



**UNITED KENNEL CLUB**

**FINDINGS AND ACTION REGARDING 2017 WORLD**

**COONHOUND CHAMPIONSHIP NITE HUNT**

**December 1, 2017**



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I. Background

The Zone 6 Qualifying Event for the United Kennel Club (“UKC”) 2017 World Coonhound Championship Nite Hunt (“Championship Hunt”) took place on Friday and Saturday, September 15 and 16, 2017 at Pilot Mountain, North Carolina. The Championship Hunt Finals occurred on Thursday through Saturday, September 21, 2017 through September 23, 2017 at Elberton, Georgia. The Championship Hunt was conducted pursuant to the UKC World Coonhound Championship Nite Hunt Rules (“Championship Nite Hunt Rules”). Each participant in the Championship Hunt signs and submits an Entry Form and Qualifying Receipt which includes the Participation Agreement that states as follows:

Participation Agreement: I hereby acknowledge by my signature below that I have read and understand, and will abide by the UKC World Coonhound Nite Hunt Championship Rules for the year I am participating. I understand and agree that the **Appeal procedure will not be applicable** during the Zone Semifinals or the UKC World Coonhound Nite Hunt Finals, and that the Master of Hounds’ decision will be final in all situations and not subject to review, appeal, or challenge in any court; I agree that the presentation of a signed copy of this Entry Form shall entitle UKC to obtain a dismissal from the court of any action that may be commenced on my behalf that seeks review, appeal, or otherwise challenges the Master of Hounds’ final decision.

Rule 20 of the Championship Nite Hunt Rules provides as follows:

i. 20. A UKC Appeal procedure will not be applicable during the Zones or Finals. The Master of Hounds’ decision will be final in all situations pertaining to activities during the actual hunt. UKC reserves unto itself, in its sole judgment and discretion, the right to take such action and impose such sanctions as it deems appropriate.

Information provided to UKC relating to the scoring and results reported for the outcome of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event caused UKC to conduct an investigation. A part of that investigation included an Investigative Hearing held before a Panel of three

experienced licensed Masters of Hounds. The Investigative Hearing Panel Members included Tom Reeves (Chairperson), Elba Neat, and Lyndell Price. The Investigative Hearing was held in Statesville, North Carolina on October 19, 2017. Also in attendance were Tanya Raab, UKC President, Todd Kellam, UKC Senior Vice President, and Allen Gingerich, UKC Senior Director of Field Operations.

The following witnesses provided sworn testimony at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing:

1. Allen Storie, Judge and Handler of dog “Homie”
2. Robbie Rhodes, Handler and Co-Owner of dog “Sam”
3. Cole Mathews, Non-Hunting Guide
4. Hunter Watson, Backup Handler for Rhodes (dog “Sam”)

A transcript of the Investigative Hearing was made by a Registered Professional Reporter. The transcript of the Investigative Hearing as prepared by the Reporter was provided to UKC on Saturday, November 4, 2017.

The Hearing Panel issued its summary of testimony, written findings, and conclusion dated October 19, 2017, which was received by UKC on October 25, 2017.

The Hearing Panel findings and unanimous opinion stated:

- The score card was filled out by both Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes.
- Mr. Rhodes’ last tree was accepted after the hunt was over.
- Mr. Rhodes scored the final tree by himself.
- Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes stopped on the way back to the club to complete the score card.

Based on the findings listed above along with Mr. Watson’s statement that the judge called and wanted to stop and discuss the score card because he

was getting nervous about what they had done, it is the unanimous opinion of the panel that the score card was falsified by Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes.

UKC has reviewed the information gathered in the course of its investigation. That information included the testimony provided at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing, the Hearing Panel’s Findings and Conclusions, and contacts and statements made to UKC both before and after the October 19, 2017 Hearing.

For the reasons explained in these Findings, UKC has determined that the UKC Nite Hunt Scorecard (“Scorecard”) submitted to the Presiding Master of Hounds Sparks for Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event on Saturday, September 16, 2017 was falsified. Accordingly, the results of the 2017 World Championship Hunt are declared void and invalid. All awards and recognition previously given to Participants in the 2017 World Championship Hunt are rescinded. UKC will conduct a Re-Hunt in which every Cast and dog affected by the submission of the falsified Scorecard for Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event held on Saturday, September 16, 2017, will be invited to participate. The Re-Hunt will be held over three consecutive nights in Elberton, Georgia. UKC will provide notification to the owners of the affected dogs that will be eligible and invited to participate in the Re-Hunt.

## II. UKC Investigation Information and Testimony

UKC’s investigation revealed the following information.

Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event which took place at Pilot Mountain, North Carolina, on Saturday, September 16, 2017 was comprised of the following Participants and dogs:

<u>Participant/Handler</u>	<u>Dog</u>
1. Allen Storie	“Homie” (Dog A)
2. Robbie Rhodes; Backup Handler Hunter Watson	“Bad Habit Sam” (Dog B)
3. Roy Craig	“Kody” (Dog C)
4. Shannon Walters	“Roc” (Dog D)

Three (3) Drops occurred. After the first two (2) Drops, two of the dogs in Cast 4 (Kody and Roc) had been scratched and their Handlers had left the Cast. The information provided to UKC, including the testimony provided at the Investigative Hearing, indicates that the controversy leading to the UKC investigation involved the third Drop (Testimony of Mr. Storie, Hearing Transcript Pgs 4-9; Mr. Rhodes Pgs 15-17; Hearing Panel Findings). By the time of the third Drop the only two dogs participating were Homie and Sam, and the Participants/Handlers included Mr. Storie, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Watson.

#### Mr. Storie

Mr. Storie testified in regard to the third Drop. He stated that there were approximately 15 minutes of hunt time remaining, and Mr. Storie's dog, Homie, successfully treed a coon (Tran. Pg 9, L 9-13). Mr. Storie testified that Mr. Rhodes was with him when time ran out on the hunt, and that Mr. Storie did not hear Mr. Rhodes tree his dog, Sam (Tran. Pg 10, L20-24; Pg 11, L 1-2). Mr. Storie testified "...when hunt time expired, we were walking back to the truck and Sam was treed" (Tran. Pg 9, L18-20), and that Mr. Rhodes retrieved Sam, and that it was Mr. Rhodes that scored the tree (Tran. Pg 10, L 2-6). Mr. Storie testified that he did not know if Mr. Rhodes had treed his dog (Tran. Pg 11, L15). Mr. Storie continued that after "talking...afterwards" (Tran. Pg 13, L 1-2) with Mr. Rhodes, and even though he did not know if Mr. Rhodes had treed his dog (Tran. Pg 11, L 15; Pg 13, L 1-2), Mr. Rhodes scored the tree by himself (Tran. Pg 13, L 9-11). Mr. Storie stopped filling out the Scorecard and "let somebody else fill it out...after the hunt was over" (Tran. Pg 13, L 12-17). At the time of filling out the Scorecard Mr. Storie did so with a pencil, and did not recall having an ink pen, and the fact that Mr. Storie did not have an ink pen was immediately confirmed by Mr. Rhodes (Tran. Pg 14, L 6-11; Pg 32, L 20-22). After the hunt was over Mr. Storie called Mr. Rhodes as they were

travelling by separate vehicle to turn in the Scorecard to the Master of Hounds at the clubhouse and said “Hey, let’s stop and look at this thing,” and then after stopping and discussing the Scorecard with Mr. Rhodes and believing that the Scorecard had been “finished”, surrendered the Scorecard to Mr. Rhodes for delivery to the Master of Hounds because Mr. Storie “...had no reason to go back.” (Tran. Pgs 34-35 & 65). When asked if he agreed with Mr. Rhodes that if just one of the two of them could determine that a coon had been treed, Mr. Storie stated “I don’t recall it being said like that. I just recall that me and him said ‘Hey, we’re going to do this fair. It’s just me and you. We don’t have a non-hunting judge, so we’ll do the best we can.’” (Tran. Pg 63, L 16-24; Pg 64, L 1-2).

Additionally, Mr. Storie contacted Master of Hounds Sparks on September 18, 2017, and stated to Mr. Sparks that he (Mr. Storie) had seen the Zone 6 results on the UKC website, and that the score submitted for his Cast #4 on September 16, 2017 was incorrect, and that Sam had 150+ and not 375+ points. Also, UKC Senior Director of Field Operations Allen Gingerich spoke to Mr. Storie on September 26, 2017. Mr. Storie spoke about September 16, 2017. Mr. Storie stated that Mr. Rhodes, at some point during the hunt, indicated to Mr. Storie that “I’ll see your coon if you see mine”. Mr. Storie indicated that he quickly rejected this suggestion and would not be having any of it on this Cast. Mr. Storie stated the time left in the hunt was four minutes after they scored Homie’s tree; he stated they walked away from that tree and were waiting to turn loose again if Sam opened; Sam never opened in those four minutes so the hunt ended with them standing there; they then walked to the trucks; that Sam was then heard treeing so they all drove around to him in two separate trucks; when asked by Mr. Gingerich whether or not he went with Mr. Rhodes to Sam’s tree, Mr. Storie said no, he did not, that he stayed sitting in the truck. Mr. Storie stated he had Mr. Rhodes sign the Scorecard when he returned. Mr.

