

December 2003 Secretary's Report

This report details the day to day activities of the ASCA Board of Directors and includes issues brought before the ASCA Board and communications done by mail, fax, e-mail and/or phone.

December 1 - 31, 2003

SDC Recommendation Working Standard

Motion by Kathy Warren

I move to approve the following recommendation from the SDC.

Comments: I'm not sure if we really need to approve this recommendation, but the Board should support this recommendation and officially mandate the development of an ASCA Working Standard for the Australian Shepherd. KW

Motion by Walker Second by Mahoney

I move for the SDC to develop a working description to define and describe the typical working Australian Shepherd.

Comments: This issue has created a far greater response from the membership than any other issue in recent memory. It is obvious that we are all passionate about the future of the working Australian Shepherd. This committee cannot ignore the fact that this is an issue that we, the SDC must deal with. Some very good ideas have been brought forward. We need to take those ideas and incorporate them into a thoughtful *concise* description of the working Australian Shepherd.

APPROVE: Schvaneveldt, Mahoney, Simmons, Baker, Holmes, Adamczyk, Bryant, Walker. DISAPPROVE: Kelly, Vest, Davies, Hodges, Moe. ABSTAIN: none NON-VOTING: none

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE :

My concerns with the creation of this document are two-fold. First, I would like to question the intent of this document. It seems that the idea for this document came about as the result of the 2003 Finals winner being labeled as a non-typical Australian Shepherd. With that in mind, then if this document is created, will it undergo revision every time a winner of the Finals does not fit within the "defined style" that is covered within the proposed document?

This brings forward my next concern, which is the eventual destination of this document. It has been stated that the creation of this document is vital to the ASCA membership in order for them to have knowledge of the typical working style of the Australian Shepherd. If that is the case, then to place this document in the Stockdog Rulebook or the Trialing Guidelines may possibly exclude the very Membership that the proponents are trying to address. The breeders that have been ASCA Members for years are breeding the type of dog they desire, whether it be in the Breed ring or the Stockdog

arena. Therefore, this document will probably have little effect upon them. However, if this document is to be used as a guide for new Members, then it must be placed in the Breed Standard. Placing it in the Breed Standard would also eliminate the possibility that this document could be changed on a whim and would give credence to the importance of the document.

I believe that the information is included in the documentation that we already have available. Compiling that information and presenting it at the beginning of the Trial Guidelines is appropriate.

1. The majority of the active ASCA Stockdog Program participants, supporters and judges within my Region do not support the development or inclusion of a working description.
2. The development of a working description has the potential to create dissention and division within the program participants. This will act to diminish and reduce the current ASCA Stockdog Program.
3. As the program currently operates, there exist sufficient written guidelines to allow all our approved and endorsed ASCA Stockdog Judges the authority to evaluate and score Australian Shepherds according to an appropriately broad view of the breed's natural and inherited working abilities.

I feel there is enough in the trialing guidelines for our judges to make an educational decision about how the Aussie should or should not work

This is well over due. I don't know how this has been over looked to not have a working standard all this time.

Been in this breed of dogs a long time, and the Twin Oaks dogs that originated with my Mother-in-law and her twin sister back in 1950 through a man named Alley Clough. He was a cowboy who trained polo ponies for Mrs. Harper of The Parker Ranch in Hawaii. She, in turn, would send him Australian Shepherd dogs for pay. Alley would use him in his rough brush covered mountain terrain to bring wild cattle out of the brush.

I would like to now address Barb's comment on the Bark comment on the working description. Here is a quote from a very recent dog sale to a cattle rancher this month. "I want an Aussie with grip and bark, one that will get in there and get them out of the brush. He needs to bark and bite to get the cattle to leave the brush, and I need to know where he is so I know where to ride to. I don't want no damn Border Collie that just stares at them never barking, so I don't even know where to ride to or where my dog is or that he won't even go in the brush."

Now that same dog that this recent cattle rancher wanted is the same way Alley Clough used his dogs in the early '50s off the boats in the port of San Francisco.

Now there are situations where bark does not work but that is what is so unique about this breed is they know when to use it or not. A good smart Aussie will bark to move his cattle or sheep just like we hup at our cattle or sheep to get them to move so as not to get in the target area of danger when they know or we know if they/we go in and bite, they will get smashed or ran over. That is just good stock sense.

