

# **ECSCA Field Trial Committee Report**

**January 9, 2009**

## **Field Trial Committee:**

Rumi Schroeder – Chairperson and Midwest Regional Rep

Martin Bell – Southern Regional Rep

Tawney Crawford – Western Regional Rep

Mike Gilpin – Eastern Regional Rep

Members at large:

Buzz Benson

Tom Calabrese

A.R. Ginn

## ***ECSCA 2008 Gun Committee Report***

### ***STATS:***

*In 2008 there were 31 Open, 7 amateur and 13 Puppy Stakes that were shot. We had 179 individual shooting assignments for an average of just over 5 guns per event. This year we had 11 different Gun Captains managing the trials. All reported safe conditions.*

### ***NEWS:***

*We approved 3 new Cocker Gun Captains in 2008, and mentored several new guns. Our current focus is to support our Cocker Gun Captains, promote mentoring of new guns and the spaniel gun safety seminar.*

*We've had some discussions within the committee regarding qualification concepts for being invited to participate as a NCC gun. As of now, metrics doesn't seem to provide the answer and we're positioned to focus on advisory support to the NCC Field Trial Committee and NCC Gun Captain.*

*Report From Committee Chairperson – Barbara Haupt, 2009 National Cocker Championship*

*Our hosts for the 2009 NCC have a long and proud history – the Cocker Spaniel Field Trial Club of America. The event will be held November 12<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> at the Dyson Orchards property in New York’s scenic Hudson River Valley. Dyson Orchards is in Clinton Corners, NY just off the Taconic Parkway which is easily accessible by land and air. The venue offers a broad variety of cover, including water and woodlands, plus the bonus of spectacular views. We are well into the planning stages for the 2009 National; key positions are being filled, site grounds are being groomed, plus the Cocker Club is sponsoring a trial there November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to give us more insight into expectations for 2009.*

*2009 NCC Judges were announced at the Awards Banquet held Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>. They are: Mike Noland and Ben Martin (Alternate to be announced)*

Judges Committee – Paul Mc Gagh Chairperson

*Following a review and comment period, the following comments and recommendations to the committee were received.*

- 1) *Reduce the number of total trial experience between the two judges to 12 from the recommended 15.*

*After discussion, which revolved around experience vs. AKC reporting practices, the committee revised the recommendation from 15 trials in experience total to 12 total between the two judges.*

*Reasoning:*

*This accrual of number of trials coincides with current accounting system already in place for Springer Spaniel trials and would allow clubs to easily determine the total trial experience for their selected judges' panel.*

- 2) *The second recommendation from the field regarded including a requirement that A judge have experience either judging AKC cocker trials or had experience and knowledge in handling Cocker in trials.*

*Again after extensive discussion, the concept that only those knowledgeable in handling or judging cockers in prior trials would be considered apt and capable enough to appropriately judge cockers was challenged. This particular section resulted in much discussion, which revolved around "Springer judge bias". The committee came to the determination that good judges are good judges regardless of involvement in Cocker trials but that experience in Cocker handling, training or prior judging assignments would enhance the judging panel but is not a requirement.*

- 3) *The third recommendation was that prior to judging a cocker trial, any new cocker judge would be required to attend and pass a judges' seminar and apprentice judge.*

*This recommendation was renounced.*

*Reasoning behind this recommendation was that the current Springer Spaniel judge selection and approval protocol requires that potential judges attend a judges' seminar and also apprentice judge. This Springer*

*Spaniel program has been in place for over ten years and has become standard and expected. While it is acknowledged that this program of seminar attendance and apprenticing would likely be beneficial to some potential judges, there is little evidence that the program has produced better judges. In fact, this program self selects those who are eager to judge and not necessarily those that are ready to judge. It was the recommendation by this committee to not require the apprenticeship program but would not discourage anyone from attending a seminar or apprenticing.*

*In summary, the recommendation by this committee is amended to require a total of 12 judging assignments between the two judges to have occurred in 5 different venues.*

*It is further recommended but not required that cocker experience handling, training or trialing be given some weight in judge panel selection.*

*Further attendance in a judge's seminar or apprenticeship program is not required.*

## NCC Print Program

The FTC of 2007 asked the ECSCA Board to eliminate the NCC Print Program due to the programs cost. In 2008 the Field Trial Committee was approached by a number of ECSCA members asking us to reinstate the NCC Print Program.