Storie stated that later, while they were on their way to the clubhouse to return the Scorecard, he noticed that the Scorecard was incorrect and that Sam's last tree was scored as plus; that he called Mr. Rhodes on the telephone and stated that he should pull over, and they pulled their two trucks over; that he told Mr. Rhodes the Scorecard was not right, and gave the Scorecard to Mr. Rhodes to look at; that Mr. Rhodes said he would fix the Scorecard; Mr. Storie then concluded he was not going back to the clubhouse but instead headed home, and he trusted Mr. Rhodes to fix the Scorecard before turning it in to the Master of Hounds.

On Friday, September 22, 2017, after Mr. Gingerich had provided Mr. Storie with a copy of the Scorecard, during a discussion with Mr. Gingerich, Master of Hounds Sparks and Master of Hounds Gardin, Mr. Storie again stated that the Scorecard was incorrect; that the hunt time had expired; that as far as Mr. Storie knew no one was with Mr. Rhodes when Mr. Rhodes scored the tree for Sam; that he (Mr. Storie) did not shine or score Sam's tree; that Mr. Storie had not scored the last 125+ points on Sam's tree.

Several days later, Mr. Storie called UKC and spoke with UKC Senior Vice President Todd Kellam and Mr. Gingerich by phone. Mr. Storie stated that after talking with the Co-Owner of the dog Sam, Elliott Shuler, Mr. Storie did not want to pursue the matter given Mr. Shuler's remarks with reference to his kids calling daddy a World Champ but now maybe UKC would pull that title from him and he would have to explain it to his kids.

#### Mr. Rhodes

Mr. Rhodes testified at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing regarding the third and final Drop. Mr. Rhodes testified that the Cast consisted of four male dogs: a Redbone, two Walkers, and the dog he was handling (Sam) (Tran. Pg 15 L 1-6). He described the first and second Drops (Tran. Pgs 15-17). After two of the four dogs had been scratched after the first and

second Drops (Kody and Roc, leaving Mr. Storie's dog Homie and Mr. Rhodes' dog Sam), Mr.

Rhodes testified that he spoke to Mr. Storie:

10 I told him, I said, "Allen, if I see your  
11 coon," I said, "because the majority in the" --  
12 as we spoke walking across that field, in a  
13 four-dog cast, three people has got to see the  
14 coon; a three-dog cast, two people has got to  
15 see the coon; a two-dog cast, the majority of  
16 two is one.  
17 So you would think the majority had --  
18 one person has to see it. And I told Allen, I  
19 said, "Allen, if your dog trees and I find your  
20 coon, we plus it. If we don't" -- "And the same  
21 goes for me. We handle this like two grown  
22 men." (Tran. Pg 18, L 10-22)

As previously indicated, Mr. Rhodes' characterization of this statement as to a two-dog cast that "the majority of two is one" did not coincide with Mr. Storie's testimony; see Mr. Storie's testimony above, Pgs 62-64 of Transcript. Mr. Rhodes restated his position that with two dogs "a majority is one" (Tran. Pg 61, L 10-12).

Mr. Rhodes begins to describe the third Drop at Page 19 of the transcript, stating that when Mr. Storie's dog trees, there are about "10 or 12 minutes left in the hunt" (Tran. Pg 19, L 21-22), and that after walking "down there..." "We have four minutes left in this hunt" (Tran. Pg 20, L 2).

21 With about -- I don't know -- 10 or  
22 12 minutes left in the hunt, Allen trees his  
23 dog. We walk down there. He's in this cedar  
24 tree with muscadine vines all over it. I see  
**20**  
1 the coon. Allen says he sees the coon. We plus  
2 it up. We have four minutes left in this hunt.  
3 Dogs barking. I can hear Sam -- way on  
4 the side of this hill, when his dog is not  
5 barking, I can hear Sam through the country tree  
6 in a subdivision. I'm not talking about a  
7 little ten-acre house subdivision little mini  
8 farms. I'm talking about a tight-knit  
9 subdivision.



