

English Cocker Spaniel Club of America

Field Trial Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 12, 2015, 8:00 PM Eastern Time

FTC Members Present: Deb Strohl, Mike Schroeder, Vicky Thomas, Robert Griffin, Keith Meissner, Joe DeMarkis, Pete Rizzo, Dennis Joannides, Terry Reckert,

I. Election of New FTC Chairman

Joe welcomed and congratulated both Terry and Dennis for joining the committee.

Both Deb and Keith nominated Vicky for the Chairman position. Vicky has accepted the position with the understanding that she will be the Chairman for 1 year and then would like another newer member take over the chairmanship in order to develop our committee members. A vote was called for and it was unanimous. Congratulations to Vicky our new FTC Chairman. Vicky will contact the ECSCA Board of Directors and let them know. Joe stated he will always be available to help with whatever we need and is only a phone call or email away. Keith will continue on as secretary for another year.

- i. **Robert in his closing statement said:** *“We are here for the Field Bred English Cockers, to preserve and benefit the breed. We need to continue our focus on Cocker’s using the wind to find game and the appropriate wind patterns for those wind conditions. Perhaps the term “pattern” should be replaced by the term “questing” because the term pattern is rigid. This conversation to insure that the future of Cockers is a first and foremost a hunting dog that hunts with its nose to the wind and not a dog that uses a robotic artificial pattern with disregard to the wind conditions. Also we should be wary of being too close to the Springers and just because the Springers “do something in a particular way” doesn’t mean we should have to do it exactly the same! We have a really good game and we don’t want to ruin it. We should really look at what we do and why before we make any changes. We should always concern ourselves and make changes with the benefit of Cockers in mind.”*
- ii. **Joe in closing his closing statement said:** *“He has learned that everyone on this committee has good ideas and that we need people to take these ideas forward and accomplish the goals of the committee. The last several years there was a lot to undertake and accomplish, but by continuing to move forward, we can benefit English Cockers in the long run.”*

II. Old Business

- a) **Gunning Criteria** Joe had a good conversation with Dave Barto and John Leinenger at the Euclid Trial and discussed many of the Gunning issues that have been under discussion in this committee. The committee would like to invite Dave Barto to attend an FTC meeting to continue this discussion. The committee understands that Gun Teams need to feel comfortable and confident together and that they rely on each other to constitute a “TEAM”. We are concerned about the lack of younger gunning members coming up through the ranks and we would like to work with Gun Captains to develop more gunners, in order for our sport to grow and continue in the future.
- b) **Mentoring 20-30 year old trailers** Dennis would like to see a mentorship program for the younger more novice handlers to encourage and grow our sport. As a group, our trialers are getting older and the majority are at retirement age or older. It would be beneficial to help the younger generation in order to

secure our sports future. This could be both at the local trials as well as the National Trial. Time and money are a large factor for the younger generation and if there is an area that we can support them or help them with training, questions, or mentorship that will benefit for both them and the field cocker community in general.

- c) Sequential Trial in Ohio: There were many concerns about the Sequential Trial in Ohio put on by the Euclid Club. The trial ran well past dark. There was no notification to the springer world that this was a sequential event and therefore there was a large number of Springers entered. The combination of cockers, springers as well as a puppy stake made too many dogs to finish the trial in one day. There were many other concerns as well. The FTC agreed that the sequential trials were for the use of clubs that had low entry numbers of both Springers and Cocker as sometimes found in the West. It doesn't make sense to use in an area, like Ohio, which already enjoys large numbers of entrants in events. It's our conclusion that if abused, the sequential trial does not benefit either Cocker or Springers. We fear some clubs might think of using sequential trials to bolster the number of entries only to benefit the bottom line profit margin of the club. Sequential Trials are not to be used as "windfall" money makers. There are certain areas of the country where this style of trial is not only beneficial, but perhaps essential to keep a club afloat. The FTC would like to see its use in those areas. The FTC must take a closer look at sequential trial requests and thoroughly review them before approval on a case by case basis.

III. Next Meeting Agenda Concerns:

Judging:

Judging Apprenticeships

Judging Assignment Criteria

Requirement of Green Book Review for Judges:

Resolve: All judges, prior to judging any field trial event must sign an affidavit stating that he (she) has read and understands the contents of the "Green Book" a Guide to the conduct and judging of cocker spaniel field trials.

The field trial secretary shall be responsible for providing prospective judges with the most recent copy of the Green Book and shall have the judges sign the affidavit prior to the trial.

Meeting to discuss the Gunning Concerns with Dave Barto etc.

Next Meeting

Tuesday January 26th at 8pm eastern time

Respectfully submitted by Keith Meisner