It is this original Aussie that made them such a special breed of popularity that we need to preserve. Not the Aussie I see the turn of the breed going to as it is now. We do have a crossbred influence in our breed so much that they are not a crossbred anymore but have formed a breed all to itself in the ASCA reg. They are inbred and line bred to where they form their own type with in this reg. No different than making any breed of cattle or Sheep. I believe 7/8 is considered a breed in cattle, a series of half crosses for 4 generations. I know these original X bred dogs personally and have tapes of them and trialed with them, they are not so far back in the pedigree of the dogs now when it is linebred or inbred. It is a fact, but they are in this breed so we must move on.

In the beginning of our Stockdog rule book states to preserve the natural working ability of the working Australian shepherd. That is just a little too vague in IMO. We need just what is the natural working inheritance is, a descriptive part of what all the Aussie does. Yes, there are many styles but there are traits that make Aussies, Aussies and yes they are easy to describe. I have been around them a long time and seen them all across the different parts of the country, judged them in all the different places of this country and Canada. The most unique trait about an Aussie is there ability work in close with no eye, or Loosed-eyed relieving the pressure off the stock so that they can work further inside the flight zone, which keep the stock calm and moving. Now as a rancher and using my dog that trait allows me to use my partner in pens and tight areas with ease and power. The other trait, the assume is a deliberate worker, and when he does use eye it is deliberate, he does not ask his stock to please move. So to breed for eye in a breed that is so well known for his loose eye is beyond me. Get a BC, they are a fine eyed breed, but lack a deliberate approach and do not excel in pen work or stock that really needs to be pushed.

As far as the Trialing guidelines, they as I interpret them, are an overview of a dog in general and can be applied to any breed so I believe the Australian Shepherd Working descriptive should be in there also to more clearly define the Aussie in itself.

I also would like to see it right along side of the breed standard, it just fits there fine.

Now some of the comments made by ***** , where she named some of the old Aussies with eye. They had Aussie Eye, deliberate, direct when the stock challenged them and then turned the eye off to become loosed eyed when the challenge passed or when flanking. No lateral flanking while holding the eye pressure on the stock. There is a big difference.

Now ***** comments don't hold much water. His last litter he bred of Australian Shepherds was in 1995 and the last time he trialed an Aussie was in 1993 and that was

an exhibition. He has Kelpies and Border collies. He is not working with Aussies.

I am a strong believer that to keep this breed pure and to preserve the inheritance of the original natural working ability of the Australian Shepherd, that we must immediately implement Mandatory DNA for every litter bred . Also DNA every Finals Dog.

So yes, let's get to work on a positive working descriptive of this unique breed. Let it be available in all areas of information for everybody to refer to. Heck I supply sheep to the BC clubs, and for the crowd they always give a working description of their breed and how it supposed to work.

And we don't have that.

After reading all the opinions of the folks who wrote in regards to the working standard I feel it is too big of an issue to sweep under the rug. I feel it should be up to the general membership to decide.

I feel there are enough general members that have expressed their wishes against a Working Standard that the SDC should disapprove this motion. I cannot see where having a Working Description will improve the Stockdog Program or the Working Australian Shepherd. I think any type of description will have an impact in the working venue, one that could possibly cause great harm to the Stockdog Program itself. I can foresee that there will be many hard feelings and divisions created by such a description within the current trialing population. There is direction given to judges in the Stockdog Rulebook and the Trialing Guidelines to evaluate the Working/Trialing Australian Shepherd. I believe that what is already written gives all judges within our program enough leeway to judge according to their own views of the breed's natural and inherited abilities.

The Stockdog Committee is charged with maintaining a professional Stockdog Program that is in the best interest of ALL concerned by perpetuating the Australian Shepherd's superior, VERSATILE working ability. The Australian Shepherd should be able to accomplish many tasks and work many different kinds of stock, how is a written standard going to promote that ideal?

I believe that we have a large enough section of the membership that has voiced an opinion feeling this is something the SDC should work on.

My personal comments are that I can't believe we already don't have this for our breed.

This is long overdue and very much needed, and I'm surprised that a standard hasn't been written before now. The Cattle Dog club has managed to write a good description of the way their dogs work, as have other loose-eyed breed clubs. I see no reason why we cannot benefit our own breed in the same manner.

I believe that we have a large enough section of the membership that has voiced an opinion feeling this is something the SDC should work on.

My personal comments are that I can't believe we already don't have this for our breed.

I think it should be written or reviewed by people more knowledgeable than myself so it will be right the first time with no questions.

