

Field Trial Committee Meeting
Tuesday April 28, 2009
7:00 P.M. CST

Members Present via phone conference call: Tom Calabres, Buzz Benson, Dede Griffin
FTC/ECSCA Liaison, Sue Wilson, Olivia Steele-Mortimer, A.R. Ginn, Hobson Brown,
Tony Roettger.

1. Meeting minutes from March 24, 2009 meeting approved.
2. Amateur Pathway "Goals" Hob Brown presented an update regarding the future of the cocker amateur. Hob stated he has been in contact with the AKC Field Events person. Hob has sent the statistics that have been put together regarding the numbers we started with when the open nationals started up. Hob has suggested that the AKC look at a similar number of trials and dogs qualified that we had in 96/97 when we asked for approval for a NCC. We are close to those numbers for amateur stakes and dogs qualified. We had 59 dogs qualified and 37 entered in the 98 NCC. At this point we have 45-46 dogs qualified and will see that number go up this year. It looks like many of the other clubs are planning to hold amateur stakes this spring and fall. Discussion of the importance of communicating to clubs how important it is to promote the amateur and help it grow so we do not see a decline of events as happened in the 60's. We need to encourage clubs to hold amateur stakes to promote growth in the number of dogs and handlers.

A.R.Ginn asked about a letter that was to go out to the clubs encouraging amateur stakes. Tom Calabrese stated a letter with other information went out to club secretaries and will follow up regarding the amateur information.

Tom Calbrese noted some changes regarding paperwork for the AKC. The Judges Affirmation form, results of the trial to the AKC and also other people tracking new qualifiers to the NCC, high point dog stats. The letter Tom Calbrese sent out highlighted these areas.

As a side note Hob Brown asked the question if we had a trophy specifically for the high point handler. A.R. Ginn stated we do recognize the high point handler.

3. NCC 2009 Check List was reviewed. Barbara Haupt submitted an update. Tom Calabrese went through the list for an update to the committee. At this point it looks like everything is coming together well. Next is making sure the hotels and meals should be planned.

A.R. Ginn suggested the FTC should give instructions as to what the “alternate Judge” should be doing. Discussion about how to make sure the alternate judge is prepared if needed to step in. Sue Wilson questioned an airline ticket for alternate judge, Jerry Light. Sue Wilson noted the added expense. At this point we are only purchasing one air ticket as one judge will be driving. It was felt by the committee that the alternate judge should be present and walking the beat as the other judges are doing, to be sure he is aware of what is going on in the event he needs to step in. Tom Calabrese suggested to Sue Wilson to go ahead and arrange a ticket for Jerry Light. Tom Calabrese will contact Barbara Haupt with the information.

A.R. commented the NCC is a long distance away for a lot of people and it is expensive to travel. The past couple of years we have had 40-50 dogs entered and we are trying to stretch the trial out. A.R. Ginn suggested we have a two day trial so people can plan to leave for home on Sunday and not miss another day of work. A.R. also noted we broke from protocol last year at the NCC by not having the 3rd and 4th series on the same grounds. The FTC should be informed if protocol will be changed if we are not running the 1st and 2nd at the same site and the 3rd and 4th on the same site. Tom Calabrese shared an example of an AKC Rep being present at a recent event, and gave permission to alter the course and move the 2nd series to another course. Tom Calabrese noted the importance of the Steward of the Beat and Tom wants to be sure he has a vested interest in having a great trial. Tom Calabrese will be sure to talk to the NCC 09 Steward so we are on the same page.

Tom Calabrese mentioned, in the Main NCC it was decided to run the first two series in heavy brush. It was really nice but the problem was clients having dogs handled by the pro's were not able to see the dogs work. Many dogs cut after the 2nd, so the owner's missed out on seeing the dog they own. It would have been better in the 3rd and 4th to run in the heavy cover. It was noted, it was not the thickness of the course, but rather running two series in the same area is inherently the fairest.

