

PKC OFFICIAL BEAGLE HUNT RULES

(Hound and Hunter Format)

1. DEFINITIONS:

- a. **Professional Kennel Club, Inc.**, referred to as PKC, will license all events, keep record of winnings, issue championship degrees, and World Championship and Futurity qualification. PKC will have no responsibility for accounting for and disbursing of proceeds, appointing Judges, or determining winners of events. PKC reserves the right to withhold recognition of winners and may decline to license a club for future events at its sole discretion. PKC reserves the right to appoint a member of PKC management to serve as Hunt Director and/or manage any event it deems necessary.
- b. **Sponsoring Club:** The sponsoring club will be a club, national, breed, or state association licensed by PKC to conduct events. The club will have complete authority to conduct events, determine winners and disburse awards. The club will appoint a certified Hunt Director who will have full authority over the event. The club will rule on all questions concerning an event, including rule interpretation and disciplinary action of members. The National Association and PKC shall have the authority to correct gross errors by clubs at its discretion. A club may be licensed to hold PKC Beagle Events for the annual fee of \$75.00. The license period is October 1st to September 30th. The club may be licensed for a single event for \$25.00.
- c. **Guide:** The Guide will be a responsible person who is an active rabbit hunter and is able to keep the cast in the best possible hunting grounds. Person shall be able to guide cast without assistance from another individual. Clubs should provide "hunting guides" from the local area if at all possible. If there are not enough hunting guides entered in the event, non-hunting guides will be used. The casting ground should be an area where the cast can compete safely.

2. PARTICIPANTS.

- a. **Membership requirement:** Owners and handlers of dogs participating in PKC Licensed Beagle events must be current members (or be a guest of PKC) in good standing. It is the owner and/or handler's responsibility to know the rules contained herein and to abide by them. The owner and/or handler also agree to accept and abide by the decision of the Judge and the Hunt Director. Handlers only will be responsible for bringing formal questions and appeals to the Hunt Director.
- b. **Guest Hunters:** Guest hunters shall be permitted to enter \$10 and \$15 Open Events and "Try One" hunts only. A person may enter only three (3) events as a "Guest Hunter" and awards will not count toward any qualification or standing. A club may refuse the entry of a guest hunter at its discretion. Guest hunters may not vote concerning the question to split or to recast for placement. Indicate "Guest" in places for PKC number of dog and Membership number of owner and/or handler. **Special note: In all Open Events, owner and handler must be current members, and dog must be PKC registered in order for credit to be given.**
- c. **Scorecard Certification:** Any cast considered for placement in an event must have the signature of a majority of the cast members certifying it to be accurate. All casts must be completed with at least three (3) members to certify the scorecard. The Hunt Director may sign the card on behalf of a handler if a question is brought before a panel. Hunt Director may also sign on behalf of any handler who has not signed a scorecard due to negligence.

3. HUNT RULES:

- a. All casts must hunt a full 120 minutes. Winners Cast will hunt 60 or 120 minutes (club option.) All members of Winners Cast must agree to split, otherwise Winners Cast will be hunted off.
- b. Time deadline for return of scorecards will be posted at the club and on the scorecards before the first cast is drawn. At no time shall more than four (4) hours be allotted to complete a one (1) hour hunt or five (5) hours to complete a two (2) hour hunt. PKC reserves the right to extend the time allotment for the deadline at major events. Hunts consist of 4-dog casts. Three (3) dog casts will be run in odd number situations only.

