

COONHOUND ADVISOR

Trevor Wade

Happy New Year! Hopefully you all had an enjoyable holiday season with your family, friends and hounds. I know I sure had a blast with mine, enjoying good food, memories and down time. One of my favorite new holiday traditions is spending hours and money on thoughtful gifts for my almost two-year old daughter, just for her to throw the present down and play with the wrapping paper and boxes it was wrapped in. Makes you wonder if we have this all a little backwards.

With your December issue of Coonhound Bloodlines, you should have received the updated version of the Official Coonhound Rulebook. A PDF version can be downloaded on our website at ukcdogs.com/coonhound-rules-forms. Also, on that link, you will find copies that are available for purchase. As always, UKC will have a couple boxes available at any major coonhound events we attend this year, so make sure to make a stop by the table to say hello and pick up your copy.

Maybe in your travel time or, for some of you, your extra time off, you had time to look through the rulebook and get acquainted with the new rules. I know there are several new rules to soak in this year but don't be overwhelmed. Take your time and read it a few times, refer to the last couple of advisor columns and don't be afraid to ask questions. It is a new transition for us all, but we feel like the rules that have been put into place will continue moving the world of competition coonhound events in a positive direction. Keep in mind that UKC will be doing a rules seminar at Grand American this year on Friday, January 3rd at 2:30 PM.

Title Multipliers

Much like last year when the nite hunt title multipliers went into effect, this year's implementation of the bench show, water race and field trial multipliers have left people with questions on how far back UKC will go to count Grand Champion wins in these events. To remain uniform throughout, UKC will be going back 10 years to do so. Any dog born in 2010 or later will be eligible to have their previous wins processed. This is to ensure that all dogs that are currently competing will be up to date on their degree and aware of what multiplier title they are working towards. Please keep in mind that we are talking about thousands of dogs so the processing on these back dated wins could take a few months to sort out. That doesn't mean that you can't compete and earn wins towards multiplier titles right away, it just means that it may take a little bit to catch up.

Fighting Dogs on Leash

Q: Here is a scenario that I had a question about pertaining to the new fighting rule. Dog A is declared treed. We head into the tree, leash Dog A to a nearby tree and start shine time. Shortly thereafter, Dog B comes into Dog A and Dog A grabs a hold of Dog B and pins it to the ground. Is Dog A protected in this situation?

A: Under the parameters of the new fighting rule, 6(b), Dog A is protected in this scenario as it is leashed. There are really two different ways for the above scenario to play out.

1.) Dog A is determined to be the aggressor. This would result in neither dog being penalized as you can't scratch a

leashed dog for being in a scuffle and you can't fault Dog B because it was determined not to be the aggressor.

2.) Dog B is determined to be the aggressor. This would result in Dog A still being protected as it is on the leash and obviously the innocent party in the fight, and Dog B being scratched for being off the leash and being determined as the aggressor.

This is a rare occurrence and it won't become anymore commonplace in the hunts as it was before the new terminology entered the rulebook. Just keep in mind that the fact that a hound is off the leash instigates a fight with a leashed dog, it doesn't protect it from being scratched if it is determined to be the aggressor.

Plott Hound Color

There has been a change in the color portion of the breed standard for the Plott Hound in the latest rule update that will go into effect in 2020. Solid black and buckskin Plott Hounds are now permitted to show in UKC licensed bench show events. In the updated version, the terms yellow brindle, red brindle, tan brindle, brown brindle and maltese (slate grey, blue brindle) were left out of the description. Now, you will see the terminology, *any shade of brindle*, which we consider to be all encompassing. No existing allowed color combinations were eliminated with the update of the rule.

I Don't Want to Hear It!

For this section, let's revisit an article that Allen wrote for the November 2015 issue of Coonhound Bloodlines regarding questioning procedures. In my first few months here, I have found that people not following the correct procedures is one of the biggest issues when getting conflicts resolved. Not only are the hunters and officials required to adhere to the procedures in the rulebook but UKC is as well. Don't tie our hands by trying to shortcut or forgo the correct steps.

Now let's look at what Allen had to say:

A phone call came in this week, and the caller wished to relay a couple situations that happened at recent hunts. One of these situations sounded all too familiar and I thought some of our Master of Hounds and most of our competitors would benefit from a quick discussion of this topic. The topic being, Masters of Hounds who refuse to listen to questions brought back into them.