Going back to the alternate judge topic, Tony Roettger wondered if that person should be part of the two judges in all activities such as judge's meetings dinner, etc. to make sure the alternate is as up to date as possible, without having any input of the two active judges. It was agreed by the committee that the alternate should spend his time with the two judges. A.R. Ginn will call Jerry and fill him in on the committee discussion. The committee wants the alternate to be as informed as possible in case he has to step in, but also careful that he does not interfere in the discussion of the two main judges.

4. Tom Calabrese posted a note on the internet to see what interest clubs have in hosting the 2010 NCC. Comment was made of going back to our prospective clubs to see what interest they have. Hob Brown mentioned Minn. is thinking about hosting and looking at different ideas.

5. Gun Program update. Tom Calabrese announced two Gun Captains have been approved as Cocker Gun Captains. Tom Ness and Buzz Benson from the N.D. Club have been approved. Congratulations to Buzz and Tom. Minnesota asked for paperwork to add a second Gun Captain.

6. Tom Calabrese stated he has been made aware the Springer Trial Parent Club at the Board meeting next week, has on the agenda to consider Cockers running in the Springer Trials. Tom Calabrese talked with Vicky Thomas, Springer Board member, West Coast, and Gary Wilson, East Coast. There has been talk the past couple of years and is up for discussion. Tom Calabrese commented it may have a greater possibility if the attendance at Springer Trials had smaller numbers. 40-50 dog trial on the Springer side vs. 20-30 dogs on the cocker side. Hob Brown was concerned it may be the ruination of the cocker breed if allowed to run with Springer Spaniels. We might end up with big running dogs and go away from the intent of the cocker breed. A positive of this would be many more trials the Cocker trailer could attend.

Olivia Steele-Mortimer commented about discussion last meeting about the NCC traveling trophy. Olivia noted the Montana NCC in 2009 made money and what about using some of that money to pay for the trophy. A.R. Ginn reported Vicky Thomas said Workingcocker.com has about \$800.00 to go toward a traveling trophy. Olivia thought the 09 NCC made several thousand dollars. Sue Wilson looked at the 09 NCC financial report and noted net income as \$9850.09. It was suggested by Tom Calabrese to get the final report from the ECSCA Treasurer. Dede Griffin, FTC/ ECSCA Liaison, noted all of the money from the "gun raffle" went to the ECSCA. It was mentioned that maybe some of the money should have been held back to benefit the club in the purchase of equipment.

Tom Calabrese thought if we were in a situation where we make a couple thousand dollars, one of the things we might want to consider is to structure the Patron Program as the financing mechanism for the print program. Instead of all of the money going back to the ECSCA, extract a set amount from the income to go to the print program.

Olivia Steele-Mortimer commented, she had input from members in her Region that this Spring, several trials, the running orders have not been completely random. Last weekend in N.D., we had the same numbers of dogs on consecutive days, all though the dogs were switched around, it was clear, it was not completely a random drawing. Olivia mentioned she has had comment from several people, that is not a good way to go, because it leaves us open to comments like; some people always get to go early or get the best course, or local advantage. Olivia stated she was asked specifically, to bring it to the committee's attention. Buzz Benson commented, the ND Club tries to be random and then looks at the order to make sure it makes sense and is workable for the handlers. Olivia commented this past weekend, she had the same dogs before and after her on different days and same brace mates the second day. Tony Roettger mentioned that it should be random but also has to make sense. A.R. mentioned in California it was done with a computer program and it was out of whack. Sue Wilson stated some bugs need to be worked out of that system.

Tom Calabrese added how it is done in N.Y. He said they draw random but once it is on paper they look at it and feel it is important to space handlers so not to bunch them up. Then we look at two dogs with the same names are not braced together. Once it is set, many times we will then flip it for the second day. Like being the first dog day one and the last dog, day two. Tom said it is too difficult to just pull the names out of the hat and list them in the order being pulled. Olivia commented she felt the thought of the people commenting was, we are losing the randomness completely. Olivia used an example of being braced with someone that is distracting, like blowing the whistle non-stop, or any other form of distraction.

Tom Calabrese to put in the minutes, the club secretaries take note on the above conversation and keep in mind random placement of dogs on the running order.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday May 18, 2009 at 7 P.M. CST.

Minutes submitted by Buzz Benson