The development of this description is long over due.

Board voting: Approve: Hollen, DeChant, Gray, Warren, Berryessa, Hellmeister & Davenport. Disapprove: Stevens. Non-Voting: Aufox.

90:38 Agility Committee - Chapter 1 & 2

Motion by Hellmeister, second by Berryessa

I move to rescind motion 90:38 Agility Committee - Chapter 1 & 2.

Comments: Said motions contains obvious mistakes which are acknowledged by the Agility committee who is currently working on a re-write.

Board voting: Approve: Unanimous. Motion is approved.

98:02 MVA COMMITTEE

Motion by Hollen.

Motion 2003-03 Lori Acierto moved and Anne Shope seconded to remove the individual point breakdowns that make up the 30 point sections in the MVA Conformation Evaluation. Voting for: Lori A, Anne S, Terry T, Andrea H, Jan W, Pete D, Andrea H, and Beth M. Voting against: Robyn G, Susan P, Abstentions: None Not Voting: Chris D. Motion passed.

PURPOSE: To alleviate policing of the individual points that make up each 30 point section, thereby leaving at the judge's discretion how they make their deductions within each section. This may also speed up the evaluation process.

Submitted for the MVA Committee, Anne Shope, Chair

Board voting: Approve: Hollen, Warren, Berryessa, Stevens & Davenport. Disapprove: Aufox, Gray, DeChant & Hellmeister. Motion is approved.

94:01 SDC - Packets

Motion by Warren, second by Davenport.

I move to eliminate subscriptions for the Stockdog Committee paper packets to the membership.

Comments: At this point in time there are only three paid for members and the

subscriptions for these is due this month (December). Though it has been SOP to do this the rules do not require it as long as an update goes into the *Aussie Times*. As this committee has become an electronic committee it has become increasingly difficult for the Chair to determine which should and should not go into these packets. The committee will be experimenting with a read only electronic newsletter that will include pending motions, vote results, and a synopsis of subjects under discussion. In this way any interested member and particularly judges can obtain more current information. I have run this motion by the SDC already and all those I heard from were OK with this as long as another alternative was given.

Board voting: Approve: Aufox, Hollen, DeChant, Gray, Warren, Berryessa, Hellmeister & Davenport. Disapprove: Stevens. Motion is approved

98:11 OBEDIENCE RULES - Ch. 3, 4, & 5.

Motion by Hellmeister.

I move to accept the following recommendation by the Obedience committee

The Obedience Committee makes the following motion: The reasons are listed at the end of this message. Motion made by Bohren, second by Burlingame.

Voting: Approved: Unanimous

Chapter 3, Section 4. Change to:

Section 4. CD Title

"ASCA will issue a Companion Dog certificate to a dog with ASCA registration or a tracking number, and will permit the use of CD after its name, when it has received three (3) qualifying scores awarded by at least two (2) judges, provided that at least two (2) dogs participate in the Novice Group Exercises."

Chapter 4, Section 4. Change to:

Section 4. CDX Title

"ASCA will issue a Companion Dog Excellent certificate to a dog with ASCA registration or a tracking number, and will permit the use of CDX after its name, when it has received three (3) qualifying scores awarded by at least two (2) judges. A dog may earn a qualifying score even if it is the only dog participating in the Open Group Exercises."

Chapter 4, Section 14: Following the first paragraph, add:

A dog may earn a qualifying score even if is the only dog participating in the Group Exercises."

Chapter 5, Section 4. Change to:

Section 4. UD Title

"ASCA will issue a Utility Dog certificate to a dog with ASCA registration or a tracking number, and will permit the use of UD after its name, when it has received three (3) qualifying scores awarded by at least two (2) judges. A dog may earn a qualifying score even if it is the only dog competing."

REFERENCE SHEET UPDATE:

Under "Groups:" Delete "A minimum of 2 dogs must participate in the Open group exercises in order to obtain a qualifying score. A minimum of 2 dogs must participate in the Novice group exercises in order to obtain a qualifying score."

Replace with:

"A dog may earn a qualifying score in Open even if it is the only dog participating in the Group Exercises, but in Novice at least two (2) dogs must participate."

Reason for changes:

These changes are proposed to make the regulations consistent with what is actually done. For example, the existing regulations say that the letters "C.D." are permitted after the name of a dog that has satisfied the requirements for this title. But certificates issued by ASCA have CD on them. And the title of dogs in catalogs or in the AT is written CD not C.D. The same holds for CDX (not C.D.X.) and UD (not U.D.).

