

Get a Truck Ticket in \$25 Hunts????

By Jarvis Umphers

Yes! Yes! Now you can get a truck ticket without having to drive all over the country. Getting a truck ticket in either the Pup or Senior Division has been an exercise in driving for the last few years. Those lucky (or unlucky) enough to get a good win at the beginning of the month were destined to spend a lot of time on the road the rest of the month. We all have seen some folks drive up to 300 miles just to try for a \$60 win in a \$25 open event at the end of the month and needing just a little more.

Most of the truck tickets the last few years have been won at the major events where one area has a week with five or six nights of \$50 added purse events. This is fine if you can afford to take time to go and it is a fun way to spend a week of vacation. All of us like to go to the "Lone Star Five Thousand" at the beginning of the year when we have been cooped up by the weather for a while. However, this fun week has now been reproduced almost every week of the year somewhere. I even had a wonderful time last year in Iowa during the hot months. But, what about the member who works forty hours a week to support a family, has a night or two of Little League as well as "mommy's night out" to work into his coonhunting schedule.

This year we will award **two** truck tickets in the Pup Division as well as the Senior Division based entirely on earnings in \$25 (or less) hunts. If you are one of the top two winners each month in \$25 events, you get a ticket. We will award **three** tickets to each division based on all open event earnings as in the past. This will give us thirty-six winners from all events and twenty-four from the \$25 events. This will give us a total of 60 dogs qualified. We can also take four more under the format we now have, so we are also going to look down the list at the end of the year and get the top four money winners in \$25 events who have not already earned a ticket to get us up to 64 entries.

For those who have not had the experience of competing in one of the truck hunts, you have a treat coming. This is a unique event in that the first place gets a brand new 4 x 4 truck and everyone else gets to say, "I had a good time." Second place pays the same as last place. The Isle of Capri Casino in Lula, Mississippi has been a sponsor of this event for many years and provides each entry with a nice room at no charge, along with a banquet before the event. Hunting is in the Mississippi river bottoms, mostly on private clubs in some of the best hunting in the country. An honest dog with a good nose and the ability to sort through a lot of trash and work out a bad track can bring in a real score. Although it is held in a Casino, gambling is your choice. You are provided a beautiful room and lots of food and some of the best fun and fellowship in the sport of coon hunting. Most of the winners bring their wife or "most significant other" and it is nice to see everyone all duded up and having fun.

Our world economy is making many of us look at our lifestyles somewhat differently. Small events at our local clubs may be in our future a lot more than we think, and for

sure hunting against folks you know close to your home as a lot of advantages and is a lot of fun, especially if you have learned to lose gracefully. We also hope that this will be a boost to a lot of local clubs around the country. Many have been on the decline recently for many reasons, some no doubt due to poor management but many others due to the large number of people who would rather drive a ways to the closest major event. I have always enjoyed the fun and fellowship of hunting in a local club and most of the time hunting with someone that may have beaten me last Saturday night. A member gets to the point where he knows the traits of almost every dog in the area and has a lot of time to work on ways to improve the work of his hound to where he can be successful. I have found that clubs based around good honest competition where everyone plays on a level playing field thrive and succeed even if some of their members may not have a dog to compete at the national level. This is where we get new people involved and trained as well as building our sport among the young people. Most of our youth hunters learned the sport at the local level.

I don't have any idea how much money it will take to be one of the top two winning dogs in \$25 events each month, I would think that from \$200 to \$400 would be a good place to start. I also believe it is very attainable for many of our members without having to miss work or spend a lot of time in the highway. In many areas a person can go to three-six hunts per week within driving range after work.

We are in the process of programming the computers to give us a listing of winners in the \$25 hunts (actually \$10; \$15; and \$25) each month. At the present time we are showing the top senior dog in \$25 events for the month of October as Sycamore Creek Reload owned by Carr/Meeks/Carr as the top dog for the month at \$188.75 and Hawk's Little Doc owned by Delbert Hawkins as the second dog with \$105. In the pup division, we are showing Crooked Creek Pearl, owned by Clinton Combs at \$120 and Bugger Hollow Mojo owned by Robert Raxter at second with \$105. If these numbers hold up these dogs will have truck tickets without having burned a lot of gas in the process.

There could very well be changes after we receive some hunt reports that are not yet in the computer. October being the first month of the new year, many clubs have not yet submitted their charter and schedule. Also, many clubs do not schedule hunts during the month of October due to the major event schedule. There is also the possibility that we do not have all the "bugs" out of this new report from the computer. But, I am sure you will agree that earning \$188.75 in one month with your hound in a club close to home is within the reach of everyone in PKC.

I believe you can see where this new program opens up a whole new world for PKC members who have good hounds but for many reasons are unable to travel to keep them in the top of the standings. We also believe that this will be a great assist to all our local clubs and will put a lot of exciting competition within the reach of all our members.