This is a touchy subject for sure. I believe that there are times when a Master of Hounds can politely and tactfully instruct the cast that they "have no question." A handler wishing to question a call that was made, or a call that should have been made but wasn't, must follow a certain procedure to do so. As most of you know, the call must be questioned at the time a decision is made, and it must be voted on by all cast members. It takes a majority of cast decision to overturn a hunting Judge (**exception: new babbling rule in which a tied vote can delete strike points, Rule 2(b)**). If the complainant is still not satisfied, he must see that a question mark is placed on the card. If the questioning procedure is not properly followed, I maintain that a Master of Hounds could explain that because the procedure for dealing with questions was not followed, his hands are tied and he cannot issue a decision that will affect the outcome of the cast.

Handlers have a basic responsibility of knowing the Nite Hunt Honor Rules as they apply to questioning the call of a hunting judge. So too must they know the procedure for questioning the decision of a Master of Hounds. Once a Master of Hounds makes

it perfectly clear that he may not render a decision that will change the outcome of the cast, it's up to him whether he listens to the question to attempt to "help" or "educate" those in the cast.

It happens all the time in my job with UKC Field Operations. Every day the phone rings and a handler tells me that he would like to ask a question regarding a hunt in which he recently participated. The first thing I generally ask is, "Was there an Appeal filed on this matter." If the answer is no, I make it very clear that while I would be happy to listen to their account of the situation, I will not be able to make any changes that affect the outcome of the hunt. In most cases, the handler is fine with that and just wants to be heard. Sometimes the satisfaction of knowing whether or not they were right or wrong is worth more than whatever placement they may have earned at the hunt.

As Master of Hounds you can do the same thing provided that you are not totally backed up with other casts coming in at the same time. Make it clear that because the procedure for asking a question was not followed, that you won't be able to change anything. Perhaps at this time you instruct the handler on the proper procedure for questioning a call. You might also agree to listen to the question to try to help interested cast members better understand the rules for dealing with the situation at hand. Not all of these questions are life-or-death, first-place-win matters. (Some of them are though, so use good judgment.)

Let's say that handler A follows all procedures and still disagrees with the decision of the hunting judge (handler B) and the rest of the cast members. Handler A asks the Judge to put a question mark on the card so that he can bring it up to the Master of Hounds. Upon returning to the clubhouse, the Master of Hounds says, "I don't want to hear it. You're supposed to settle this type of question in the woods. No question." Sound familiar? Is this an acceptable response from the Master of Hounds?

The answer is no, this is not an acceptable response from the Master of Hounds. The Master of Hounds has an obligation to politely listen to and issue a ruling on all questions that are procedurally, properly, asked. I've listened to many a MOH start off their pre-hunt speech with remarks pertaining to handling questions in the woods. It is a good reminder for a Master of Hounds to make. It's necessary for the cast to make decisions in the woods. However, a Master of Hounds should never take that so far as to think that they have the authority to decide which questions they will listen to and which ones they won't. The bottom line is, if the procedure for asking the question is followed right to the "T", then the MOH must listen to the question and render a decision no matter how insignificant the question may seem. It's one of the very basic rights of a handler in an event; the right to take a question back to the Master of Hounds. I agree that some of those judgment questions are hard to answer from behind a Master of Hounds desk, but you have to listen to everyone and make the best decision you can.



Attention!

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

Timmy Murrell • Booneville, Kentucky
Indefinite

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

Rev. 6/4/18

**UKC® Disciplinary Action
 Committee Report**

- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Brian William of Chillicothe, OH, threatened and intimidated at an event. DAC Action – Suspended indefinitely.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Manson Tarbin of Hattiesburg, MS, failed to comply with a UKC investigation. DAC Action – Suspended until November 26, 2021.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Jose Homberto Zapata of Hattiesburg, MS, failed to comply with a UKC investigation. DAC Action – Suspended until November 26, 2021.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Markella Porter of Chattanooga, TN, failed to comply with a UKC investigation. DAC Action – Suspended until November 27, 2021.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Elliott West of Dallas, TX, failed to comply with a UKC investigation. DAC Action – Suspended until November 27, 2021.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that James Smith of Fort Worth, TX, failed to comply with a UKC investigation. DAC Action – Suspended until November 27, 2021.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Diane Kowalczyk of Lebanon, MO, exhibited conduct unbecoming of a UKC official. DAC Action – Suspended until November 27, 2021.

Rev. 11/27/19

*The UKC Notice of Suspension list can be found at
www.ukcdogs.com/suspension*