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- c. After all judges have been pasted to the cards, judges will draw their own casts. Casts will be drawn from all remaining entries placed face down on a table. Judge should draw for a Guide (if needed) and check for multiple entries at the time the card is drawn. Casts will be drawn by judges in plain view of all. Judge's authority begins when the card is drawn and ends when it is turned in to the Hunt Director.
4. **SCORING SYSTEM:**
- a. Strike: 100 points to the 1st dog that opens, 75 2nd, 50 3rd, 25 4th. If a dog is turned in on track, dog gets next available position. If all positions are taken dog gets 25 points. Dog turned in cannot be struck in over a position already being held. Dog must open to be declared struck.
 - b. Speed and Drive: 100 points to the 1st dog that crosses the designated line, 75 2nd, 50 3rd, 25 4th. Line should be specified as to placement and width before the dogs cross said line. 1st line of a run can be made and scored after the track has been open one (1) minute. After 1st line is scored or closed ("Scored" is defined as all dogs in the cast score the line. "Closed" is defined as a one (1) minute period after the 1st dog scores the line.) Next line cannot be made until after a period of two (2) minutes has elapsed. A line is also declared closed at the moment that the cast chooses to abandon a line that has not yet been scored. No line can be scored after it is declared closed. Rabbit can be scored three (3) times only, then dogs must be caught and recast.
 - c. In all scoring situations where points cannot be positively determined, positions/scores will be split.
5. **POINTS WILL BE PLUS:**
- a. When dogs strike and rabbit is lined. Strike points become plus when dog(s) score a line. Majority of cast must be present when dog(s) are scored on line. Dog must score at least one (1) line on that track for its strike points to be plus. If dog scores no lines, its strike points are deleted. Dog must participate in majority of chase to be eligible to score a line (majority cast decision.)
 - b. One set of strike points. In case of a split track the first line is scored, and the dog(s) will be caught and turned in with the other track that is running. When handlers are catching their dogs after scoring a split track, they should not call to the dogs in a manner that will interfere with the dogs that are running.
 - c. If rabbit is jumped and seen but reaches refuge before line can be scored, strike points will be plus. (Majority cast decision.)
 - d. If rabbit that is jumped is seen and time runs out before a line can be scored, strike points will be plus. (Majority cast decision.)
6. **POINTS WILL BE MINUS:**
- a. When reasonable forward progress is not made within a three (3) minute period after dogs have been declared struck. Reasonable forward progress is defined as a track that is run-able by majority of the pack or is a defined track or trail. Milling around a junk pile, place of refuge, or not making progress from the area of strike will not be considered a defined strike and points will be minus. Dogs are responsible for the points for which they were declared struck (Majority cast decision).
 - b. If all dogs quit a track that is being worked, each dog declared struck to receive 50 minus points.
 - c. **Calling a dog that has not opened.** Should any handler call his dog that has not opened or calls another handler's dog, the Judge will award points called and minus them. These points will then be opened for all handlers. The handler will immediately notify the Judge when he believes his dog has been struck by another handler.
 - d. **Failure to call dog.** When Judge has determined that a dog has opened three (3) times after the first minute, he will ask for a call. If Handler fails to call the dog struck on the next bark, Judge will award next available points and minus them. If the dog

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continues to open he must be struck after the next three (3) barks or minus process repeated.

- e. **Babbling.** Any handler calling strike while his dog is false barking will be minused. On second offence, refer to Rule 10 (B).

7. CIRCLE POINTS:

- a. If trail ends at place of refuge and rabbit has not been seen (majority cast decision).
- b. Dog(s) are trailing, time runs out, and rabbit has not been seen.
- c. If judge calls a time out and rabbit has not been seen.

8. DELETE POINTS:

- a. When majority of cast decision cannot be reached. Deleted points may not be used in any way to determine the outcome of a cast (unless ruled by panel).

9. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- a. All decisions are to be made by the judge without any pressure from cast members. Once judge has made a decision, the cast may vote, in situations where majority decision is specified. Majority of cast vote overrules decision if it applies. In cast that dictates the scratching of a dog, the judge makes the decision unless otherwise specified.
- b. If a handler wants to place a question, the handler will ask the judge to question the call at the time the call is made. Before the judge places the question on the card he will, first, have the handler sign the IOU provided on the back of the scorecard. No calls/scores will be allowed to be questioned once dogs are recast. If the IOU is signed, the fee must be paid even if the question is dropped.
- c. Dogs, not hunters/handlers, are to search for rabbits.
- d. **Entry Refusal.** PKC or sponsoring club has the right to refuse entry to any dog or handler. However, no handler will be barred on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, or physical impairment. Any handler denied entry must be given a hearing if it is requested in writing in order for entry to be refused.
- e. **Signing Scorecard:** Each Handler is responsible for the honesty of the scorecard and will sign the scorecard certifying it upon completion of the cast. A member who believes that the scoring of a cast is drastically wrong and cannot be corrected by bringing a question must notify the other cast members and sign the scorecard in the gray area at the time the situation is scored to disqualify the cast. In a four-(4) dog cast, two (2) cast members must sign the scorecard in the gray to disqualify the cast. In a three-(3) dog cast, one (1) member must sign the gray area to disqualify the cast. This cast will not be considered for placement, and the signing in the gray cannot be questioned. However, other cast members who believe the cast member(s) signing the gray to disqualify the cast did not have a legitimate reason for doing so may file misconduct charges against that member(s). If the cast is completed when a cast member signs the scorecard in the gray area, any other cast member(s) may question the signing in the gray. Hunt Director will appoint a panel to hear the reason for disqualification and the panel may reinstate the cast if the handler did not have a justifiable reason for signing the gray. PKC reserves the right to review any scorecard submitted with signature(s) in the gray area, for possible misconduct charges against any and/or all members of the cast.
- f. At least three (3) members of the cast must finish the hunt in order for the cast to be considered valid. In 3-dog casts, all three (3) cast members must finish the cast. **Should any cast become less than a three (3) dog cast, the Hunt Director or a member of PKC management must be contacted to determine who can serve as the required voting member(s) of the cast.** The recruited member or qualified hunter becomes a voting member of the cast in majority of the cast decisions.

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- g. On the final score of a scorecard, a dog with a score of zero cannot advance in the hunt if it does not show any hunt activity on the scorecard. (Hunt activity is defined as plus, minus, circle, or deleted points.)
10. **TIME OUTS:** Time outs may be called by the Judge for the following reasons:
- If new ground is needed to finish the cast.
 - In case of sickness or accident.
 - If cast gets lost or separated. It is the hunter's responsibility to return to the clubhouse if he becomes lost or separated from the cast.
 - When dog(s) are trailing out of hearing or pack splits out of hearing.
 - If extra dog(s) are picked up by the cast.
 - If dog(s) trail onto posted land.
 - Any cast member may call time out if dogs are in danger by running close to a roadway.
 - Strike points that are not plus when time out is called will be deleted.
 - Handler calling time out to avoid minus points or to gain a better standing in the cast, will be scratched immediately.
11. **DOGS WILL BE SCRATCHED:**
- Dog(s) or handler(s) will be scratched for interfering with another dog's or handler's ability to compete. Dog(s) or handler(s) should be scratched as a last resort. Every effort should be made to allow dogs and handlers to compete. Reasons to scratch are as follows:
- Fighting with other dog(s) or biting humans.** A dog with his or her hackles up, growling and fussing may be scratched. Judge may issue a warning to the handler of a dog he suspects is causing trouble without scratching the dog. In any subsequent altercation where the aggressive dog is not known, the dog under warning shall be scratched with the other dog(s) involved being permitted to remain in the cast under warning. No Handler will be allowed to withdraw his dog to avoid being "scratched for fighting." Any cast member(s) found guilty of allowing another member to withdraw to avoid being scratched for fighting may be subject to disciplinary actions. A dog may be scratched by the Judge and one (1) other cast member or majority of the cast. No dog should be scratched for fighting while under the control of his handler (on leash, in the truck, etc.) or because of another dog previously scratched or withdrawn but not handled.
- Any time a dog is scratched for fighting, the scratch shall remain on the dog's record for one (1) year from the date of the scratch. Any dog scratched three (3) times within any fiscal year will be suspended for life. Dogs that have been scratched two (2) times may be published in PROHOUND. Handlers with dogs that have been scratched for fighting two (2) times cannot be used as judges. Any handler may report a fighting dog even if the dog is not caught and scratched. These reports will be taken into consideration should there be a hearing. A Handler has the right to request a hearing before a Hunt Director panel to determine which dogs of the cast are charged with a scratch, through the normal question procedure. Owner or handler may request a hearing by the National Association under the normal appeal process only after the normal question procedure at the club level has been exhausted, and the request for an appeal is received within thirty (3) days of the dog being scratched. An appeal deposit of \$100 must be received at the time the written request for the appeal is received. Should the panel rule in favor of the appeal, the deposit will be returned and records changed to reflect the panel's decision. However, should the panel not rule in favor of the appeal, the deposit will be forfeited to PKC.
- Babbling.** Opening where no track is evident after the first minute of the cast. When any dog continues to open off track to the point of interfering with the work of other hounds. This is not intended to include the dog that opens a few times off the chain, then goes on hunting as he should. Any hound determined to be babbling after the first

