on to the next step. This report must be submitted to KUSA.
- 15.1.1.3 Shadow judge a minimum of 4 live events and submit a Report for scrutiny to their Mentor and Judge of the day. The Mentor will provide a written comment on the submitted Report. On approval of these Reports they will be considered Junior Judges and be eligible to move on to the next step.
- 15.1.1.4 Judge a minimum of 2 live events under the supervision of a Senior Judge and submit a Report to the Judge of the day for scrutiny and approval for each event. On approval of these Reports they will be considered Senior Judges and be eligible to judge competitions.
- 15.1.1.5 Attend at least one Judging Workshop / Training Course in every two-year cycle.
- 15.1.1.6 Failure to judge in a two-year cycle will result in a Judge needing to co-judge a minimum of one live event and submit a Report for scrutiny and approval.

16. General

- 16.1 Competitors are responsible for picking up their score sheets from the judge/s at the end of their division.
- 16.2 Competitors may only discuss their scores once the competition is finished, and the judge has finished scoring all competitors. Judges may only discuss the individual scores of the specific competitor enquiring about his/her scores. No handler shall impugn the decision of the judge/s.



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Most recent changes to this Schedule have an effective date of 01.03.2024