

2023 The 86th Annual Beagle Advisory Committee Meeting

The teleconference meeting was called to order at 10:10 am on Wednesday June 28, 2023

Jim Odle took attendance and welcomed new committee members. All members were present except Dale Pliscott.

Jim then introduced the AKC staff. The staff included Brett Jones, Mel Stewart, Caroline Murphy, Susan Foote, Lisa King, Dawn Salpeck and Doug Ljungren.

Jim Odle and Doug Ljungren welcomed and thanked the committee members.

The committee discussed trends within the sport.

Jim Odle: Let's start with the first item on the agenda:

Agenda Item #1 Awarding Championship Points -

Chapter 9, Section 5. Awarding Championship Points. Field Championship points for Beagles shall be awarded only to hounds placing in licensed or member field trials in Open Classes in which there were six or more starters. The championship points shall be awarded on the following basis: 1 point to the winner of first place for each starter; ½ point to the winner of second place for each starter; 1/3 point to the winner of third place for each starter; ¼ point to the winner of fourth place for each starter. 1/5 point to the winner of fifth place for each starter.

If this is approved, other sections of the rule book will be changed accordingly – **Procedure 4. Judging and Chapter 4, Section 1 and 3. Ribbons.**

Stefan Givens: I just wanted to state that I put out a poll to beaglers on social media, over 88% of participants voted yes to make the change. I took a trip to the Northeast and North Central US and I talked to a lot of different beaglers about this proposal and there is an overwhelming support for this change.

John Edwards: I want to mention that we received another letter regarding the agenda, and it mentions that if this is approved other sections of the rule book will be changed, does that refer to section 7 J?

John Edwards: The problem that the brace world has with this, we are averaging around 32 dogs a trial and we have a lot of defeated hounds. If you have defeated dogs, it makes it difficult. I am for the points but making it a place will cause confusion in our venue.

Raye Ann Cole: I agree on gun dog brace side, our classes maybe bigger but I was recently in a class where two defeated dogs were brought back, and this situation would have caused havoc because they needed to move dogs around. It causes me concern on gun dog brace, and having defeated dogs it will cause confusion and issues and its possible people won't use defeated dogs when they should. It could cause mistrials because people are going to want to move dogs around when they can't. On our side because our classes can be larger the way you would get around that is people would need to bring back 8 dogs or more if you're going to use defeated dogs in the mix. From an SPO standpoint I am completely for it but it does cause me concern on the brace side.

Tim Beck: The option is already there for a 5th place hound when you have second series, and it performs well. You have an option to let it run as 4th place and move up in class. I represent the International Federation and Heartland Federation and I spoke with both delegates at meetings, and they were 100% against it because sometimes that 5th place dog does not deserve a chance to get a licensed trial point.

Jim Odle: If it was passed and implemented, they would have to award a 5th place dog. What you are saying is that they would not be worthy of a placement, is that correct?

Tim Beck: I just judged the NE Federation I did four classes, 2 of the classes the 5th place dog performed well in 3rd brace, and we ran it against the 4th place dog. In 2 other classes the 5th place dog did not perform well, and we just left it where it was an NBQ. The option is there to give 5th place dog a chance to move up and sometimes they go all the way to the top.

Stefan Givens: It sounds like a lot of the large pack and SPO folks are in favor of this. Is this something that needs to be across all formats, or can it be for certain formats with AKC? I understand if it causes a problem with brace but not SPO or large pack can it be split out and different?

Doug Ljungren: The answer is yes; it could be different for different formats.

Raye Ann Cole: I would vote for SPO and Large Pack and exclude from Gun Dog and Traditional Brace format. I would be for it if it could be excluded.