10 I say, "Allen, Sam treed." Can I say he  
11 heard me? No, I can't. The dog might have been  
12 barking when I said Sam treed. I said, "Sam  
13 treed." We was walking back to the top of the  
14 hill. We get in the truck. Ride around through  
15 this subdivision. He is in a subdivision with  
16 houses probably 100 feet apart, and the lots is  
17 probably 100 feet by 200 feet deep. The reason  
18 I know, I survey.  
19 But, anyway, and he was in an undeveloped  
20 lot between two houses treed in a pine tree  
21 30 feet off the side of the road. (Tran. Pg 19, L 21-24, Pg 20, L 1-21)

Mr. Rhodes testified that he was alone and found the coon that Sam had treed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Drop (Tran. Pg 20, L 20-23). Mr. Rhodes' testimony was inconsistent with his September 22, 2017 statements to Mr. Gingerich when he first indicated that the judge (Mr. Storie) was the one who found the coon in the tree. Mr. Rhodes indicated that he and Mr. Storie completed the Scorecard on the hood of his truck and "we [Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Storie] plus him up"; Mr. Storie said that he would take the Scorecard back to the clubhouse (Tran. Pg 21, L 2-12). About halfway to the clubhouse Mr. Rhodes received a telephone call from Mr. Storie, who said: "Robbie, something don't look right with this scorecard" (Tran. Pg 21, L 13-15 & Pg 30, L 11-13). Mr. Rhodes then met with Mr. Storie, and with an ink pen Mr. Rhodes added total point information to the Scorecard (Tran. Pg 21, L 16-24, Pg 22, L 1-14; Pg 30, L 16-20; Pg 32, L 3-6). Mr. Rhodes testified that the final tree on Drop 3 for Mr. Rhodes' dog Sam occurred "30 feet off the side of [road]. Everybody sees him treed off the side of the road" (Tran. Pg 31, L 15-18; Pg 40, L 11-17). Mr. Rhodes admits that he was the only person that saw the coon that his dog Sam allegedly treed on the final tree of Drop 3 (Tran. Pg 31, L 19-21). Mr. Rhodes testified as follows:

24 MR. PRICE: But if -- as many hunts as  
44  
1 you've been in, chances are you've read where  
2 you're not supposed to go to the tree by

3 yourself and score the tree.  
4 If you wasn't but 30 feet from your tree,  
5 as much as you've been around hunts, as much as  
6 you know, why did you not go 30 feet back, get  
7 him or holler at him, and get him to come in  
8 there with you and score the tree?  
9 MR. RHOADES: The reason for that,  
10 because we was in a subdivision and I was -- we  
11 was ready to get out of there because we didn't  
12 know if people was coming. You know how it is  
13 when people -- (Tran. Pg 43, L 24; Pg 44, L 1-13)

Mr. Rhodes further testified as follows:

4 MR. PRICE: But to me, if you're 30 feet,  
5 you see the coon, you could holler or walk back  
6 there and get him to come in, score the coon,  
7 you scored it, you're gone, everything is good.  
8 MR. RHOADES: I did holler. I said, "I  
9 got the coon."  
10 MR. PRICE: Yeah, but he didn't see it.  
11 He has got to see it.  
12 MR. RHOADES: In my mind, at that time,  
13 we was in a subdivision. I was ready to get  
14 out. When we got on the hood of his truck, he  
15 plussed it, so I'm taking that he seen it, too.  
16 I didn't ask him if he did or if he didn't. I  
17 just hollered I seen it. So I'm taking he seen  
18 it -- (Tran. Pg 46, L 4-18)

#### Mr. Mathews

Mr. Mathews testified at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing regarding the third and final Drop. Mr. Mathews testified that he was the only one besides Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes that “walked to every tree and made every step they made” (Tran. Pg 23, L 20-23). Mr. Mathews testified that Mr. Rhodes “never treed his dog in for anybody’s acknowledgment” (Tran. Pg 24, L7-8). Mr. Mathews testified that Mr. Rhodes’ claim that his dog Sam was treed in a subdivision was not true, but rather Mr. Mathews testified that the “claimed tree” was not in a subdivision; that “the hunt was clearly over...” that Mr. Rhodes’ “...dog was maybe 90, 100, 120 yards right in the woods. That tree was not scored” (Tran.

Pg 24, L 14-21; Pg 25, L1-7). Mr. Mathews indicated that Mr. Rhodes scored the last tree for his dog Sam solely by himself (Tran. Pg 25, L 12-15) and that Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes would not allow him and Mr. Watson to look at the Scorecard (Tran. Pg 26, L 6-7) but that he (Mr. Mathews) knew what the score was when he last saw it (Tran. Pg 26, L9-10). Mr. Mathews testified that Mr. Rhodes' dog (Sam) was not treed before the hunt was over (Tran. Pg 47, L 10-16) and that the Scorecard was filled out before they all drove around to Mr. Rhodes' dog after conclusion of the hunt (Tran. Pg 54, L 2-11). Mr. Mathews indicated that the Scorecard had been altered after he had last seen it following the conclusion of the hunt:

8 MR. MATHEWS: On the hood of his truck,  
9 before we drove around to his dog, the scorecard  
10 was filled out and completed.  
11 MR. REEVES: And signed?  
12 MR. MATHEWS: And signed.  
13 MR. WATSON: That's the truth, because --  
14 MR. MATHEWS: There was a coon added  
15 somewhere after it left my house. Whether it  
16 was at the gas station or whenever, there was a  
17 coon added on that scorecard. By the time I  
18 woke up on Sunday morning and the scores was on  
19 the computer, I called Curtis and said, "What  
20 the hell? That ain't right." (Tran. Pg 55, L 8-20)

On October 6, 2017 Mr. Gingerich spoke with Mr. Mathews. Mr. Mathews stated that he walked with the Cast every step of the way; that there were suspicious things going on in the Cast other than just Sam's last tree in question; he claimed that Homie's tree did not have a coon in it either and that Mr. Mathews and Mr. Rhodes' Backup Handler, Mr. Watson, were talking about it amongst themselves, and that Mr. Mathews and Mr. Watson could not believe what had just happened. Mr. Mathews stated that they all drove around to where Sam was treeing, and the three of them (Mr. Storie, Mr. Mathews and Mr. Watson) stayed at the trucks while Mr. Rhodes went to get Sam; he stated that they were not sitting in the trucks but stepped outside and were

all three making small talk at the hood of the truck during this time. Mr. Mathews stated his job was done so he left for home. The next day Mr. Mathews saw the results on the UKC website and knew then that the Scorecard was in fact not correct. Mr. Mathews stated that Sam treed the only coon seen in the Cast, which was on his very first tree. He stated that he thought they were also going to plus his second tree but ended up rightfully circling it. He stated that he and Mr. Watson could not say anything as they were merely spectators.

On November 10, 2017 Mr. Gingerich returned a voicemail call to Mr. Mathews, who wanted to know where UKC stood in terms of a decision. Mr. Mathews said he and Mr. Watson were getting a lot of harassment due to his and Mr. Watson's involvement. Mr. Gingerich asked Mr. Mathews some questions:

1) Specifically, what were the chain of events as it related to the moments after they scored Homie's last tree? Mr. Mathews said he was off to the side while Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Storie talked. All three remained in the general area of the tree. He could not hear what they were saying. The last four minutes expired while they were standing there. Once expired, they took off right away and walked to the truck.

2) How much time was spent at the trucks after leaving Homie's tree and before they drove around to Sam? Mr. Mathews said they spent approximately 10 to 15 minutes, and that Mr. Mathews and Mr. Watson were at the rear of the truck while Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes had the Scorecard on the hood of the truck.

3) After Sam had been retrieved and Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Watson headed back to the clubhouse, what if anything was discussed during the ride back to Mr. Mathews' truck that was parked at the church? Mr. Mathews said that before he got out of the truck he looked at the Scorecard and told Mr. Storie "you know that score is not right and you better make it right". Mr.

Mathews said that Mr. Storie responded with “yes, it’s not and I will call Robbie and get it corrected”.

4) Mr. Gingerich mentioned that at the Investigative Hearing on October 19, 2017 Mr. Mathews had pulled out his phone and had the gps coordinates of where Sam was treed, in an effort to dispute Mr. Rhodes’ testimony that Sam was treeing in a subdivision and merely 30 feet off the road. The Hearing Panel had declined the suggestion of viewing the photo. Mr. Mathews forwarded to Mr. Gingerich a Google Earth aerial view of the location and marked where the truck was parked as well as where Homie was treed and where Sam was treeing. Mr. Mathews further stated that “if” Sam would have been declared treed there is no way they would have walked back, in the opposite direction, to the truck to go drive around to Sam; rather, he stated that any handler in their right mind would have wanted to walk directly to Sam from Homie’s tree, and that Sam was merely three hundred yards from Homie’s tree.