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minute of the cast must be scratched on the second offense. Any handler calling strike while his dog is false barking will be minused on first offense.

- c. **Fifteen minute rule.** Dogs failing to go hunting during any fifteen (15) minute period of hunting time will be scratched. The handler has the right to walk any dog not hunting in the direction the guide wishes to hunt. A dog must be gone for five (5) minutes to be considered hunting, unless the hunt expires. At anytime a dog is called struck that has opened, the fifteen (15) minute rule will be dropped/stopped/broken.
- d. Molesting stock.
- e. **Sexual Behavior.** Females smelling strong enough to attract male dogs, or any dog exhibiting sexual behavior instead of hunting during the progress of the cast may be scratched. If it is not possible to determine which dog is responsible for the behavior, both may be scratched. Any owner/handler found guilty of altering by any means, the scent of a female may be subject to disciplinary action.
- f. For delaying the cast for fifteen (15) minutes after time out is called.
- g. Running off game anytime during the hunt. Off game doesn't need to be seen to scratch dog(s). Dog(s) scratched for running fox, coyote, or deer will be reported to PKC. Dogs scratched three (3) times within one (1) year will be barred for one (1) year.
- h. Using a tracking device during the hunt. (These can be used during timeouts to recover dogs.) Training collars or dummy collars may be worn but activated only after hunting time is complete.
- i. Returning the scorecard after the posted deadline.
- j. Striking another handler's dog (second offense).
- k. Quitting a working track (second offense).
- l. Back tracking (second offense). Dog is to be warned on first offense.
- m. If handler scolds or discourages dog without permission from the judge.
- n. Any cast member that will not cast his vote concerning a question will be scratched from the cast.
- o. **Handler Misconduct.** Any handler becoming unreasonable, aggressive or presenting his ideas in a forceful manner may be scratched. The decision is final and cannot be questioned. Any handler continuing to be abusive will be reported to a disciplinary committee.
- p. **Unsolicited Advice.** Any handler offering unsolicited advice to a Judge concerning the scoring of dogs while he is considering his call may be scratched on second offense. Judge must warn handler on first offense, and scratch on second offense. Judge must be free to make his decision concerning scoring of dogs without being under pressure from handler to make a certain call. Any handler is free to question judge's decision after he has made his call according to question rules. He may question a Judge who has not made a call that should have been made.
- q. **Signing scorecard.** All cast members should sign scorecard, however, it is not mandatory. Any handler who feels that the scorecard is not correct should make a note in the appropriate place on the back of the card of the reason, sign his comments, and sign on the shaded side. Any cast considered for placement in an event must have the signature of a majority of the cast members certifying it to be accurate. All casts must be completed with at least three (3) members to certify the scorecard. The Hunt Director may sign the card on behalf of a handler if a question is brought before a Hunt Director's panel. Hunt Director may also sign on behalf of any handler who has not signed a scorecard due to negligence.
- r. **Signing Fraudulent Scorecard.** Any handler found to have signed a fraudulent scorecard may be suspended from all PKC activities, fined, placed on probation, and/or barred for life from registering dogs.