James Coburn: I am in favor for all formats. I do represent 2CP Federation it's a little different because we don't run second series; however, I judge a lot of Appalachian gun dog brace trials. I don't understand where the confusion comes in. If you run a brace in first series and they are absolutely the best brace of the day both of those dogs deserve to come back whether they are defeated or not. I feel like that is how a judge should score them. I have no problem bringing back defeated dogs. If you're a judge and your judging brace it's your responsibility to understand the rules. The one rule you cannot break is moving a dog above a dog that was defeated by earlier. However, if that dog comes out first series and that brace drops its rabbit, as a judge you have every opportunity to drop that dog and move the dog that it defeated earlier up. I don't understand where the confusion is in judging. I am in favor of it for the 2CP.

Raye Ann Cole: I just want to give you an example of where it would get confusing. I totally agree people need to know the format. Let's say in the situation you just provided the high brace goes out the dog you brought back high beats the dog you brought back 3rd. The dog goes out and they drop rabbit you're going to have to flip that dog on a loss because you no longer can make that dog a 5th place dog he now has to be 6th. If you have 2 defeated dogs in the mix then you have to potentially sacrifice out of that because one of those 2 dogs are going to be your 5th dog. If your second-place dog also beat a dog sitting below it, you blocked yourself out. Only way around is to bring back 8 dogs.

James Coburn: I agree in very small classes it could be a problem. In larger classes if you're bringing back multiple defeated dogs you might need to bring back an extra brace for insurance. As far as me representing 2CP I would vote in favor, but I do understand the concerns.

Tim Beck: Can we not as leaders of our sport just decide what is best for each branch whether it be large pack, SPO or traditional brace?

Jim Odle: Yes, we can do that.

John Edwards: I was looking back at the beagle field trial statistics. In 1971 there were 61,197 entries and 405 field trails. There were 151 entries per trial you move that to today and our entries on our brace is 32 so the chances of us having 2 defeated dogs in second series is high. To change to 7 would be only way for that to happen and that would be confusing to 60, 70 or 80 year old men. AKC should look at this and look at the numbers. We don't need any more confusion. This book is written in the standards pretty well the foundation of who we are. Leave alone for traditional brace. I understand with other ones if they are not moving the 5th place dog up. I don't understand why because the option is there and has always been there. If you apply 7J which is in the rulebook. You can't do it in a real small class.

Russ Arend: We are in a whole different situation then we were 10 years ago, because our numbers are down so much. This sounds like a good thing, but it will cause mass confusion. I could be wrong but everybody I talk to sort of said how would we do it if this happens? I am not saying we can't do it, I am saying it will cause problems for us. If others had it, I understand that would be wonderful but not for us.

James Coburn: With what has been put forward today can the language be altered and voted on today that it would include large pack, SPO and 2CP and exclude the brace format? Whether gun dog or traditional brace? Is that an option we have today? Leave out any brace format leave it out? Just pass it for large pack, SPO and 2CP?

Jim Odle: Yes, we can do that.

James Coburn: That would satisfy everybody's concerns.

Doug Ljunggren What about small pack?

Russ Arend: Yes, that would be ok

Raye Ann Cole: Yes, that would be ok

Doug Ljunggren: Sounds like first vote should be to amend the proposal to exclude the brace formats. That either passes or fails. If it passes, then the next vote is do we approve the amended proposal or not.

First vote: to amend proposal to exclude the brace formats. If you vote yes, it means amend to exclude. If you vote no, it means leave alone.

Yes 11

No 0

Jim Odle: It passed unanimously.

Second Vote: Amended to exclude the brace format, to approve amended proposal or leave alone.

Yes 11

No 0

Jim Odle: It passed unanimously.

Doug Ljungren: This will have to get approved by the Board then it will have to be programmed.

Russ Arend: I think what you are doing is good. That way that gives us a chance to explain to our people.

Jim Odle: Let's discuss the next agenda item:

Agenda Item #2: Chapter 3, Section 3 MAKING APPLICATION TO HOLD A FIELD TRIAL. SECTION 3

A licensed or member club may hold up to two licensed field trials in a calendar year, ~~provided the second trial is at least 30 days from the first day of the trial.~~

Donald Dobbs: I thought it was discussed and came about by clubs wanting to have 2 trials the same weekend and these are clubs in more isolated regions and this would help with traveling, entries or states that only have a few clubs. Is that how it came about?