Mr. Watson

Mr. Watson testified at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing regarding the third and final Drop. Mr. Watson testified that he concurred with Mr. Mathews’ testimony (Tran. Pg 26, L12-13). Mr. Watson indicated that after the third Drop had ended, Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Storie “...started talking and we got up back to the truck and they told me and Cole [Mathews] to go back to the back end of the truck, and Robbie [Rhodes] and Allen [Storie] went up to the front of the truck. So we got back in—nothing was heard from Sambo. He was treed, but the hunt was over...” (Tran. Pg 27, L 5-12) Mr. Watson testified that only Mr. Rhodes went in to retrieve his dog Sam, and that he, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Storie all stayed at the truck; that when Mr. Rhodes came back, Mr. Rhodes stated that there was a coon, but Mr. Watson indicated that “the hunt was over.” (Tran. Pg 27, L 19-24) Mr. Watson testified as follows:

12 MR. REEVES: Now, was you riding with him  
13 back to the --  
14 MR. WATSON: Yes, I rode with Robbie.  
15 MR. REEVES: So did they stop on the way?  
16 MR. WATSON: Yes, sir. They stopped on  
17 the way at a gas station where we met before the  
18 hunt. And they went back there and they told me  
19 to get in the truck. And I went and got in the  
20 truck, and Robbie and the judge went back there.  
21 The judge stayed in his truck and they talked  
22 for probably 15 or 25 minutes back there while I  
23 was sitting in the truck.  
24 MR. REEVES: So nobody went but Robbie to  
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1 score that last tree?  
2 MR. WATSON: Yes, sir.  
3 MR. REEVES: So we're all satisfied on  
4 that. (Tran. Pg 28, L 12-24; Pg 29, L1-4)

Mr. Watson also testified that after the conclusion of the hunt, when he, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Storie, and Mr. Rhodes had stopped at a gas station as requested by Mr. Storie because of a concern about the Scorecard:

13 Now, on the part about the gas station, I  
14 did. I got out of the truck before the judge  
15 got there and walked up and got a pack of beef  
16 jerky, a Gatorade, and a Twix bar. I came back  
17 and stood outside for about five minutes and the  
18 judge pulled up. I got in the car -- or in the  
19 truck. He told me to get in the truck.  
20 MR. STORIE: Who? I did?  
21 MR. WATSON: No, sir. Robbie. And so I  
22 got in the truck. And when Robbie got back in  
23 the truck, he said that the judge was getting  
24 nervous about what they had done and he was  
49  
1 about to back out of what they decided that --  
2 about the scorecard. That's why the judge came  
3 back. And they stood back there for 15 or  
4 20 minutes talking. (Tran. Pg 48, L 13-24; Pg 49, L1-4)

Mr. Watson also indicated:

9 MR. WATSON: And I love Robbie, but I --  
10 you got to stand up, you know, tell the truth.  
11 And, I mean, what me and Cole said is the truth.  
12 I mean, I know that you all got to go through

13 this and everything like that and -- but I --  
14 it's the truth. I didn't have a dog in there,  
15 one, and I'm going against my -- one of my  
16 friends to tell the truth. But that's what  
17 happened. (Tran. Pg 51, L 9-17)

Mr. Watson testified:

21 MR. WATSON: Now, on the hood of the  
22 truck, like he said, I don't know who it was,  
23 but somebody told me and Cole to go back to  
24 the -- there was two trucks there. It was

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1 Robbie's truck and the judge's truck. And to go  
2 back on the back end of Robbie's truck while  
3 them two went up to the hood of the truck up  
4 there and did the scorecard.

5 Now, what I was told by Robbie was --  
6 when he got in the truck, was that they were  
7 going to plus the hollow tree, the second  
8 dropout, instead of the third one. And that was  
9 what I was told.

10 MR. RHOADES: And if that got plussed,  
11 I'd have 350 instead of 375.

12 MR. WATSON: But that's when they meet at  
13 the gas station. I don't know what went on from  
14 that point on, but Robbie himself got in the  
15 truck with him -- with me and told me that he --  
16 that the plan was -- now, out there at the  
17 judge's tree, we -- he treed the dog and they  
18 said, "Oh, here's a spider."

19 Well, I remember Robbie walked off from  
20 the judge right there and they determined it was  
21 a spider. And Robbie walked off the judge and  
22 said, "Well, I ain't going to say it."

23 And the judge said, "Say what?"

24 And Robbie said, "Well, I ain't going to

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1 say it."

2 And the judge said, "Well, go ahead and

3 say it."

4 And Robbie said, "Well, we can work  
5 something out."

6 And that's -- they said that the plan was  
7 that if they plus -- if they seen the coon at  
8 the judge's tree, it would give him a shot, and  
9 then if they gave -- once we got up to the hood,  
10 that's when everything went down. Me and Cole  
11 went to the back of the truck. Got up there.  
12 The scorecard was filled out. Robbie got in the

13 truck with me and said that that was the plan.  
14 Now, from that point on, I remember one  
15 time that we stopped at a stop sign. Robbie  
16 took out a pen and did something to the  
17 scorecard. I have no idea what it was. But  
18 that's what I -- that's what -- that's all I  
19 seen. (Tran. Pg 55, L 21 through Pg 57 L 19)