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- s. **Handler Leaving Cast.** A handler may not leave the cast for any reason except as directed by the Judge. The Judge may give a handler permission to leave the cast to search for his dog during time-out.

12. HANDLERS:

It is the handler's responsibility to know his dog, its voice and the PKC Beagle Hunt Rules. Handlers have the right to withdraw their dog anytime during the cast without reason. However, if the dog is withdrawn, the handler forfeits all awards affixed to that cast and will be required to remain with the cast unless permission to leave the cast is granted by all remaining cast members. Handlers are to present themselves in an orderly fashion at all times. Handlers have the right to sign the scorecard in the gray area. It is the handler's responsibility to make sure that the score is correct and that they have signed the scorecard in the correct area.

13. JUDGES:

- a. The club should pick judges that they feel best represent the PKC beagling sport. They should be honest and of good reputation. If the judge withdraws his dog, he can elect to continue judging the cast or turn the card over to another cast member and may be required to remain with the cast unless permission to leave the cast is granted by all remaining cast members. Before the card is turned over, the time and score will be tallied (time out should be called for this) and signed by the resigning judge. The incoming judge has no authority over the part of the hunt that has been conducted prior to his becoming judge. The judge will **always** inform the cast members of the following:
 - (1) placing time on a dog, when one (1) minute has elapsed after the dogs have been released the first time,
 - (2) when track is deemed to be finished after three (3) minutes has elapsed,
 - (3) the score of each handler on strike and line when score is made,
 - (4) when giving warning to a handler or dog (warnings should be made with everyone present)
 - (5) when timeout is called,
 - (6) if the scorecard has been signed in the gray area, and
 - (7) of any questions that are placed on the card.
- b. Judge must declare when strikes are open and closed. Strikes should only be called closed when dog(s) are being called in for re-casting. If rabbit is jumped when strikes are closed, the cast can decide if that track should be run and strike points will be split (majority cast decision). Judge must also declare when a line is declared closed or dead.

14. HUNT DIRECTOR:

The Hunt Director will be appointed by the local club and will be in charge of the hunt. The responsibilities of the Hunt Director are as follows:

- a. Post scorecard deadline
- b. Read Hunt Director's Checklist prior to drawing casts.
- c. Receive scorecards and record return times.
- d. Select a panel for ruling on questions, prior to sending casts to the field if possible. (Select four.)
- e. Keep official hunt clock in plain view of all.
- f. Measure any dog if challenged by an owner or handler. When cast is called, dogs must be presented at staging area and measured if challenged by any member of cast. Dogs measuring more than 15 inches will be scratched. Once a dog is measured, it may not be measured again at the same event. Hunt Director's measurement is final.
- g. Make sure entry deadline is observed.

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- h. Fill out Hunt Director's Report and send to PKC along with Certificates of Earnings and proper fees.
- i. Verify that dogs are registered and that hunters and judges are current members of PKC in good standing. The Hunt Director may appoint individuals to help with taking entries, posting scores, measuring dogs, etc.
- j. Appoint judges, guides, and an Assistant Hunt Director.
- k. The Hunt Director may enter a dog in the hunt in which he is Hunt Director. If a question should arise in his cast, the Assistant Hunt Director will appoint the panel to hear the question. The Hunt Director's authority ends when a panel hearing begins. The Hunt Director will announce the final decision of the panel.