After polling the Field Trial Community there appeared to be overwhelming interest to continue the program. The FTC was asked to provide ways to self-fund this program and they are as follows.

Form a fund set aside for the sole purpose of funding the NCC Print Program. The FTC Chairperson and Committee will monitor this fund.

1. As of today's date there have been a number of individuals who have made a commitment to donate a monetary sum for the next 5 years.
2. A person (or Company) shall be hired to administer the sale of past year's NCC prints. The suggestion is to sell the prints on the English Cocker Web Sites; ECSCA, Field Cockers and Working Cockers, also to utilize selling venues like Ebay and Craig's List.

The FTC feels this should provide enough income to continue the program as it stands, donating a stipend of \$1,000.00 to the winning dog of the NCC. It is foreseen that in some years there will be an excess of funds to make up for the years there is a short fall. Because of this we ask the ECSCA Board to allow the FTC to establish a separate fund for this purpose only and monies not to be put into general funds.

**ECSCA FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE MISSION**  
**(Changes by the ECSCA Board are done in Color)**

**OVERVIEW**

The Field Trial Committee is a working committee of the English Cocker Spaniel Club of America, Inc.; it reflects the mission of this Club and is made up of members of the ECSCA. The Field Trials Committee has the ability to recommend to the ECSCA Board various approvals or revisions to matters concerning English Cocker Spaniel field trials.

**The committee represents the interests of ECSCA club members and ECSCA clubs that are involved in field trials with their English Cocker Spaniels. The Club supports activities for all pure-bred, AKC registered, English Cocker Spaniels.**

***The objectives of the ECSCA club shall be:***

*To encourage and promote quality in the breeding of pure-bred English Cocker Spaniels and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection;*

*To define precisely the true type of the breed, and to urge members and breeders to accept that standard of the breed as approved by The American Kennel Club as the only standard of excellence by which English Cocker Spaniels shall be judged;*

*To do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the breed and to promote educational activities pertaining to the English Cocker Spaniel;*

*To encourage sportsmanlike competition at dog shows, field events, obedience trials, hunting tests and tracking tests;*

*To conduct sanctioned matches and specialty shows, field events, obedience trials, hunting tests, tracking tests, and other performance events under the rules of The American Kennel Club; and*

*To encourage the organization of independent local English Cocker Spaniel Specialty Clubs in those localities where there are sufficient fanciers of the breed to meet the requirements of The American Kennel Club.*

***Reprinted from Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution and By-Laws of the ECSCA, Inc.***

**ECSCA FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT**

**To foster and promote the English Cocker Spaniel working in the field** through providing guidance and assistance in (a) running field trials, and associated educational functions (judging, gunning, and training seminars or workshops), and (b) promoting the merits and advantages of the English Cocker Spaniel as a companion hunting dog.

To foster and promote English Cocker Spaniel Field Trial competition for English Cocker Spaniels (and Cocker Spaniels) at local levels with the various AKC stakes and other stakes described by the sponsoring club as approved by the American Kennel Club.

To foster, promote, and assist in the organization of an annual ECSCA National Cocker Championship Field Trial (NCC FT).

To review proposals to hold the annual ECSCA NCC FT and select the proposal to be presented/recommended to the ECSCA Board for approval.

To monitor and maintain the method for selection of judges for the annual ECSCA NCC FT.

To assist in the selection and approval for the courses to be used at the annual ECSCA NCC FT .

To produce a report on the ECSCA NCC FT shortly after its end for the ECSCA Board of Directors to be published in various venues.

To provide guidance and direction to other AKC clubs which hold, or which are seeking to hold field trials for English Cocker Spaniels.

To regulate and approve the calendar for English Cocker Spaniel (/Cocker Spaniel) Field Trials (for non-AKC member clubs) and associated events so as to assist in promoting a strong level of competition and entries.

To issue the parent club approval letter for the non-AKC member club's field trial dates for licensed English Cocker Spaniel (/Cocker Spaniel) field trials as required by the AKC.

To develop and support a regionalization system for both FTC committee members and for English Cocker Spaniel field trials.

To develop and promote educational programs pertaining to field training, judging, and gunning safety for those persons and clubs sponsoring English Cocker Spaniel field trials.