On October 6, 2017 Mr. Gingerich spoke with Mr. Watson who served as Mr. Rhodes' Backup Handler. Mr. Watson stated he rode in the truck with Mr. Rhodes; that the Cast only treed one coon that he saw, which was on Sam's first tree; that Homie's tree was slick but he could not say anything as a spectator but that it was not right to have been plussed; he said the hunt time had expired shortly after Homie's tree was scored and that Sam was never declared treed prior to hunt time expiring. Mr. Watson stated that it was not even an issue with anyone whether Sam's tree was going to be scored as Sam had not been declared treed, and that otherwise, they would have gone with him to score the tree. Mr. Watson stated that after signing the Scorecard they all headed back towards the clubhouse. He was riding with Mr. Rhodes. Along the way, Mr. Rhodes received a phone call from Mr. Storie but he did not hear the conversation. Mr. Watson stated that Mr. Rhodes then said they were going to stop at a gas station to talk with Mr. Storie. When they stopped, Mr. Rhodes told him to get in the truck while he went to Mr. Storie's truck to talk with Mr. Storie. Mr. Watson stated that this whole deal took at least 15 minutes and he was getting uneasy about it.

### III. UKC Findings

UKC has carefully reviewed and considered the information that has been provided to and obtained by UKC in the course of its investigation of the scoring and results of the outcome of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event, specifically, the scoring for Cast 4 on Saturday, September 16, 2017. The information establishes that the Scorecard submitted to the Presiding Master of



Hounds for Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event on Saturday, September 16, 2017, was falsified. Each of the following Findings supports the conclusion that the Scorecard was falsified:

1. It is solely Mr. Rhodes who asserts that his dog, Sam, treed before the expiration of time on the third Drop. Mr. Storie testified that he was with Mr. Rhodes when time ran out on the hunt, and that Mr. Storie did not hear Mr. Rhodes tree his dog. Mr. Storie testified that it was Mr. Rhodes that scored the tree, and that he did not know if Mr. Rhodes had treed his dog. Mr. Storie testified that Mr. Rhodes scored the tree by himself. On September 26, 2017, Mr. Storie indicated to Mr. Gingerich that Mr. Storie did not accompany Mr. Rhodes to Sam's alleged tree. In his conversation with Mr. Gingerich on September 29, 2017, Mr. Storie again indicated that the Scorecard was incorrect, that hunt time had expired, and that as far as Mr. Storie knew, no one was with Mr. Rhodes when Mr. Rhodes scored the tree for Sam.

Mr. Mathews testified that Mr. Rhodes "never treed his dog in for anybody's acknowledgment." Mr. Mathews indicated that Mr. Rhodes scored the last tree for his dog, Sam, solely by himself. Mr. Mathews testified that Sam had not treed before the hunt was over.

Mr. Watson (Mr. Rhodes' Backup Handler) testified that the hunt was over by the time Sam allegedly treed. Mr. Watson testified that only Mr. Rhodes went into retrieve Sam, and that he, Mr. Mathews and Mr. Storie were not present and had stayed in the truck. On October 6, 2017 Mr. Watson advised Mr. Gingerich that the hunt time had expired after Homie's tree was scored and that Sam was never declared treed prior to hunt time

expiring. Mr. Watson also stated that it was not even an issue with anyone whether Sam's tree was going to be scored as Sam had not been declared treed, and that, otherwise, they would have gone with him to score the tree.

In short, there is no evidence provided that anyone heard Mr. Rhodes declare that Sam had treed on the third Drop. Rather, the evidence indicates Mr. Rhodes did not successfully declare Sam treed.

2. It is implausible that Mr. Rhodes did not insist that the other participants in Cast 4 go with him to score Sam's tree directly upon leaving Homie's tree, and rather that the parties headed in the opposite direction of where Sam was located. Moreover, the Cast participants stood at the truck for approximately 15 minutes working on the Scorecard after leaving Homie's tree and before driving around to retrieve Sam. It is not believable that Mr. Rhodes would not insist that Judge Storie and/or the other Cast members accompany him to Sam's tree to score it.
3. Mr. Rhodes' assertion that an "agreement" was reached with Mr. Storie that "the majority of two is one" was not supported by Mr. Storie. Moreover, such an assertion is patently incorrect, and is directly contrary to UKC Official Nite Hunt Honor Rule 3(a)(2) as incorporated by Rule 3 of the Championship Nite Hunt Rules. Rule 3(a)(2) specifically provides that points will be plus when dogs strike and tree and coon is seen during shining time only "by a majority of the Cast when hunting Judge is used". As succinctly pointed out by Mr. Neat, one of the members of the Investigative Hearing Panel, during

the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing, when Mr. Rhodes was asserting that one constitutes the majority of two, Mr. Neat stated “Well, the fact is, with two people, there is no majority unless both of you agree” (Tran. Pg 42 L 2-5).

