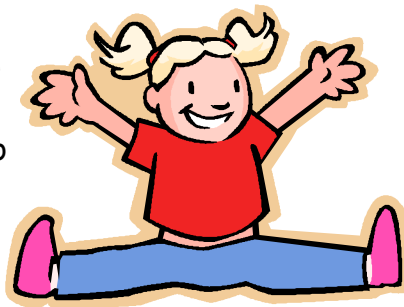


Ribbon Parades are FUN!!!!!!

Generally things stop being fun if we feel that we are looking like idiots, we are worried, or we are out of our depth. If any, or all of the above are stopping you from coming to a ribbon parade, read on.

If you have a Labrador you may enter. A ribbon parade is a show for novices - novice handlers, novice dogs and novice judges. No one is going to banish you from the ring if your dog sits down or you go the wrong way. And although you may feel as if you are wearing a neon sign saying " Klutz with dog standing here" in actual fact no one will have noticed because they are all too busy turning on their own neon signs.



What is a Ribbon Parade?

A Ribbon Parade is a dog show and follows the same format as any other dog show.

Labradors are divided into classes for:-

A] Age group [it makes sense to have baby puppies competing with other baby puppies and not with adult dogs - easier for the judge to compare like with like ;there are classes for:-

Baby puppies - 4-6 months,

Puppies 6 -12 months,

Novice- any age, but cannot have won first place at Championship or Open Show unless they were baby puppies

Juniors 12 - 24 months,

Intermediates 2—3 years

Veterans over 7 years and

Opens - Normally 3-years and over but can be any age.

B] Sex. [Blokes (dogs) are separated from girls (bitches) at this stage but the class age groups are the same.

Let's do a 'for instance'.

The 'for instance' is that you have the most handsome, smart, 14month dog called Einstein that you want to show in the ribbon parade. Which class will he go in? --- RIGHT -- junior dog. There is always a fairly obvious table where the show secretary takes your money and gives you a number that you wear in the ring. Help is at hand here.

The normal format is that the judge will be introduced to everyone and then the show will begin. Now you will be saying 'help - when do I know when to take Einstein in ' - your worries are over because there is wonderful person called a call steward who will call out your number when you are needed, HOWEVER it does pay to stay within earshot. The classes are judged in numerical order, so ' junior' is not very far from the beginning of the show. While you are waiting beside the ring watch the competitors in the ring. Usually judging follows a similar format in each class, so what you can see the judge asking the puppies to do will be what you have to do with Einstein. Keep listening for your number to be called. Lordy, the steward is calling your number! Are you ready for this?! Of course you are - Einstein can do this standing on his head, and the guy with two left feet in the class before can win a ribbon this will be a doddle.

When you hear your number - say "here" - and make sure the steward has heard you. The steward will, from here, tell you what to do. Usually it is "just line up inside the ring" Wow, you are **in the ring and nothing scary has happened yet!**

The judge may have quick look at all the dogs in your class while you are standing, but usually will say ' round the ring please'

Now this is no more difficult than taking Einstein to the letterbox for the paper, just have him trot beside you on a nice loose lead. It isn't a race, in fact many judges like you to move at a nice steady pace so that they have time to see

movement and compare all the dogs as they move around the ring. This is the tricky bit - concentrate on Einstein as you move around the ring but as you near the completion of the circle flick an eye at the judge, they will probably indicate [in the manner of a traffic officer on point duty] that they want the class to stop, or, go round again. When you stop, do you very darndest not to use the competitor in front as a brake.

We now approach the part of the judging where the judge will look at the dogs individually, and you and Einstein will be ready. Some judges like the dog they are judging at the time to walk out in front of the others, while others will judge them in line. Whatever—when the judge is looking at Einstein have Einstein standing in front of you and looking at you. Because Labradors are foodies, training him to do this should be easy peasy. All you need is for him to be standing evenly on four legs with his head up saying "don't wave that food at me GIVE it to me -- no no no don't put it back in your pocket aw shucks." The judge will look at him and then start 'going over' him. Einstein will have absolutely no problem with this. The judge will start at Einstein's head look at his teeth, and run his hands over his body feeling with his hands what his eyes have probably already told him. Because this is a Labrador he will pay particular attention to the coat. During this examination. Einstein may, of his own accord, kiss the judge, sit down, roll over. None of the above are, of course what you want him to do --- BUT do not panic—any judge worth their salt will know that this is a first time out for you both because it is a ribbon parade and at Ribbon Parades this is what dogs DO for goodness sake. Just encourage Einstein to stand and look for that food again. Give him some to keep his attention.

