



**NFC, FC Aikane Hokulani "Lani"**

Owners: John M. Bishop &  
Susan Takemoto  
Handler: Paul McGagh

**2016 FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE**

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**STANDING COMMITTEES:**

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*"Doing My Part"*

# ECSCA Field Trial Committee

Meeting Minutes: August 9, 2016, 8:00 PM EST

**Members Present: Deb Strohl, Mike Schroeder, Vicky Thomas, Keith Meissner, Pete Rizzo, Dennis Joannides, Terry Reckart**

**Invited Guests: Tom Meyer      AKC  
Sue Rose                      ECSCA Liaison**

1.      **Call to order:** 8:00 pm Eastern Time
2.      **Approval of Minutes** Mike moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Deb. Unanimously Approved.
3.      **Approval of the agenda:**      The agenda was approved.
4.      **Unfinished Business**

**IS IT TIME FOR AN AMATEUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP?**

At our last FTC meeting, the committee took a straw vote asking if we thought it was an appropriate time to commit our Cocker Community to begin having a National Amateur Championship. The vote passed.

We invited Tom Meyer of AKC to attend this meeting and ECSCA Liaison, Sue Rose to evaluate our position. We began the meeting by reviewing the letter sent to Hobson and Lisa Brown in 2009 outlining the requirements AKC sees as a minimum for them to grant the Amateur National Championship. They are:

1.    17 Amateur All-Age stakes held in the previous calendar year.
2.    59 qualified dogs: Placed 1st - 4th in an Amateur stake in the previous three calendar years.
3.    The Amateur National Championship stake must have a minimum of 35 starters. If there are not 35 starters, the stake will be considered a regular Amateur All-Age stake (no Championship title).
4.    Must follow green book standards, some substandard trials have occurred.

We began the discussion stating we had a report compiled by Rumi Schroeder that demonstrated we currently have 55 dogs that, in theory, would be qualified for a NACC per #2 above. A second document compiled by Bethann Wiley estimated we had 120 Amateur owned Cockers qualified for the Open Championship. Our challenge remains to have our field trial clubs stage 17 Amateur trials during 2017 and onward.

Several FTC members, noting we've already met 2 of the above requirements, discussed how to encourage Field Trial clubs to stage the additional Amateur stakes necessary. In the past, Field Trial clubs would reserve an entire day for the Amateur Stake which often dealt a financial blow for the trial club. Now we are seeing more and more clubs stage both Open and Amateur Stakes on the same day using the "Sequential" trial method or running alternating series. This may be an answer to having clubs host Amateur trials on a consistent basis and not lose money staging them. The major difference would be to offer 8 placements in a day rather than 4. Dennis and Deb thought that this way would increase the amount of dogs at the overall trial. It would give the handlers an opportunity to enter a dog more than once in a weekend.

We noted if a club was only running an open stake and had, for example, 35 dogs entering, if they were to offer the additional Amateur stake, they might see the Open Stake shrink by 10 dogs that opted to enter the Amateur. They would have the same 35 total entry for the day, but divided into 25 for the Open and 10 for the Amateur. The FTC wanted to caution FT clubs that this sequential method has larger 3<sup>rd</sup> Series to accommodate two trials and this system breaks down with more than 45 dogs competing during the spring's daylight limitations. Fall trials should be able to accommodate a larger total entry.

Due to the lower total entries found in the East & West regions, clubs might have trouble offering two different stakes of 10 each and keep a competitive element. It was suggested to offer both stakes, but if the minimum 10 dogs required for a stake was not achieved, those dogs could be rolled into the Open Stake. Also, if the clubs did indeed muster the 10 entrants per event, we need to caution those judging the smaller entry, if they do not see the proper standard achieved, they should withhold placements!

Keith asked Tom if it would be possible for an individual (who is an amateur) that entered, competed and placed in an Open Stake, be able to qualify for the NACC. Tom agreed that this could be considered for a limited time period as a qualification method especially in areas where Amateur Stakes had not yet expanded. But, this would be only offered for a limited time period.

We requested AKC give us a "verbal" commitment that if we could meet the 17 event level, they would approve an Amateur National for 2018. We reasoned there would be greater incentive for handlers to enter and run in Amateur stakes when they know a National Amateur Championship stake will take place. If we couldn't reach our goals, then we wouldn't have the event.

Tom suggested we put a proposal together and submit it to the AKC. He cautioned that we would want to double check our information and commitment to make sure that we have enough dogs for either a) an every year national or b) an every other year national so that we don't have one NACC and then it's over! Vicky stated Option B may be a way to work towards an Amateur National without forcing the clubs to host substandard trials.