Jim Odle: That is correct.

Tim Beck: I represent the Wisconsin Association and this would benefit those beaglers up in the Wisconsin area.

James Coburn: I do have a question. The way it reads it says up to 2 license field trials in a calendar year? Can we change to field trials and or hunt tests?

Doug Ljungren: Yes

James Coburn: If you have a club that is holding both it's field trials on one weekend, doesn't that open up another weekend for other clubs. For example, in Pennsylvania and some states they have a lot of trials doesn't that give them a wider array of open dates to choose from? Where they can possibly be the only club holding a trial that weekend? As an example let's say club A decides to hold both licensed field trials one weekend, their second weekend now becomes open, correct? That actually gives clubs an opportunity to look at the event calendar and say now Sept. 1 is open and we are going to be the only club holding the event that weekend. It just may cause clubs to look around and move one of their events. It may be a benefit because we all struggle to support our formats. It gives a guy like me a chance to support more clubs because it will open up those days.

Doug Ljungren: Yes, that is true and a very strong point.

Jim Odle: We are voting to eliminate the 30 day waiting period.

Yes 10

No 1

Jim Odle: The vote passed

Doug Ljungren: This will take programming of the AKC computer system. We have to get this approved by the Board and then the Delegate body. We will make an announcement when this can happen.

Agenda Item #3 – Beagle Bench Show:

Doug Ljungren: The Beagle Bench Show idea is something that is under development by AKC. It does not affect the field trial per say. This can be held with field trial but it does not change any field trial rules, its just in addition to. The purpose of having a beagle bench show is to provide an opportunity to evaluate both the form and function of the hounds at the same event. We anticipate it will be held in conjunction with a field trial however, it could be held as a stand alone at a clubs summer event or something like that. The way we are thinking about structuring it gives maximum flexibility to the club. Number one, even having it is discretionary. No club has to have it at all. The dogs would enter the bench show in the morning. The host club can conduct the bench show as strictly a pass fail test or they can ask the judge after he has evaluated all the dogs to call back the dogs and pick the top five dogs of each class being the Winners Dog, Winners Bitch and BOB. The dogs that enter the field trial and the bench show can present themselves to the judge at whatever time fits their needs so it doesn't interfere with field trial. I am thinking the club designates a spot where we will have the show and if you enter the show, just go to the designated spot when you want but you have to do it before a specific time. The club can charge whatever entry fee they want for the bench show including free if the dog is already entered in the field trial. The host club can offer ribbons or no ribbons. I would think normally they would want to offer ribbons, but its up to the club. In the most basic form, it's a pass fail conformation test where the dogs are graded against the breeds major characteristics, as identified in the breed standards. The beagle breed standard is structured so each characteristic is given a certain weight. The weighting adds up to 100. We will adopt that same weighting when the judge evaluates the dog. To pass the test a dog must receive 70 out of a possible 100 points and you cannot get less than 50% in anyone category. If you pass the beagle bench show pass fail three times under 3 different judges, that qualifies you to earn what we are going to call the Bonafide Hunting Beagle Title (BHB) . It's like the Certified Hunting Beagle at the UBGF. So to get the BHB title you have to pass the bench show 3 times and you have to place three times in a field trial, then your qualified for the BHB title. We have really tried to minimize the paper work on the club, so if the bench show is in conjunction with a field trial we are going to consider the bench show another stake in the field trial so there is no application fee if held in conjunction with the field trial. The field trial application fee covers it. The club does not have to send in the results of the bench show. Instead, the owner of the dog has a title application form. The judge signs the title application form, fills in the date and location and says your dog passed today. When the owner has all three slots on the application filled out and the dog has placed 3 times in field trial, then the owner can submit that if the owner wants to earn the title. The club does not send in any results to the AKC, all they have to do on event secretary report we are going to add a line, and event secretary has to say yes we had a bench show and who the judge was and there were x number of dogs. They do not have to submit the names of the dogs. Once the staff verifies the 3 placements in the field trial we will assign the BHB title and issue a title certificate. There is a title application fee that is paid by the owner of the dog. If the club structures this right, the fee to AKC is zero. There is no application fee and no \$3.50 service fee. We have moved the burden to keep track of all this to the owner of the dog who has the most interest. That is the idea, we are moving forward with at this time, we just wanted to make you all aware of it. Do you have any comments?