4. Mr. Rhodes’ assertion that the alleged tree occurring during the third Drop was “in a subdivision” and occurred 30 feet off the side of the road is not supported by any other witness, is directly contrary to Mr. Mathews’ testimony at the October 19, 2017 Investigative Hearing. The assertion is also contrary to the visual evidence provided by Mr. Mathews in the Google Earth aerial view of the location marked where the truck was parked as well as where Homie was treed and where Sam was treeing. That Google Earth aerial view of the location reveals that it is neither in a subdivision, nor merely 30 feet (10 yards) from the side of the road.
  
5. It is reasonable to conclude that Mr. Rhodes’ actions and testimony are affected by the scoring situation for Mr. Rhodes and his dog Sam at the time of the second day of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event, Saturday, September 16, 2017. Sam did not win his Cast the preceding night, Friday, September 15, 2017. Had Sam won his Cast with plus points on Friday, September 15, 2017, then any Cast winning score with plus points on Saturday would have been enough points to assure Sam the right to advance to the Championship Hunt Finals. However, since Sam’s score was low on Saturday, September 16, 2017, it became in Mr. Rhodes’ interest to accumulate enough points on the Scorecard to assure that Sam would advance to the Championship Hunt Finals with a single Cast win.

6. On two different occasions Mr. Mathews and Mr. Watson, Mr. Rhodes' Backup Handler, were specifically directed to not be present during the scoring of the Scorecard.
7. UKC's finding and conclusion that the Scorecard was falsified is consistent with the Investigative Hearing Panel findings and conclusions which unanimously stated the opinion that (a) the Scorecard was filled out by both Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes; (b) that Mr. Rhodes' last tree was accepted after the hunt was over; (c) that Mr. Rhodes scored the final tree by himself; (d) that Mr. Storie and Mr. Rhodes stopped on the way back to the clubhouse to complete the Scorecard; and (e) that Mr. Storie had called and wanted to stop and discuss the Scorecard because he was getting nervous about what they had done.
8. Mr. Storie disclosed to Mr. Gingerich on September 26, 2017 that Mr. Rhodes, at some point during the hunt, indicated to Mr. Storie that "I'll see your coon if you'll see mine", a suggestion which Mr. Storie indicated he quickly rejected.
9. It was only after Mr. Storie had talked with Elliot Shuler, the Co-Owner of the dog Sam, that Mr. Storie indicated to UKC that he did not want to pursue the matter any further.
10. Certain aspects of Mr. Rhodes' testimony are entirely consistent with the information provided to UKC by Mr. Storie, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Watson. For instance, Mr. Rhodes acknowledges that he is not able to confirm his alleged statement to Mr. Storie that Sam had treed; that he was alone and found the coon that Sam had treed on the third Drop (however, it should be pointed out that this testimony from Mr. Rhodes was

inconsistent with his September 22, 2017 statements to Mr. Gingerich when he first indicated that Mr. Storie was the one who found the coon in the tree.); Mr. Rhodes indicated that he and Mr. Storie completed the Scorecard on the hood of his truck and that Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Storie together added plus points; Mr. Rhodes agreed that he received a telephone call from Mr. Storie who said “Robbie, something don’t look right with this scorecard”; Mr. Rhodes admits that he was the only person that saw the coon that his dog Sam allegedly treed on the final tree of Drop 3. To the extent that Mr. Rhodes has offered facts and explanations contrary to those provided by Mr. Storie, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Watson, it is reasonable to conclude that Mr. Storie, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Watson are to be believed. The more believable, credible, and convincing information is provided by Mr. Storie, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Watson.

#### IV. UKC Action

UKC has determined that the Scorecard submitted to the Presiding Master of Hounds for Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event on Saturday, September 16, 2017 was falsified. Accordingly, the results of the 2017 World Championship Hunt are declared void and invalid. All awards and recognition previously given to Participants in the 2017 World Championship Hunt are rescinded. UKC will conduct a Re-Hunt in which every Cast and dog affected by the submission of the falsified Scorecard for Cast 4 of the Zone 6 Qualifying Event held on Saturday, September 16, 2017, will be invited to participate. The Re-Hunt will be held over three consecutive nights in Elberton, Georgia. UKC will provide notification to the owners of the affected dogs that will be eligible and invited to participate in the Re-Hunt.

December 1, 2017

United Kennel Club