Assuming we were granted AKC permission to stage an Amateur National we then have several other considerations such as timing, finding people to stage the event and who would be the hosting entity? We could have a trial in the fall but that would really pack the schedule and competes with the Springer Open/Amateur as well as the Canadian Nationals. Alternatively, if we consider a late spring trial we need to select a time when we can find good birds (the females are laying eggs and the cock pheasants fight). Dennis noted that several years ago, the Springer Nationals were back to back events, this might help with volunteers and we should keep this alternative open.

Also, do we have enough people to sustain two National Championships during the year? Even if we begin with every other year NACC, we still are going to need more people to continuously stage the event. Terry suggested that we don't have to put on extravagant Nationals and we should pay particular attention

to how the NACC is structured to keep it from burdening the Open National. He suggested we keep the focus on an event that any one of our Field Trial Clubs could host like their regular trial.

There was a discussion of the possibility of running the NACC through the American Spaniel Club as they had been the host for every Cocker National from 1953-1962. Rumi has informed the FTC that the Spaniel Club has shown an initial interest. The thought is they might draw some more volunteers to put on the trial, but it was noted that they did not have much actual depth of experience.

It was also suggested we consider using the Hall of Fame Committee as the hosting group which would benefit the Hall of Fame as well as both ECSCA and The Spaniel Club.

But first, we need to establish the criteria that would be used for the qualification of the dogs for the NACC. The FTC requested Sue Rose and Vicky work on getting a new National Amateur Qualification proposal together to send to the AKC.

**The FTC would like to solicit suggestions from the Field Trialing Community on how we can work to get more Amateur trials and feedback on the concept of a National Amateur Cocker**

**Championship!** Currently, we believe we have 12 Amateur trials committed for 2017 from the following clubs: Fox Valley, Door County, MHSA, ECSCA/South Carolina, and ECSCA/Euclid. We need commitments for 5 more. AND, we need to hear if those clubs would be committed year after year!

**5. Unfinished Business Continued:**

**B. Comments from the FTC approval of the Gunning Committee Document**

The FTC will be handing off the gunning document changes to Kim Wiley and Tom Calabrese for recommended changes.

**C. Field Trial Updates**

1. ECSCA/South Carolina- Paul Mommerts trial date change. The SC trial will be moved to the weekend just prior to the Hall of Fame. This was done to try and make a circuit for trialers so they can travel from one trial to the next in the Southern-Eastern region. Mike moved for approval and Terry seconded it, all were in favor for approval

D. Judges List: Cheryl Dooley has been doing an excellent job putting together the Judges List to aid Trial Clubs in locating and selecting future Judges for their events. The FTC would like to post the list on fieldcockers.com so that all trial chairmen could review it when they are making selections for their judges. Mike moved for approval and Deb seconded it, all were in favor for approval

**New Business:**

A. Fieldcockers.com There was a discussion as to whether the FTC through the NCC fund should pay Nadine for the work that she does on fieldcockers.com. Vicky stated that the counterpart on the springer side gets paid from the Amateur and Open National as well as the advertising from the website. It was noted that the HOF Committee also pays for a web-host. The FTC felt that Nadine puts in a lot of work into the website for very little or no money and the website are vital to our sport. Vicky is to investigate.

B. Bixby Award update: The nomination deadline is August 31<sup>st</sup>.

- C. NCC Judge Nomination update. We've received 1 nomination for the 2017 NCC Judge nominations. The nomination deadline is August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- D. 2017 NCC Entry Fee- \$260.00 per dog was discussed. The FTC felt that a \$225 entry fee would be more appropriate. We hope to see the 2017 NCC Proposal at our next FTC meeting.
- E. The FTC discussed that at the end of this year the Regional Representatives (Deb, (Mid-West) Vicky (West) and Pete (East)) are up for re-election but all three may be re-elected for an additional two year term. However, if anyone is interested in becoming a Regional Representative for their Region, they should contact their club to send a nomination to the FTC. Only ECSCA members can be elected to the FTC. The deadline for nominations is September 30. If there are no nominations, we will assume all of the current representatives will be re-elected for an additional 2 year term.
- F. The FTC would like to send our thoughts and prayers to Ollie and A.R. Ginn wishing AR a speedy recovery from his recent illness!

Adjournment – Next FTC Meeting August 23rd, 2016 8:00 pm EST