Tim Beck: I think it's a good idea I see nothing wrong with it. My one question is who will judge the hound in the bench show?

Doug Ljungren: Good question. There will be 2 pools of judges that can Judge. If you are an AKC Conformation Judge that is approved for beagles, you are approved to Judge Beagle Bench Shows. Or we are going to set up a pool of Judges that are called beagle bench show Judges. To become a Beagle Bench Show Judge you have to take an anatomy course which is online through AKC's Canine College and that is free. Then you have to take a beagle breed standard exam so that you know the standard. That is online and that will cost the beagle bench show Judge \$35.00.

Jim Odle: Everybody understand that? Any comments from the committee?

Marty Gipson: I mean you are aware that we also have bench shows with the UBGF so I think this is a great idea. One thing I have noticed even though we do the field and bench show same day for the trials sometimes there is not as much interest in the bench portion as there is field trial itself. So I do think this could help build more interest on the bench show side. I am gathering from you this will be a title that will be added to their papers right?

Jim Odle: Yes that is correct

John Edwards: I agree this will be a great idea. I think it will create a lot of interest

Doug Ljungren: We want to put more focus on the form and function of the dogs. Some of the breeds have suffered from a division between show dogs and field dogs. That is not good for any breed so this is meant to bring focus back to the combination.

Jim Odle: I think it's a good idea

James Coburn: Would this also apply to the 2CP contest, would we be able to hold the same type of show at our events or not?

Doug Ljungren: Yes you would

James Coburn: I see it's a positive thing. Anytime you can do anything to get peoples mindset improving conformation is always a good thing. I think the UBGF definitely started that trend. I see nothing but positive.

Stefan Givens: I am excited about AKC putting forward the effort to get this done. I can see where it will be a positive thing especially in the Southern Large Pack.

Future Agenda Items:

Jim Odle: I guess we are ready for now to discuss future agenda items to be put on the agenda and be voted on next year.

Item #1:

Marty Gipson: I received a proposal that specifically deals with Gun Dog Brace Trials. This will fall under Raye Ann Cole's area.

Dear AKC and BAC Committee,

I've noticed an issue at many AKC GDB Trials over the last several years that has brought concerns with rule 6B.

GDB Trails are experiencing single owners or owner partnerships entering a large number of dogs that causes those dogs not be drawn but placed in the running order due to that owner entering enough dogs to have a dog in every Brace/Trio for that class. This situation is allowing dogs to be entered that are considered knock out dogs to eliminate competition to others by influencing the type of run/score you may receive by drawing with faulty hounds purposely.

Judges can or maybe influenced to not pick up the faulty hounds due to the following;

- Large Entries (not enough time in day to finish the trail by interrupting a brace.
- Host club possibly not having enough game to allow time for judges to find another rabbit after disruption of hound pick up.

I propose the solution of removing the highlighted language for the GDB Format to align with the other AKC Field Trial Beagle Formats in the drawing of the hounds. Removing the language to the rule would greatly help the GDB Drawing Format by providing simplicity to the process and maintaining consistency with the other formats. Removing the highlighted language also eliminates the knock out dog philosophy and add fairness for all back to the GDB Trails.

To simplify, all dogs would be run in the exact order of the draw in 1st series.

Please consider the following change to 6B;

- Remove the yellow highlighted language (below) from the rule 6B.