The existing regulations say that judges "certify" dogs, which is not correct. Judges either give qualifying scores or do not. ASCA does the certification. The term "certify" has a well-defined meaning in tracking. Whereas tracking judges do indeed issue certificates, obedience judges do not.

Sections 4 in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 were rewritten to make them consistent and to make it as clear as possible that although at least 2 dogs must participate in the Group Exercises in Novice in order for dogs to earn qualifying scores, dogs may earn qualifying scores in Open and Utility even if they are the only ones competing.

The change to Section 14 of Chapter 4 is not an addition but rather correction of an error. A statement about the number of dogs competing in the Open Group Exercises did appear in the January 1, 2002 version of the ASCA Obedience Rules and Regulations, but mysteriously disappeared from subsequent versions.

The change to the Reference Sheet is necessary to make it consistent with the regulations. As things stand, the Reference Sheet contradicts what is in the regulations.

Footnote: We also respectfully request that the "Reference Sheet" page be moved to either the front inside cover or the first page of the rule book. The reason is so the sheet is easily found by anyone searching for pertinent information. The present location (near the end of the book) is at best hard to location and many exhibitors aren't even aware that we have included this tool for their use.

Thank you for your consideration, Mary Burlingame, Obedience Committee

Board voting: Approve: Unanimous. Motion is approved.

98:11 OBEDIENCE RULES - Ch. 5.

Motion by Hellmeister.

I move to accept the following motion of the Obedience committee

The Obedience Committee respectfully makes the following motion to become effective 4/1/04.

Utility

Chapter 5, Section 7, Scent Discrimination be changed as follows:

Replace paragraph 4 with:

The handler shall present ten (10) regulation articles to the Judge. The Judge, or, on order from the Judge, the steward or handler will select one (1) article from each set. Only the handler will be allowed to touch the selected articles with his/her hands. The Judge or steward will use a device of the Judge's choosing (such as tongs) to remove the articles to be scented from the bag. The selected articles will be placed on the table, chair or other location designated by the Judge, that is readily accessible to the handler. In order to preserve the continuity of the run, it is suggested that the articles be placed on the chair or table before the beginning of the run. The Judge or steward will handle each of the remaining eight (8) articles, while randomly arranging them on the floor or ground about six (6) inches apart. The closest article should be about twenty (20) feet from the handler and dog. Before giving the command to send your dog, the Judge must make sure that the articles are visible to the handler and dog and that they are far enough apart so that there will be no confusion of scent among the articles.

Paragraph 7 - correct misspelled word in first sentence. Sentence should read:

"On order from the Judge....." (Change "form" to "from").

Add paragraph 11:

If the scented articles are to be kept separate from the others at the end of the Scent Discrimination exercise, it is the responsibility of the handler to notify the steward.

Motion: Willems. Second: Waller. Voting: Approve: Link, White, Burlingame, Bohren, Cox, Case, Mann, Swatko, Munson.

COMMENTS: These changes are needed to clarify and standardize the handling of the articles in the Scent Discrimination exercise. Paragraph 4 highlights the fact that only the handler can touch the scenting articles. Additionally, it allows the judge to place the articles in a place other than a table or chair, within the ring (as sometimes neither of these places are practical or available). We also felt it important to suggest that the selection of the articles take place prior to the beginning of the run to allow for a smooth transition from one exercise to another.

Paragraph 7 has a typo that need correction.

Adding paragraph 11: If a handler intends to use the same set of articles for back to back shows, the articles scented in the first show must be kept separate from the others

so as not to cause cross contamination. We want to clarify that it is the handlers responsibility, not the judge or stewards, to make this request known. Elmer

Board voting: Approve: Aufox, Hollen, DeChant, Warren, Hellmeister, Stevens, Davenport & Berryessa. Abstain: Gray. Motion is approved.

Approved:

Non-Regular Breeder Judge: Janet White, 23 Bateau Rd. Hilton Head Island, SC 29928 Judge #3551

ASCA Breeder Judge: Gail Karamalegos, 4405 Andert Rd., Bryan, TX 77808 Judge #3681

ASCA Senior Breeder Judge: Ken Silveira, 15466 Linn Rd., Lodi, CA 95240 Judge #3238

ASCA Senior Breeder Judge: Kristin Rush, 6433 S. 32nd St., Phoenix, AZ 85042 Judge #3352