To assist in identifying individuals who will serve as lecturers and/or mentors to provide training advice and guidance concerning field work with English Cocker Spaniels.

Develop programs to educate and inform the club and the public about the qualities of the English Cocker Spaniel as a personal hunting companion.

To produce an annual report concerning all field activities of English Cocker Spaniels, noting the numbers of various field titles, number of events run, and other items of interest for publication in various club publications.

To develop criteria for the qualification of field trial judges for AKC approved English Cocker Spaniel (/Cocker Spaniel) field trials.

To publicize field trials in ECSCA publications and periodically recommend the revision of ECSCA publications and web site concerning field trials.

To designate a FTC committee member each year to serve as liaison between the FTC and the ECSCA NCC FT for each year.

To conduct an annual meeting to be held in conjunction with the annual ECSCA NCC FT.

To maintain communication on a regular basis with the ECSCA Board of Directors.

#### ECSCA FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The committee members are appointed by the ECSCA Board of Directors upon recommendation of the FTC Chairperson or other members of the ECSCA Board of Directors. It is a committee of a total of seven (7) persons, four (4) regional representatives and three (3) at large representatives. The Chairperson shall be selected from the committee members.

Regionalization will be very difficult, as the population of active members with field trial interest is not well distributed. The distribution of the regions should be reviewed at the end of each decade.

**North-Central Region:** Illinois, Indiana; Michigan; Wisconsin; Minnesota; Iowa, Ohio, Nebraska

**North-Eastern Region:** Maine, New Hampshire; Vermont; Massachusetts; Rhode Island; New York; Connecticut; Pennsylvania; New Jersey; Delaware; Maryland; Virginia; West Virginia; Kentucky

**Southern Region:** Texas, Louisiana; Kansas; Arkansas; Oklahoma; Mississippi; Alabama; Georgia; Florida; North Carolina; South Carolina; Tennessee; Missouri, California

**Western Region:** Alaska, Washington; Oregon; Idaho; Nevada, Hawaii; Utah; Arizona; New Mexico; Colorado, North Dakota; South Dakota; Montana; Wyoming

Anyone meeting the criteria set forth later in this paper should be free to indicate their willingness to work on this committee. Each region will ask for nominations, these nominations will be sent to the Field Trial Chairperson. The nomination shall include the name of an ECSCA Member in good standing and meeting the criteria for being a member of the FTC along with a brief Bio. A consensus with the rest of the FTC will determine if the nominee meets the requirements for appearing on the ballot for Regional Representative. A vote shall take place by region; the person receiving the most votes will represent his region for the next two years. Members at large will be nominated in the same fashion as the Regional Representatives but on the opposite year.

The length of continuous appointment for the FTC committee membership should be two years with a reappointment of an additional two years (a maximum of 4 continuous years). A person may be reappointed after a year off the committee. The Regional Representatives should be changed/reappointed on the even years and the At Large Representatives on the odd years. [The Chairperson has traditionally been a FTC Member that has been in office for at least 1 year and is appointed/reappointed for 1 year by the Board at the January ECSCA Board Meeting.](#)

The Chairperson will be responsible to notify the ECSCA President and Corresponding Secretary of the list of potential committee persons prior to the January Board Meeting.

The ECSCA Corresponding Secretary will serve an ex-official member of the committee; 1) Official signature for the ECSCA Field Trials, 2) Retain and maintain AKC/ECSCA field trial results and titles, 3) Handle official ECSCA correspondence as requested by the FTC.

### **CRITERIA FOR ECSCA FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The person shall desire to serve for the betterment of the breed (English Cocker Spaniel) and the growth of the field trial activities for the breed (English Cocker Spaniel).

Any ECSCA member that is (or has been) working, training, or handling an English Cocker Spaniel for field trials can be on the committee.

Regional Representatives must live in the region they are to represent. At Large Representatives can be from any area of the country.

The person shall have at least five (5) years experience in field trial training or hunting with an English Cocker Spaniel. The person shall have experience in organizing/running English Cocker Spaniel field trials.

The person shall be comfortable with use of e-mail and conference calls as the basic committee correspondence and communication vehicle.