ADDITIONAL STANDARD PROCEDURES FOR BEAGLE FIELD TRIALS RUN IN BRACES ON RABBIT OR HARE PROCEDURE 6. CLOSING, DRAWING, BRACING ABSENTEES

6-B The running order of the hounds entered in each class shall be determined by drawing, and the hounds shall be drawn in braces, or trios if applicable, for the first series. In the first series the hounds must be run in the order drawn. However, at Gundog Brace trials, should a second hound owned by the same person be drawn in the same brace or trio, that hound will change places with the next hound drawn which is not so owned. This change will be made with a hound drawn later if possible, but may be made with a hound drawn earlier if necessary. The running together of two or three such hounds may be permitted in the first series when a separation is impossible, but in no other case.

Raye Ann Cole: This is how I understand that this rule came to be. Several years ago in traditional brace based on a rule about not running against yourself in 1st series and the proposal to apply the same methodology to Gun Dog Brace. I am willing to allow that to go on the agenda for next year. I will tell you that so far I have received very mixed messages. My Delegates meeting is not for a couple of weeks so I am interested to see what I get from that meeting. I know that the concern I believe is people are bringing eliminators entering dogs that try to take out other dogs. I have received a couple of phone calls from those who were in favor but I also received opposite feedback as well. I am not against putting it on the agenda to be discussed next year and get more information from the people that run under gun dog brace. Jamie Coburn, you attend another area of trials that I am not part of. Do you see this as a problem in Appalachian?

James Coburn: Obviously rumors go around. I heard this was going to come up. What I did in the last few weeks I have reached out to about 12 to 14 people that are either officers of Appalachian clubs or field trial secretaries and I have to tell you that they are 100% no. My average drive time is 8 hours that is my average, some clubs of DE is 10 or 11 hours to drive to a club and enter 3 dogs and have them pull out the same trio would be extremely frustrating. Their concern is it would stop people from wanting to travel the long distances to come to a trial if there was a chance they were going to roll out against themselves in the same brace or trio.

Raye Ann Cole: From what Marty is bringing up, the group that represents the proposal from what I have heard from that area is that there are issues with this. I have heard mixed messages from the area that I directly compete in. I am fine with putting it on the agenda to do more research and get additional feedback but I am not ready to vote on it today.

Marty Gipson: Discussed the proposal he received and the two major points.

1. They feel like people can bring a large amount of dogs declare them in their name and most of the time they are, they don't compete against themselves. They think some are bringing eliminators to take out the competition.
2. The other area was simplifying the drawing process. I will say when I come to Silver Creek, the efficiency is unreal, they do an amazing job. I also travel all over this country to do trials. I hit 40 trials a year and some of the other clubs in other areas struggle with it, they rely on the people that are there. The attendees say that it won't work or not when it's called out. The ownership won't work so it gets dropped down to next line item. There is no process ensuring that they are telling you the truth that it's the same owner or not. I think those are the two areas that are important. I was thinking that I judged a Gun Dog Brace this weekend up at Northern IL WI line, I judged a class of 20 one owner had 10, the rest of the 10 was mixed up. You think about benefits to one owner if I had ten dogs to enter a class of 20. I know I will run against everyone else. If I have one that is not as good then I probably should not enter. You could eliminate some competition doing that. Not having to run against yourself is a huge benefit. I was thinking about the comment made a few minutes ago that I travel pretty far distances. I would hate to take two dogs and have to run against myself. I would like to compete against someone else. I think there will be some discussion from the Brace group.

Jim Odle: Marty, the Brace people have eliminated that requirement, they run against themselves. They run as drawn in regular Brace.

Marty Gipson: So it's just Gun Dog Brace this would impact?

Raye Ann Cole: Yes that's correct.

Jim Odle: The vote is should this item be put on the agenda for next year to be voted on or not?

Yes 10

No 1

Jim Odle: The item will be on the agenda next year. Does anybody else have any proposals they would like to add on the agenda next year?

