

**English Cocker Spaniel Club of America**  
**Field Trial Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Members Present: Deb Strohl, Mike Schroeder, Vicky Thomas, Walt Leytham, Robert Griffin, Keith Meissner, Joe DeMarkis

- I. Call to order was made at 8:03pm EST
- II. Approval of the agenda (Additions to the Agenda are below)

- a) Approval of the 3/3/15 minutes

The Minutes from the 3/3/15 FTC meeting with the Revisions & Corrections were unanimously approved by the committee. Vicky's comments on Merged trials and a revision to the NCC Game Recovery & Utilization program will be inserted into the minutes, the old minutes will be removed and the new copy posted on the fieldcockers.com website.

- b) Approval of FTC Mission Statement from the ECSCA

Joe has sent 2 emails to Beth Hendricks the ECSCA President and has not had a reply from either e-mail. Joe is concerned about having an incorrect email address. Joe will try and call her to present her with the FTC's letter about their objections to the FTC Mission Statement being changed without our consent and without proper documentation. Joe will contact the committee after he has reached her with the results.

- III. Unfinished Business

- a) **Decide on how the FTC is going to handle our minutes.** Joe proposed a 5 day time frame for the committee to review the minutes and if adjustments or corrections need to be made the committee will ~~then~~ have 2 days to make those corrections. After that time frame the minutes will be considered approved, sent to the membership and posted on fieldcockers.com website. Our goal is to have the minutes sent to fieldcockers.com and to the membership within 5 to 7 days after they have been written. A vote was taken and all committee members were in favor.
- b) **Game Recovery & Utilization.** The committee felt that Game Recovery & Utilization should be included in our document "How to Run a NCC" Joe will write up a draft for Game Recovery & Utilization to be inserted in the document and will send it to the FTC committee for approval. We have had a lot of discussion on the topic of Game Recovery & Utilization especially from the West and Central regions and the Committee would like to hear more from the East Coast. The Patriot Club of NH/ MA and the Cocker Club of NY have both appointed official game stewards to be responsible for Game Recovery & Utilization.
- c) **Mission Statement review.** Joe & Vicky recommended that a subcommittee be formed to take an in depth review of the FTC Mission Statement so they can report back to the FTC with changes and or corrections that need to be made. The FTC can then submit a formal report with specific changes to the

Mission Statement to the ECSCA Board for approval. Keith, Robert & Vicky were very concerned about the changes that were made to the FTC Mission Statement without the FTC's knowledge and the lack of documentation of the changes. Mike was concerned that the ECSCA holds the Mission Statement document and that we were not notified of any changes that were made to it. Vicky thought that the more people that are familiar with the Mission Statement, the less likely it will be that changes will be made without the FTC's knowledge. A motion was made by Joe/Vicky & seconded by Mike to form a subcommittee that will review, update and revise the FTC Mission Statement. Mike made a motion that Vicky should be the Liaison between the FTC & the Subcommittee. We would like the Subcommittee to have a Final Document produced in August 2015 in order to have time for the FTC and membership to approve the document and have a discussion about the Mission Statement at the annual FTC meeting in October at the 2015 NCC.

- d) **Merged Trials** will be tabled until the April meeting, at that time Vicky will have a review of the California Merged Trial and present it to the Committee.
- e) **Judging Criteria. (patterning and hunting styles, NCC, etc)** This was a lengthy discussion and there were several parts to it that will be continued at the next meeting. Deb was concerned about Judges that are grandfathered in, who don't trial dogs any longer and or Gunners that don't run dogs in trials but are judging Cocker Trials. Robert thought that a good judge is still a good judge no matter the time away from trialing and Keith thought that there are people who no longer or never ran dogs and should not be judging, but there are also several very experienced retired handlers / pros that can still judge and will do a great job even though they don't run dogs any longer. It is up to the club to make their judges choices with the best interest of the dogs and to choose the best judges available. Vicky thought that Field Trailers should avoid trials that they don't feel are being run under quality judges.