## **NOMINATION and VOTING ON JUDGES FOR THE ECSCA NATIONAL COCKER CHAMPIONSHIP FIELD TRIAL**

Each FTC regional member shall pole interested parties in their region for potential NCC Judges for the next year. When nominating a brief description of their qualification should be provided. This shall take place in early spring. From this master list each FTC member will choose 5 names and rank them from 1 to 5. The name in the first position will receive 5 points, second position 4 points, third position 3 points, fourth position 2 points and the fifth position 1 point. The FTC Committee will then decided on 8 to 15 names to be put on the a ballot giving consideration to nominees with the highest points. If there is not a clear division in the results, the FTC members will discuss and trim the list; All judges on the ballot are deemed of the highest quality, worthy of judges for our NCC; The top 8-15 are put on a ballot to be sent to the owners\* of the qualified dogs\*\*.

The ballots are sent from & returned to the ECSCA Recording Secretary for counting; The results returned to the ECSCA President, FTC Chairperson, and Event Chair; The judges are contacted by a member of the ECSCA Board (or Board designated alternate) starting with the top choice until two are hired, and with one additional judge available for an Alternate. This Alterante Judge will fill in, as a substitute in the case one of the advertised judges cannot fulfill the judging assignment. The Alternate judge is chosen in order of the next highest vote. The Alternate Judge shall be advertised on the Premium list. In the instance that there is an emergency that one or both Judges cannot fulfill his assignment and the Alternate Judge is not available the FTC will determine the Substitute Judge(s).

The person contacting the judges shall send and receive the contracts from each judge, the original is sent to the ECSCA Treasurer with copies going to the Event Chairperson and Secretary.

The Judge selection is to be made public at the next ECSCA NCC FT Awards Banquet.

The balloting for Judges for the ECSCA NCC FT should be done in June (or as soon as possible after the close of the spring trialing season) of each year, approximately 16-18 months before the ECSCA NCC FT date.

\*Persons eligible to receive ballots for nominated judges for the impending NCC (about 18 months in future) are owners of qualified dogs and NCC Champions (from Jan 1 of the previous year, about 18 months back from June balloting).

For NCC '09 judges ballot, owners of dogs placing in the Spring '07, Fall '07, and Spring '08 Trialing Seasons.

\*\*Dogs qualified for entry in an ECSCA NCC FT shall be the dogs placing in the three years before that event, plus all NCC Champions.

For NCC '09; '07, '08, & '09 trialing season winners plus NCC CHs.

For NCC '10; '08, '09, & '10 trialing season winners plus NCC CHs.

This procedure is to be reconsidered at the end of the decade (2010) or when entry approaches 100 dogs.

*\*\*A qualified dog is one “which by reason of wins previously made qualify under special rules approved by the Board of Directors of the American Kennel Club” (AKC Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedure for Spaniels Chapter 14 , Section 24).*

A Field Trial Liaison must an ECSCA member, selected by the Field Trial Committee and approved by the ECSCA Board at the meeting in January. This Person may or may not be a member of the FTC but is expected to attend all FTC meetings/conference calls as a non-voting member. The intent of this person will be to attend ECSCA Board Meetings and represent the FTC.

The Field Trial Committee respectfully asks the following people to be approved for the FTC 2009:

**Field Trial Committee Chairperson:**

Tom Calabrese

**Regional Representatives:**

**EAST** Hobson Brown

**MIDWEST** Tony Roettger

**SOUTH** Sue Wilson

**WEST** Olivia Steele-Mortimer

**Members at Large (remaining in office)**

Buzz Benson

Tom Calabrese

A.R. Ginn

**Field Trial Committee Liaison:**

Deirdre (Dede) Griffin

## Doug Ljungren AKC Board of Directors

Dear Mr. Ljungren and Board,

On August 21, 2008 the ECSCA Field Trial Committee became aware that the Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedures for Spaniels had been changed without the English Cocker Spaniel Club's knowledge or acquiescence. . The changes made were as follows:

*Addition to Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedure for Spaniels, Chapter 5, Section 1, effective January 1, 2008 (November 2007)*

*New Paragraph 4. "A professional dog trainer with an ongoing business relationship should not be allowed to judge his client within one year of their relationship."*

*New Paragraph 5. "The definition of a professional relationship is one where the professional dog trainer, or a member of the trainer's household is compensated for the training of a client's dog for field trials or hunting tests, or the handling of a client's dog in a field trial or hunting. It would not include the purchase or sale of a dog, attendance at a seminar or the purchase of dog training equipment, or other business transactions that may occur not related to the training of dogs."*

