

COONHOUND ADVISOR

Trevor Wade

As the calendar shifts from spring to summer, exciting things are on the horizon here at UKC. By the time this magazine is published, I anticipate at least an episode or two of the new UKC Hunting Ops Podcast will be public for those interested. This is a big step for us as a company and I'm especially excited about the element it will add to our Coonhound Program. This podcast will be found on all the major podcast listening platforms, as well as on the United Kennel Club YouTube channel where we hope to have some video content from the episodes available as well.

There are some major advantages to having this capability available to us. First off, it is going to give us the ability to streamline information to the consumer much more efficiently. Straight from our mouths to your ears. The turn around time will be quicker than the month we wait for information to be released from this magazine publication. This podcast will also give us a chance to go in depth when discussing things like rule interpretations that can sometime be misunderstood and misconstrued when read in this column. This column will still be a useful tool to lean on and keep record of, but the podcast will be a great addition to continue building knowledge for event officials, judges, and participants.

The podcast will cover a wide variety of our Hunting Ops sports, including coonhound, beagle, cur/feist, retriever, pointer, and shed dog content. I would imagine that coonhound will be the most produced material, as it is such a strong program and has a lot of material that needs to be covered. Allen and I have a list a mile long of things to cover but you can expect to hear us highlight major event winners, discuss upcoming major events and their particulars, lots of rule discussions with UKC interpretations, and deep dives into current programs including the Next Generation Spotlight Series, Triple Crown, Top Ten Bench Show, and Performance Programs. That's just the tip of the iceberg! Stay tuned to the UKC website and social media platforms for more information as it becomes available.

And Action!

As you can see in the introduction above, digital media is coming whether you like it or not. With these advancements will come a lot of good things. We have already seen many examples of the usefulness it can have at major events and the coverage it supplies for folks to consume in real time. As is so often the case with any instance where human nature is involved, the lines of what is right and wrong will get blurred. Recently the trend is to pull out the cell phone and start recording situations that arise in the woods. As we can tell watching mainstream news outlets, leaving out context to the videos can

oftentimes shape the narrative one way or another. What led up to this point? How was it resolved after the camera stopped rolling? This can lead to people jumping to conclusions.

So, is pulling out your phone in a cast and recording something that UKC can police? In ways, yes. If you refer to the Rulebook, you will find a couple instances where the limitation on cell phone use can come into play. You can't use one as a scoring aid, per Rule 6(r) which tells us that the only scoring aids that are permitted are your light, mechanical squaller, and laser point light. Using the phone camera as a scoring aid is a scratchable offense. If you check out Rule 8(f) you will see a rule that reads, *Relaying any type of electronic messaging with reference to scores, that is deemed detrimental to the hunt, may result in suspension.* Not only does this limit the information you can share via your phone, but it brings about a much harsher penalty than just scratching as it mentions possible suspension, depending on the circumstances.

To answer the question, no, there is not a rule in place that would scratch a handler for taping an incident in the woods. Could that type of behavior have other implications for possible disciplinary actions? Possibly depending on the situation. One thing I'm certain of is that I would stray away from it. I don't have a law degree and a quick Google search didn't give me a yes/no answer on the legalities of taping someone without their permission. I just know that if I were going to do so, I would be well versed on the subject. Sometimes getting scratched from a coon hunt is the least of your worries.

Calling Timeout

Q: On a hunt this past weekend, we were getting towards the end of hunt time, and no one had any plus points on the scorecard. The dogs had been beating and banging in the woods we were in, and the cast was wanting to call timeout, catch dogs, and move locations. The issue was the dogs were struck in. In this instance if you called time out, what would you do with the strike points?

A: According to the Rulebook, there are five instances listed where a time out may be called. For the sake of clarity, let's just list them here: a) *When dogs are getting on highway, trail onto posted land or trail into a place where there is danger to dogs or hunters.* b) *If dogs get with another group of dogs.* c) *In case of accident or sickness.* d) *When dog(s) are trailing out of hearing in different directions.* e) *After scoring dog(s) on tree and all remaining dogs are either on leash or declared treed, and cast decides to move to new location after all trees are scored, time out may be called walking to remaining trees with scored dogs on leash. Hunt time shall be back in during shining time of each tree. If dog leaves tree, time shall be called back in and dogs on leash recast.*

This is a broad array of instances and I think it's safe to say that it covers most instances where a time out would

NEED to be called. If this had been a situation where you needed to call a time out and wrangle up dogs basing it on them being in some sort of danger, you would delete the strike points and gather the dogs per Rule 5(f). In the instance above, it doesn't sound like it meets any of the criteria listed in Rule 7 to call time out. I'm not naïve enough to think that this rule doesn't get stretched and abused. But if you are going to pick up dogs that are struck in, citing time out being called but not meeting one of the criteria for a time out to be called, you would need to minus the dogs' strike points. We'll refer to Rule 4(c) for that interpretation which reads, *Strike points minus for calling dogs off trail.*

It takes a majority of the cast with a hunting judge to make the decision to call the time out, so vote responsibly. Make it a point to find out why the time out is being called and if it is worthy of your vote for calling timeout.


Dogs Treed Before Timeout

Keeping that same train of thought, lets revisit a column from almost exactly a year ago that instructs you what to do with dogs that are not just struck in but also treed in at the time of a time out being called.

Q: I was on a hunt recently where dogs were getting out of pocket quickly. In the process of them doing so, one hound was declared treed. Another member of the cast suggested a timeout be called to round up dogs, as they were getting out of hearing in opposite directions and leaving the ground we had permission to hunt. Following a 3-1 vote, time out was called, and all strike and tree points were deleted. The guy with the dog treed, voted against the time out and was pretty upset with the call, considering he didn't get to score his dog. Did we get the call right in this situation?

A: This is a good question and one that it seems like the

bulk of the hunters get wrong. While I understand some of the confusion due to the wording in Rule 5(g) which says to delete points, *If Judge has to call time out in accordance with Rule 7*, there is further clarification in Rule 11(a). That line reads, *Dogs declared treed within hunting time are eligible for scoring.*

Rule 11 is tucked in the end of the nite hunt rules and is **essential**. The four bullet points under that section include information and clarifications for many key situations. In this situation, the treed dog was declared treed within hunting time and is absolutely eligible to have his tree scored. As a matter of fact, every effort needs to be made to score that tree. Hunt time should be called in while shining and scoring the dog's tree and immediately called out once again when shine time has concluded. The other dogs in the cast, assuming they had been struck in, would have their strike points deleted. 

Attention!

The following person's Nite Hunt Director and Nite Hunt Judging privileges have been suspended until the date listed.

Darrel Barker • Rockford, IL

Scott Johnson • Monroe, WI

October 19, 2022

Justin Crockett • Senatobia, MS

May 1, 2024

Violations to these privileges should be reported to the United Kennel Club.

Rev. 5/2/2022