

ECSCA Field Trial Committee Report

December 15, 2009

Field Trial Committee

Tom Calabrese	-	Chairman and Member at Large
Hob Brown	-	Eastern Region Rep
Tony Roettger	--	Mid -West Region
Sue Wilson	-	South
Olivia Steel Mortimer	--	West
Buzz Benson	--	Member at Large
A.R. Ginn	--	Member at Large
Deridre Griffin	--	Field Trial Committee Liaison

ECSCA 2009 Gun Committee Report 11/4/09

There were 22 Spring Cocker Trials and 19 Fall Cocker Trials for a total of 41 Trials, all reporting safe gunning with no incidences.

New Approved Gun Captains include: Vern Knapp – Maine, Tom Ness- North Dakota, and Buzz Benson – North Dakota. Additionally, one mentoring/apprentice program in Wisconsin is in place, developing more experience. As always, we're interested in developing new guns in our mentoring program. Anyone interested in a copy of the Cocker Gun Program should contact Tom Calabrese.

2010 National Cocker Championship

Our hosts for the 2010 National Cocker Championship will be the Euclid Ohio ///Southern Michigan field Trial Club. This is the host club that sponsored our first NCC back in 1998. The venue will be in southern Michigan, and the Euclid Club officers promoting the event are Dave Barto, John Leininger and George Kittle. The dates scheduled are October 29- November 1, 2010.

The 2010 NCC Judges were announced at the FTC General Meeting held November 4th at the Holiday Inn – Kingston, NY. They are Lynn Miller from Colorado and Chuck Nelson from Wisconsin. (Alternative to be announced)

Print Program

The continuation of the Annual NCC Print Program will be revived with the 2010 National Cocker Championship. The program will be permanently funded through the Patrons Program (out of the NCC budget) an annual contribution in the amount of \$1000. The owner of the prior year's NCC Champion will incur the cost of the art work and printing, the \$1000 will subsidize the owner's expense. Normally, 100 – 200 prints are made, with 25-30 remaining in the owner's possession for their program and the remainder in the ECSCA possession.

Out of the ECSCA's portion will come the gift of one print to each Patron.

Prior year prints may be purchased from ECSCA through Sue Rose at the cost of \$50 each, plus shipping.

Cockers in Springer Trials

A Springer Spaniel Field Trial Board member approached the FTC requesting consideration for the Cockers to run in Springer Field Trials, somewhat of an AV Spaniel event. The purpose would be to increase the attendance number of spaniels in trials and also increase the number of possible trials that Cockers could attend. After much discussion and evaluation, it was determined that it wasn't in the best interest of the English Cocker breed to combine the two breeds in field trialing, and therefore the offer was declined. Our efforts would best be spent in concentrating our energy on building and promoting Amateur Stakes.

Judges Committee Report

Participants: Paul McGagh - Chairperson

A.R.Ginn, Mark Mercie, Tom Ness and Martha Calabrese

Summary of Proposal for the NCC Judging Selection

Nomination Process –

Each Club that conducts a Cocker Field Trial for the current year will have their members vote and submit one name for the National Judging Roster. A form will be mailed to the qualifying Clubs by the FTC chairperson and returned to the chairperson by an established due date. When the names are submitted to the FTC, a brief biography of the individual must be attached to the nomination form. The National Judging Roster will be compiled by the FTC for the voting process. It is the responsibility of the Clubs before submitting their name to contact the individual and ask if he or she would be interested and available. This proposal was accepted by the FTC.

Voting Process-

Voting will occur at the current NCC for the following year. The judge for the next NCC will be the individual with the greatest number of vote's .The alternate judge for the current NCC will automatically be asked to judge the next year's NCC. The individual with the second highest number of votes will be asked to be the alternate judge. Each dog qualified and entered into the current NCC will have one vote. In order to vote the owner must be present at the NCC. This was accepted by the FTC with the exception that the owner and/or dog don't have to be present at the NCC to participate in the voting process. Voting will be done by mail, as in the past. Note that the alternate was utilized in the NCC 2009, and therefore there will be no carry over into NCC 2010. The top two judges were voted and accepted the engagement.

Vote Tallies-

Numbered ballots will be distributed to the owners of the qualified dogs by the FTC chairperson (or designee) and collected in a secure manner at the current NCC. A committee will be assigned to tally the ballots without disclosure. The results will be announced after the voting has been completed and the individual judges have been contacted. This was accepted by the FTC.