Mr. Ljungren then informed the English Cocker Spaniel Club Field Trial Committee Chairperson; Rumi Schroeder that the English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association had sent a new proposal (received by the AKC on 08/01/2008) requesting a language change to the New Paragraph 4 above, to now read as follows:

*"A professional dog trainer and a client with an on going business relationship should not be allowed to judge one another within one year of the relationship."*

The ECSCA asks the AKC implement the rule changes to Chapter 5, Paragraphs 4 and 5 as rule changes applicable only to English Springer Spaniels. . Examples of already existing rules applicable only to English Springer Spaniels are:

Chapter 5, section 1

Chapter 6, section 4

Chapter 15, section 15 Chapter 15, sections 22 - 25

Chapter 14 sections 31 and 32

Standard Procedures for Spaniel Field Trials page 21, Water Retrieve

The ECSCA was never consulted on these proposed rule changes and accordingly never had the opportunity to provide its input and/or approval to the AKC.

Sincerely yours,

Rumi Schroeder, ECSCA Field Trial Committee Chair 2008

### Simplify the ECSCA Application

The FTC and interested field members would like the Board to consider simplifying the membership application. Some from the field side feel that the application is long and could be made more user friendly while still maintaining the ECSCA high standards for membership.

A suggestion has been made that a committee is formed to consider options for a new application form. We also ask that members from the field side be included in this committee if formed.

### Field Trial Amateur Stakes/Amateur National Championship

The FTC fully supports the Amateur All-Age Stake in field trials and would like the ECSCA Board to support its efforts to grow this stake as well as pursuing the Amateur National Championship for English Cockers.

I (Rumi Schroeder, FTC Chairperson 2008) have been in contact with Doug Ljungren of the AKC about the time frame that it would consider allowing an Amateur National. Not only was Doug Ljungren in opposition of an Amateur National for English Cockers but would not clarify the criteria that would constitute a minimum requirement to have a the stake. I ask for the ECSCA Board to support the future efforts of the FTC to make the Amateur National Championship a reality. Anything this Board or the ECSCA could do to help in this endeavor would be appreciated.

## Summary

Approve the following reports from FTC Sub-Committees: Gunning Committee, Judges Committee, and NCC 2009 Committee.

Post Note: The ECSCA Board approved all sub-committee reports,

Approve the reinstatement of the NCC Print Program.

Post Note: The ECSCA Board approved the reinstatement of the NCC print program with the guidelines stated on page 5 of this report. A separate fund will be set up for this purpose by Karen Spurlin (ECSCA Treasurer).

Approve the Mission Statement changes for the ECSCA Field Trial Committee.

Post note: The Mission Statement was approved by the ECSCA with changes made by the ECSCA Board in "Blue". The ECSCA Board asks the FTC to consider the vote for NCC Judge to be limited to only ECSCA Members of qualified dogs, not all owners. They have asked the FTC to consider this request, discuss it, and report back to the Board. The Board feels this will encourage owners/handlers to become ECSCA Members.

Approve the new FTC Chairperson, Committee, and Liaison for 2009.

Post Note: The ECSCA board approved the Field Trial Committee, Chairman, and Liaison as it appears on page 12.

Pursue the AKC rule change that was made without the ECSCA approval.

Post Note: The Board has asked me (Rumi Schroeder past FTC Chair) to get with Jesse Pfeiffer (post AKC Delegate) to see what can be done and pursue accordingly.

Consider a committee being formed to look at changes that could be made to the ECSCA Membership Application.

Post Note: The Board will not make any changes to the current Membership Application. But it will entertain discussion of specific changes to the application if the FTC can make a case for them to be changed. The Board asks for examples of changes the FTC would like to see and bring them back to the next Board Meeting.

Support of the ECSCA Board of an Amateur National Championship.

Post Note: The ECSCA Board has asked me (Rumi Schroeder past FTC Chair) to get with Jesse Pfeiffer (post AKC Delegate) for input on drafting a letter to the AKC to get specifics on the reason for not allowing an Amateur National as well as why they will not set a criteria for when they would allow one.

Rumi Schroeder  
FTC Chairperson 2008