

# SUPER STAKES SHOULD BE A LOT MORE FUN!!

*Jarvis Umphers*

All of us are continually looking for that outstanding young pup. The younger the better and we have all seen 12 month to 18 month old pups go to a pro hunt and compete with the best old dogs in the land. But; we all know that this is a once-in-a-lifetime deal. If you have been following the PKC pup events through the years you know that one-year-olds do not usually beat two-year-olds. Isn't that the reason we separated the two age groups in the Futurity a few years ago? For many years they all ran together in the Futurity and you could just depend on seeing at least 80% of the winners in the older group.

During the last years we all have seen promising young dogs burned out and become worthless for competition hounds before they were three years old. We are pushing them every night to get that elusive truck ticket, a place in the standing and qualified for the Super Stakes and the World. Not only do they need to get deep quickly they must forget what all the other dogs are doing and go alone to get it done. Dogs were born as a "pack animal" and although they may have been hunted alone a lot they still have that desire to be a part of what the other dogs are doing. Many times, what the others are doing is not something a handler wants his dog doing.

Beginning with the '08 model pups, the rules have changed a little and another year of eligibility has been added. Hopefully handlers will no longer have to push a promising young dog for all he is worth and run the risk of burning him out. With the new rules we can allow a young dog to progress more naturally and correct faults at a slower pace and arrive with a better-finished dog. The new rules allow a young dog to be a "pup" longer and develop more naturally. Some of the improvements are:

**SOPHOMORE SUPER STAKES:** A pup has until he is almost two years old to compete in the Baby Stakes. For example; a fall '08 pup (born between Nov 1, 2007 and Apr 30, 2008) would compete as a Baby Stakes in October of 2009. He would have to earn \$100 in PKC awards to qualify to enter. This is the same time frame that a pup would compete in his Junior Super Stakes under the old format. This should give a pup plenty of time to develop as a hound and be ready to compete at a pretty high level. Since he only needs \$100 to qualify, there will be no reason to have to push him in the hunts.

**JUNIOR SUPER STAKES:** This pup has until he is almost three years old to compete in his Junior Super Stakes. This same pup referenced above will compete in his Junior year in October of 2010 and he will have to earn a total of \$250 in PKC awards to qualify to enter. This is another change from the past and we are trying to get everyone aware of the change. In the past the same \$100 qualified a pup for all parts of the Super Stakes.

**SENIOR SUPER STAKES:** This pup has until he is almost four years old to compete in his final Super Stakes year. He will compete in his Senior year in October of 2011, and he will need to have earned a minimum of \$500 in PKC awards.

The increase in the amount needed to qualify for the Junior and Senior should go a long ways toward improving the quality of the dogs entered into the championship. This should also help our clubs some in drawing dogs as well as keep these pups active in the events. We also believe that \$250 and \$500 is a small amount to earn to insure that the pups entered into the Super Stakes Championship are quality hounds. This should be true even for dogs in areas where there are not a lot of clubs.

I know this represents a change in the way we have always conducted our Super Stakes and getting the word out is sometimes a challenge. Just remember:

Sophomore Super Stakes .....Just before two years old  
Junior Super Stakes.....Just before three years old  
Senior Super Stakes .....Just before four years old

## TO QUALIFY:

Sophomore Super Stakes .....Earn \$100  
Junior Super Stakes .....Earn \$250  
Senior Super Stakes .....Earn \$500