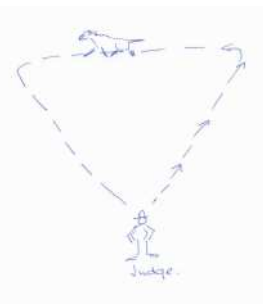


Which Lab looks the best???? You will probably say the one on the right, and you would be correct, but it is the same dog .In the photo on the left she is just standing looking bored and sloppy - but look what happened two seconds later when some food was produced and she was 'baited'

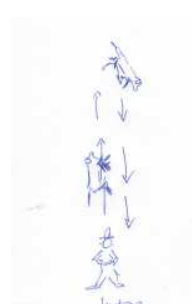
Next, in order to see if Einstein's movement is nice and straight when viewed from the front or the back, the judge will ask you to do, either a triangle, or go straight out and back. See diagrams below.



"around the ring please"



"triangle please"



" straight out and back please"

Do these at the same easy pace that you went around the ring.. When you come back to the judge come back TO the judge not to some place somewhere else in the ring, and stop just before you reach him and let Einstein stand looking at you till the judge tells you to go back to your place.

Phew, that was OK, but it isn't over yet. The judge might well have made up his mind but he is still judging Einstein all the time he is in the ring so when the judge says " set them up' just have Einstein looking for that elusive bit of bait that you have hidden in your pocket. Have him alert and looking at you ---- it just might be the clincher between you and the swashbuckler that looks pretty good too but just happened to sit down and have a jolly good scratch. All of a sudden the judge makes up his mind, points at you, and says " on one please" Yay!! That means go to the number one peg and receive your red ribbon!!! But DO NOT GO HOME because there is more . Your Einstein is the best junior dog, this is great, but there is chance for more glory. When all the dogs have been judged in their age groups Einstein then has to compete against the **winner of all the other dog classes**. Our trusty steward will call your number and assemble you in the ring in order. Because the judge has already judged all the dogs in the ring he will most probably not " go over them again' but h

has not judged them against one another, so he will probably ask them to go around the ring again, and/or go straight out and back. Not a problem - this is by now old hat to you two, you pros.

You have done your 'out and back' and the judge is about to decide which, of all the dog class winners, is going to be the Best Dog on Parade.

At this stage all the dogs will be standing in a line while the judge walks along the line, then stands back to see all the dogs at once. Einstein wants to see the dog behind him and starting to turn around so you whip your bait under his nose and have him facing you just in time as the judge is looking at him. And then---- the judge is walking towards you with an enormous ribbon, everyone is clapping and you have just won Best Dog on Parade. Einstein really couldn't care one way or the other just as long as you off load into his mouth all the bait that you still have in your pocket.

Thought you had finished didn't you - no no no. Now all those reading this who don't own Einstein - please concentrate. Once Einstein has left the ring [and the others are still there] the judge must pick the second best dog on parade, so, the dog that came second to Einstein [named Fred] might still be better than all the other dogs in the show. Fred comes into the ring, the steward will tell him where to stand, so that he may compete against the winners of all the other classes and if the judge thinks that he is better than them he will be the Reserve Best Dog. But of course the judge may pick one of the other class winners.

Class winners compete against class winners to choose the overall best dog. The dog that came second to the winning dog comes in to compete against the other class winners to be the second best dog.

The same format takes place with the bitches, with eventually, all the class winners competing against each other for Best bitch and Reserve bitch.

The BEST ON PARADE is when your Einstein competes against the Best Bitch for

Best on Parade

Well you knew he was going to win didn't you!! There you are covered with ribbons and glory with the very best dog in the entire world. When Einstein received his ribbon and went out of the ring the judge must pick a 'runner up' or reserve best on parade This may be the Best bitch, who is still in the ring OR the dog that was reserve to Einstein.

[read this again slowly - it WILL make sense]

Now that the judge has chosen the Best, and the Reserve on Parade the Baby puppies come in [dog and bitch class winners] to compete against one another. then the best dog puppy against the best bitch puppy, and so on through the age groups.

What will happen when the judge comes to judge the Best Junior in the show [on Parade --- Riiight! It MUST be Einstein because he was the Best in the Show -- he will still have to do a lap of honour though - don't you just love that!

MOST IMPORTANT!!!!!!

The dog that you took to the show, and thought was the very best in the world is the one you take home - and he/she is STILL the best in the world - even if he/she isn't Einstein. Sheesh what does that judge know!!!

Once the class judging has finished there are "stakes" classes. These vary from Ribbon Parade to Ribbon Parade but are usually for things like the "Best Head", Best Coat, Best Gait. Committee at entry time will help you here.

A dog entered at a ribbon parade does not have to be registered with the NZ Kennel Club, but must be for other dog shows e.g Open, and Championship Shows The owner of the dog at these shows must be a member of the NZ Kennel Club, Ribbon Parades are a training ground for dogs, handlers, judges and should be low key and fun. If you really enjoy ribbon parades you may wish to go on to compete seriously -. The Lab Club handbook also has a section on filling out entry forms correctly - oh yes - this is MUCH more serious and much more addictive.

Come and join us and have fun with your Labrador - spend some time with others who feel their Lab is as wonderful as you think your is!!

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