15. QUESTIONS

- a. **Proper Procedure for Question** - Any handler has the right to question the scoring of any dog in the cast. Questions must be placed on the card at the time the dog is scored or should be scored. Questions must be submitted to the remaining cast members and resolved by a majority vote. If a handler is unsatisfied with the majority decision, that decision may be appealed to the Hunt Director to be heard, after the cast is finished, by placing a deposit of \$25. The deposit must be placed with the Judge in the field at the time of the question. The deposit will not be refunded later in the cast if the handler changes his mind. However, the handler may choose to drop the question and forfeit the deposit at the end of the cast if it is agreeable with all cast members. Handler may sign an IOU on the back of scorecard, which must be paid before question is heard. No deposit is required when cast has voted but does not have a majority.
- b. **Question Presentation** - A cast should not return to the clubhouse to have a question heard until hunting time is completed, unless the question pertains to a dog or handler being scratched from the cast.
- c. **Panel Hearing** - The Hunt Director will assemble a panel of three (3) qualified people to hear the question. If the panel finds in favor of the question, the deposit will be returned and the scorecard changed to reflect the change. If the panel finds against the question, the deposit will be forfeited to the club.
- d. **Panel Appeal** - Any cast member that believes a panel has made a gross misapplication of a rule, may request an appeal of the panel's decision, if and only if he can quote the specific rule violation to the Hunt Director or PKC Representative immediately following the rendering of the panel's decision, and by placing a deposit of \$100 with the panel at that time. When, and only when, an appeals panel overturns the original panel's decision will the appeal deposit be returned.

16. STANDARDS:

- a. All dogs must be of the Beagle breed.
- b. All dogs must be 15" or less when measured at the withers.
- c. All dogs must be PKC registered to compete in PKC events. However, a hunter may pay an entry fee and compete as a guest in a \$15 Open Event or a "Try One" hunt only. However, any awards earned by guest hunter will not count for the dog or handler. The guest handler may not vote concerning question to split or hunt for first. **A person or dog may compete as a "guest" in a maximum of three (3) events.**

17. SCORE:

- a. A dog's score is determined by subtracting its total minus points from its total plus points. Dog with the most plus points or least minus points after subtracting, is the cast winner.
- b. If cast ends in a tie, it will be broken to determine the cast winner; most strike points, least minus points, most line points, most circle points. If still tied, dogs that are tied will hunt off in 15-minute overtime periods. Only two (2) overtime periods are allowed

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(except in winner's cast). If still tied, winner is determined by coin toss. Winner's cast cannot end in a tie.

- c. Order of placement in a cast will be determined as follows: most plus points, total score of zero [See Rule 8 (g)], least minus points, most circle points.

18. WINNERS:

Winners will be determined as follows:

- a. The top four (4) cast winners will be advanced to the Winner's Cast. Handler and dog must be present when winner's cast is announced.
- b. No cast, dog, handler, or owner that has been scratched from the hunt will be eligible for any placement in that hunt.
- c. All payments for placements in a PKC event will be paid to the owner of the dog. If the owner is not present the payment will be made to the handler. Any agreement concerning monetary awards between the owner and handler are between them and them alone. PKC will not hear complaints nor be responsible for any part of these agreements.

19. NON-HUNTING JUDGES:

Non-hunting judge(s) will be used to judge Winner's Cast.

20. **HOLD HARMLESS CLAUSE:** By your entry in a PKC event you agree to hold PKC, PKC National Association, the Club, the Judge, Guide, and Hunt Director harmless in the event of accident, error, or misapplication of the rules. Any owner or handler may file a written complaint concerning actions of the sponsoring club. PKC will investigate the complaint and take necessary action, including but not limited to withholding recognition of winners, and/or refusing to license the club for future events.

21. **GOOD JUDGMENT:** These rules are written and intended to identify and reward the hound that hunts, strikes, jumps, and runs a rabbit better than the other hounds in his cast according to the guidelines within these rules. At times it will be necessary to use good judgment rather than a literal interpretation of these rules toward this end. It is within the scope of these rules for the Judge and/or Master of Hounds (panel) to rule on a situation not specifically covered in detail by these rules.

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