Item #2:

James Coburn: I have two items that the 2CP group would like to put on the agenda next year. They are straightforward. One is that the 2CP hunt test format would like to change the definition of the derby to be the same as Large Pack. It would only affect the 2CP Hunt test. For those that don't know that means you have to be 2 years old or younger on the date of the event. That is the way the Large Pack is run now, that is the way we would like to have the language amended for 2CP Hunt test only.

Item #3:

The Second item is we would like to put forth a proposal for a title of Grand Master Hunter similar to what we have done with field champion. The requirements to make that would be 3 additional wins and additional 60 points. Once you met the MH title you would have to do that again in order to gain the Grand Master Hunter. It would be a total of 6 wins and 120 points. We want it to be something not every dog can maintain, something special. But we do want it to be something that is attainable. I have finished a lot of MH I have very few that have reached those 6 wins and 120 points. That might be because I did not run them as much when they were finished but I am definitely open to discuss requirements for gaining the title. If there is research that can be done on AKC end that would be great. This would not be retroactive but if we wanted to make it more stringent, I would understand that. Right now, when you get 3 wins and 60 points you become a MH. We are asking for a new title of Grand Master Hunter that would require additional requirements once you meet that first title.

Jim Odle: Does anyone else have an agenda item to be put on the agenda in 2024?

Marty Gipson: First item that was mentioned about the derby age, I would be interested in hearing more about that. I never understood the July 1st date and I saw how the large pack does it and it states up to two years old. That is so simple, and I would like to understand the downside of moving to that. Is there a downside? In the UBGF we run our derby run off in the spring at the worst time and we are killing our young rabbits, the habitat is down we are not helping our grounds in what we are doing. I think the way the large pack does it stating up to 2 years old can be a huge benefit to the UBGF, which I have not polled the group to find out, but I would like to understand is there a downside?

Doug Ljungren: I am not aware of any downside. The upside is it's much easier to understand. It seems to me if this is changed, it should be changed in all formats.

Jim Odle: Does anybody have an objection to adding that to the agenda next year?

Marty Gipson: I agree it sounds so much simpler to me.

Jim Odle: We will now vote to discuss on next year's agenda the definition of a Beagle Derby

Yes 8

No 3

Jim Odle: That will be added to the agenda next year.

The next one we are voting on to add to the agenda next year is the 2CP Grand Master Hunter Title, adding 3 wins and 60 additional points:

Yes 11

No 0

Jim Odle: That will be added to the agenda next year.

Does anyone else that have an agenda item we would consider?

Item #4:

Tim Beck: I represent the International Heartland Federation and we have had a discussion regarding measuring of the hounds. They want to know if we can add an option to measure the hounds on a raised surface like a small table. Some of us have a hard time getting down. If you can have it on a raised surface, that would help. A lot of us think that would be a great thing if we can do that.

Jim Odle: What does the group think?

Jamie Coburn: I see no reason at all we can't put this on the agenda for next year and give us all time to go back to our members and people we represent and get feedback. This would give us a chance to poll our members and get feedback and vote on it.

Doug Ljungren: In Conformation, depending on the breed and desires on the parent club, a breed can be shown on the ground, ramp or lifted up and put on a table. The purpose is exactly why this is brought up. Judges have a hard time bending. Some of the smaller breeds tend to be on a table or a ramp.

Jim Odle: It would accommodate a lot of judges. Anybody have any other comment on that before we vote to add to the agenda in 2024.

Let's vote to add to the agenda in 2024 to measure dogs on an elevated surface.

Yes 11

No 0

We will add the item on the 2024 agenda.

Jim Odle: Does anybody have any additional items to add to the 2024 agenda?

Russ Arend: If we come up with something that we think we would like to add, do we have options between now and meeting in 2024?

Doug Ljungren: If someone comes up with something a month before the meeting in 2024 then the group has not had time to evaluate it. If it's too close to the meeting it might have to wait an additional year. Anything that comes up can be forwarded to Jim Odle.

Jim Odle thanked all the members for taking time out of their day to attend the Beagle Advisory Committee meeting. In addition, he thanked the AKC staff.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45am