



Club de l'Épagneul Breton of the United States of America

May 26, 2016

United Kennel Club
Senior Vice President Todd Kellam
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Mr. Kellam,

Thank you for your dedication to the Pointing Dog Program and our breed, the Épagneul Breton. We commend the UKC on revising the Pointing Dog Program Rules in an effort to make the Program and all pointing dog breeds stronger.

After you posted the proposed rule changes on May 16, 2016, I sent a blast e-mail to all 250 CEB-US members with a hyperlink to the changes asking everyone to read them and interact in the forum provided, reply directly to me or a CEB-US Board member, or reply directly to the UKC in writing. I asked all the Board members to reach out to their friends and constituents and solicit their feedback. A Rule Change Committee was formed of all the CEB-US Board members and a teleconference was held on Monday, May 23, 2016. After several hours discussing and debating, the following consensus was reached on the "larger" rule changes as interpreted by the Board.

Section One, III, B - Designation of Field Trial: Type (W) Field Trial, page 3 of 65; also found under Section Two, I, I – Designated Upland Game Birds for Licensed Trials, page 8 of 65.

We are opposed to birds being considered "wild" after just ten (10) days. Especially now that a Champion of the Field – Wild (CHF-W) is being offered. A wild bird should be a truly wild bird; one that was bred, survives and could reproduce in an upland habitat. That being said we understand that the availability of truly wild birds is very limited, especially in certain areas of the country. This sparked a heated debated within the committee. Therefore we can concede that "wild" birds could be considered pre-season supplemental release birds, birds released at

least thirty (30) days in advance *with* NO call boxes or electronic calls being implemented at least ten (10) days prior to the trial. Discussion was had that it is obvious that some dogs cannot hunt truly wild birds and to offer a CHF-W on released birds "waters-down" that title. A "wild" bird should be a wild bird.

Section One, IV, C - Annual Number of Field Trials..., page 3 of 65

Currently the UKC allows 4 annual field trials; 2 liberated, 2 wild. Would the UKC consider allowing any combination of wild and liberated trials, not to exceed 4, based on the club's ability? For example; all 4 wild, all 4 liberated, 3 wild and 1 liberated, etc.

Section One, V – Classes and competition of UKC Pointing Dog Field Trials, page 4 and 5 of 65

We vehemently oppose and disagree with not allowing Wild Gun Braces anymore. This should be left to the sponsoring club based upon availability of grounds, birds and judges. Wild trials are less expensive to run due to no additional bird or labor cost (gunners, planters, etc.) and are in essence a way clubs generate funds. These funds are very important to have qualified judges, meals, trophies and sometimes facilities to run the trial. If the club wants to and can, they should be allowed to run Wild Gun Braces. This is also a chance for handlers to experience a brace before going to Open where rules are much stricter. Also, a pointing dog HAS to be able to hunt WITH another dog during the hunting season if necessary. This is an excellent opportunity for handlers and owners to gain valuable experience and knowledge. For those of us who are UKC licensed field trial judges, we agree many Gun dogs (and Open for that matter) are sometimes not prepared to run braces, but this should be left to the handler to judge their ability, and after spending \$50 over and over to get excused or not awarded, the handler will either stop entering or start training. We concede that we as judges could do a better job explaining the brace and critiquing performance to raise the level of knowledge and ability for the future, but to remove offering a braced wild Gun trial is not appropriate.

Section Seven, C – TR Title Required for Dogs Entered in Open Class Braces Competition, page 40 of 65

The second part of this is requiring an Open dog to be a Trialer (TR) or above to run Open braces as specified officially in Section Seven (above). We strongly oppose this change also. We can all think of Trialers or above in the Open class that are terrible brace-mates, and dogs without these designations that are extremely good brace dogs. Again, leave this up to the handler and the ability of the dog, not a title designation. \$50 per run is a strong motivational tool to start training or stop entering. Limiting these dogs will also limit the number of dogs necessary to meet the new increased minimum of six (6), potentially causing more braces to be cancelled.

Section Two, VI – Awards, page 16 of 65

We welcome the new award designations, aligning us a little more with our European friends and making it easier to explain placements to international judges, BUT we have a stockpile as the parent club of first and reserve ribbons and trophies. We purchase in bulk to save money, and just this past February, I purchased almost \$1500 in awards for the CEB-US. There was no communication on the award change and we, local and national clubs, all have thousands of dollars in unusable awards unless we come to an agreement that we can still use the already purchased awards with old placements, but officially report the new placements to the UKC.

Section Three, II, F – Grand Champion of the Field (GRCHF), page 20 of 65

We are opposed to requiring a GRCHF to obtain a Certificate of Achievement to Championship in Trial Barrage (CACT) award classification. This opportunity for this award will be EXTREMELY limited, possibly only obtainable at a National event. We just do not have the numbers of dogs and large trials as in Europe. While the barrage is an important component of the field trial if necessary, and the CACT a coveted award, it should stand alone and not be a requirement for the already extremely difficult GRCHF.

We are split almost evenly as to requiring the UKC Water Retrieve Test (WRT). Some feel it should be required to give credence to the GRCHF and respect from NAVDHA people and others as a stand-alone test and the GRCHF is just that: of the field. We all agree it is about time some sort of water retrieve certificate for upland pointing dogs is initiated by the UKC.

Section Five, Q, 11 – Nominating dogs, Organizing and Judging a Barrage, page 33 of 65

We feel the criteria hierarchy should be:

- A.) Desire/Enthusiasm to Search for Game;
- B.) Ground Coverage/Hunting Pattern;
- C.) Gait and Style in context of the applicable breed of dog; and
- D.) Obedience (as potential disqualifying criteria).

Section Ten, Rules for UKC Licensed Water Retrieve Test (WRT), Article 1 – Applicability of Rules, page 58 of 65

We disagree with the minimum of six (6) dogs necessary to run a WRT. This is a pass fail test like a TAN and believe if there is interest, whether 2 or 20, it should be the decision of the sponsoring club based on available facilities, birds and judges. This is a great idea, but there should be no minimum attached.