Additional Alternate Judge Selection- (if required)

If the alternate judge is needed at the current NCC, the individual with the second highest number of votes will be asked to judge at the following year's NCC. The individual with the third highest number of votes will be asked to become the alternate judge for the following year's NCC. This was not utilized by the FTC.

Amateur National Championship Pathway

Hobson Brown, Eastern FTC Representative, is leading the committee's efforts toward an AKC approved Amateur National Championship. He suggested to the AKC that we could set goals similar to the participation level prior to the first Open NCC back in 1998. At that time we had 17 field trials and approximately 60 qualified dogs. Currently, in 2009 we had 14 Amateur Stakes and approximately 50 qualified dogs. The FTC feels that we will be able to meet the goal numbers of "17 & 60" in 2010. We have requested that all clubs hosting trials in 2010 include an Amateur Stake(s) in their events. It is felt that an Amateur NCC would provide significant enthusiasm to the Cocker movement and aid in building the number of competitors and dogs.

Game Conservation

Game Conservation is a topic that has come to the forefront this year. The concept surrounds itself with the issue of "leaving game in the field." Both state DEC along with AKC representatives have commented on this situation.

The topic, through discussion, has been broken down into two different but related actions. The first is to remove / retrieve all shot game. To this end each club hosting Cocker trials should evaluate and implement, based on conditions, the best method of achieving this. The possible methods employed could be, pick-up dogs, combing the field after a series or the trial, and of course the "eye wipe" method.

The second consideration is to utilize the "eye wipe" as a possible game conservation method and also an evaluation of the English Cocker Spaniel's training. This will continue to be addressed by the Field Trial Committee in the 2010 year. Discussions within the Cocker community have brought forth the possibility of unfairness of varying eye-wipe methodology. The first problem is the delay in the trial, and therefore the next dog's birds have left the course. Considerable discussion has taken place regarding efficient ways to do this, but conditions and timing dictate a reasonable implementation. Issues include, who receives the eye wipe.....the brace mate or the next upcoming dog, at what distance would be an acceptable blind retrieve for an eye wipe, how much time, if any, could be dedicated to the eye wipe retrieve. Tom Ness suggested at his North Dakota Club's next trial that they will employ a 'walk up' of the field retrieving dog to his/her bird, as you would in a hunting situation. This may be the quickest method of picking downed game, and thereby fulfilling our Game Conservation objectives.

The Harold S. Bixby Award

The Bixby Award is given annually and the NCC to recognize an individual who has continually endeavored to promote English Cockers working in the field. It recognizes the individual who, during the course of the year, has unselfishly and distinctly given of themselves to advance the cause of English Cocker field work. This person is selected to exemplify the sportsmanship and high standards set by Harold S. Bixby, the award's namesake, whose generosity and unselfish support has contributed to our breeds' success in all field events.

The Regional FTC representatives should present suggested candidates, with reasons and brief bio to the FTC for consideration. The final selection will be the sole responsibility of the FTC to make the decision. No current member of the FTC should be eligible, in order to avoid conflict of interest.

Four Judge NCC Concept

A.R. Ginn and Hob Brown presented the Four Judge Concept as a possible method of 'getting to' the best dog at the NCC. The Cocker community has offered up significant conversation regarding the pro's and con's of this concept. Those in favor feel two sets of eyes on each dog would be better than one. Those opposed cited, cost, delay in the trial due to conferencing and judging 'by committee, and a culture change required as the Four Judge Concept is not currently done in the US spaniel world, but is done in the UK championships. A change of this magnitude would require an AKC rule change with a lengthy time requirement. This topic will be brought forth for continued FTC discussion in the 2010.

Field Trial Committee for 2010

Field Trial Committee Chairperson:

Open – to be selected

Regional Representatives: Remaining in Office

EAST	Hobson Brown
Midwest	Tony Roettger
South	Sue Wilson
West	Olivia Steele-Mortimer

Members at Large: newly elected for 1/1/2010 – 12/31/2011

Buzz Benson (prior member)

John Dartt

Dennis Joannides

Field Trial Committee Liaison:

Deirdre Griffin

Summary

We ask the ECSCA Board of Directors to Approve:

Sub Committee Report: Gun Committee

Sub Committee Report: Judges Committee

Print Program permanent funding via Patron Program fund.

Continued support for the Amateur National Cocker Championship

Addition of newly elected At Large FTC members Buzz Benson, John Dartt and Dennis Joannides

Tom Calabrese

FTC Chairman 2009