

English Cocker Spaniel Club of America

Field Trial Committee

General Meeting – Wednesday November 4, 2009

Holiday Inn ---- Kingston, NY

Meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM

Agenda Item #1- Gun Committee Annual Report:

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.

Agenda Item #2 – Print Program Status:

The topic of continuation of the Print Program has been discussed within the FTC for the past two years and polling within the Cocker Community last year regarding the continuance of the program. The FTC felt the program should be continued and discussed our parent club's Board of Director's request that we find permanent funding for the program. Earlier this year we discussed the possibility of funding via donations or sale of prior year's prints. We felt that it would be difficult to satisfy the permanent aspect of the *B of D's* request. Therefore, the Print Program should be funded, as it was originally started as a part of the NCC Patron Program. Patrons would receive a signed print as part of their NCC gift package and the Patron Program would dedicate \$1000 toward the expense of the prints.

Agenda Item #3 – Amateur National Championship Pathway

Hob Brown led the discussion regarding the development and status of our quest for an Amateur National Cocker Championship. Hob has 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, that is in 2009, we had 14 Amateur Stakes and approximately 50 qualified dogs. We're looking to meet the goal numbers of "17 & 60" in 2010 and we request that all clubs hosting trials include Amateur Stakes in their events. We thank Hob for all his efforts on this program and offer our continued support. It is felt that an Amateur NCC would provide

significant enthusiasm to the Cocker movement and certainly aid in building the number of competitors and dogs.

Agenda Item #4 – 2010 FTC “at-Large” Positions

The three “at-Large” representative positions will be open at the conclusion of 2009. Tom Calabrese requested that nominations be sent to him with a brief bio, to facilitate the voting process.

The criteria for ECSCA Field Trial Committee Membership are as follows:

The person shall desire to serve for the betterment of the breed and growth of the field activities for the breed (ECS).

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.

Agenda Item # 5 – Game Conservation Concepts

The FTC has had discussion on this topic for several months and also has received valuable input from the Cocker Community regarding ideas and methods of addressing Game Conservation. The topic can be broken down into two different but related actions. The first is to remove/ retrieve all shot game.

We have had both DEC and AKC reps. question the practice of “leaving game in the field”. To this end each club hosting Cocker trials should evaluate and implement, based on conditions, the best method of achieving this. There was discussion from the group regarding possible methods, such as pick-up dogs, combing the fields after a series or trial and of course the eye-wipe thing.

The second item or part was the possible employment of the “eye-wipe” as a game conservation method and also evaluation of the spaniel’s training. This ensued lively debate and offered up several possibilities. We have concern about the “unfairness” of varying “eye-wipe methodology.” The first problem is the delay in the trial, and therefore the next dogs birds have scooted from the course. Kim Wiley offered up his experiences as a judge with possible efficient ways to do this, but warned conditions and timing dictated the reasonable implementation. Tom Ness suggested at his trial they

will walk the 'failed retrieve' dog up to the bird, as you would do in a hunting situation. He suggests that might be the quickest method of picking down game, and thereby fulfilling our Game Conservation. The FTC will continue to evaluate possibilities and will deliver write-ups to the Cocker Community for evaluation.

Agenda Item # 6 – 4 Judge NCC Concept

A.R. Ginn and Hob Brown presented the 4 Judge NCC Concept as a possible method of "getting to" the best dog at the NCC. There was substantial discussion from the attendees, describing the Pro's and Con's to this concept. Those in favor feel two sets of eyes on a dog would be better than one. Those opposed cited cost, delay in the trial due to continual conferencing, and a culture change required as the four Judge thing is not currently done in the US Spaniel world. Paul McGagh gave a knowledgeable dissertation of his experiences with the British Championship whereby they employ four judges. He offered up both the upside and downside of the concept. A change of this magnitude would require an AKC rule change with a lengthy time requirement. Obviously, this topic continues to require more discussion.

Agenda Item # 7 – 2010 NCC Judges, Location & Date

Tom Calabrese announced that the judges for the NCC 2010 will be Lynn Miller from Colorado and Chuck Nelson from Wisconsin. The dates are October 29 through November 1, 2010 and the site is most probably in southern Michigan.

TAC

11/17/09