There was a concern about the NCC judges and who checks on their Qualifications which are listed below :

Have judged a minimum of twelve (12) AKC Championship Spaniel Field Trial stakes, of which at least three (3) must be AKC Cocker Spaniel Field Trial Championship stakes.

Have Field Championed or, shared by handling the earning of points toward the FC or AFC title of a spaniel.

Has actively handled a spaniel in an AKC field trial in the past three (3) years prior to the NCC they would be judging.

As of now we are not sure if anyone has or does check the NCC Judges for qualifications. It's expected that the nominating club would check the requirements before nominating a judge. It was noted by Keith and Vicky that at least 2 regular field trials have had judging combinations not in accordance with the Cocker Judging Criteria that was approved by the AKC. So if no one is checking the regular trials who is checking the NCC judges-

Vicky thought that a section on NCC Judges Nomination Ballots should be included in the FTC Mission Statement. The committee suggested fieldcockers.com website include the names of the judges when they list placing dogs on the results page, , so that we can have a reference to check and see if a Judge has judged the minimum of 3 Cocker Trials needed to judge an NCC. Keith thought that only having to judge 3 Cocker Trials was a very low number in order to be a National Cocker Judge. He felt the number should be higher. Deb would like to encourage all Field Trial Clubs when presenting their results to fieldcockers.com to include Judges, number of dogs entered etc... Joe thought that any Nominated NCC Judge should have the past three Cocker Trials they have judged listed on the NCC nominating ballot. Joe will look into making changes to the NCC Judges nomination ballots to show the Cocker Trials judged and find a copy of the Ballot so the FTC can review it for the next meeting. It was noted that the AKC website doesn't denote whether it was a Cocker or Springer trial judged, only that it was a Spaniel Field Trial.

## **New Business**

- a) **2016 NCC Bids** – The Committee would like to remind all interested Clubs that proposals for the 2016 NCC have to be submitted to the FTC by June 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 for consideration.

- b) **Hall of Fame Field Trial** Walt would like to put on a Cocker Trial at the Hall of Fame in Tennessee during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of February in conjunction with the Springer Trials Walt is going to try and get a feel for what type of participation & numbers there will be. Vicky was concerned about the time of year and if there would be an unfair disadvantage to the Dogs in the North that can't train during that time of year. Robert suggested that a training day prior to the trial might help to draw more dogs. Several hurdles are #1. There are no Cockers in the area, #2. Springer Trials occupy Friday, Saturday & Sunday events and #3 the distance to coordinate for the Field Trial Chairman is very far. Keith wanted to make it clear that this would be a Field Trial near the Hall of Fame in Tennessee and that the proceeds would be going to the host club, not the English Cocker Spaniel Hall of Fame.
- c) **Coordinating Field Trial Dates to improve participation** Keith brought up that several clubs on the East are trying to schedule the Trial season with every other week trials rather than clumping them together with back to back weekends. The reasons were back to back trials, especially several in a row are expensive and financial draining on handlers, There is less time to train dogs as we get back on Sunday night and leave on Thursday for the next trial, it extends the season over several months instead of a brief time. On the East there are more Clubs wanting to put on Cocker Trials than we have the dates available for, especially with the NCC being so early in October. If the NCC was moved into November we would add 2 or 3 weeks to our trial season and could include more trials in the fall season. Mike stated that the winter weather could be a problem in some areas. Keith noted that the Springer Nationals are frequently held in December so this should not be a problem. This discussion was tabled as it was getting late and will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Increasing ECSCA field trial interest membership** Discussion on this topic was tabled until the next meeting

- d) **2015 NCC Liaison discussion** – Jim Karlovec will be invited to attend the next FTC meeting to give us an update on the 2015 NCC in Ohio/Michigan

IV. Adjournment – at 10:05 pm EST Next FTC Meeting March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 8:00 pm Eastern time