

COONHOUND ADVISOR

Trevor Wade

What a volatile winter it was. I'm writing this in early March, and after a week of nice temperatures, we got ambushed by another cold front with ice and snow. My dog and I are ready for spring where we can get out and hunt without fighting the ice and snow. They at least make medicine to combat the spring pollen. Anyway, I've been doing the thing were I scour through the archives and try to look for old advisor columns that address issues and questions we still see today. With Tournament of Champions bearing down on me with this deadline, I think I'm going to take the time to rehash some of these old articles.

This one has been addressed within the past several years but it has popped up several times the past couple of weeks so maybe it's a good time to share again.

Majority of Cast or Majority of Those Present?

Q: This situation came up on a recent cast, and we would like UKC's ruling on it. All four dogs were declared struck. Dogs A, B, and C were declared treed, in that order, to the north. Dog D was then declared treed to the south. The handlers of A, B, and C went to their dogs, and the handler of dog D went to his. Handlers A, B, and C shined their tree without handler D being present. Of those three, two see the coon and one does not. How is the tree scored? From there, they all went to handler D's tree and scored it.

A: First of all, you don't say whether the cast agreed to shine the tree without the presence of the other handler or if that handler refused to come over and score their tree. It makes a difference. If handler D refuses to go to the split tree of the dogs declared treed first, then that handler should be scratched for refusing to score the tree. I'm assuming that's not the case.

I'm guessing this situation happens fairly frequently in the essence of saving time. Three handlers agree to go score their tree, then go score the other tree. It's not right, I know, but it is happening. The thing is, in situations without a unanimous decision when only three handlers are present, you have a problem. The tree in the situation above cannot be plussed just because two out of the three handlers present voted that it should be plus. Because, in the grand scheme of things, that's only two of the handlers on a four-dog cast. A tree cannot be plussed or minused without a majority of cast vote to do so. The key words are "majority of cast." Notice it's not written "majority of those present."

If handler D refuses to come back and score the first

tree, then he is scratched for failing to participate, and you would have a majority vote of two handlers against one, and the tree would be plussed. So, it does make a difference. The next time you handle a dog in a nite hunt, remember this. You would be crazy to agree to anything other than having the entire cast present for the scoring of every tree. It can and will come back to haunt you.

Now You Do. Now You Don't.

Q: I drew out in a cast, and my hound got away from the rest of the cast. Their dogs had pulled up on a tree. My dog followed the track out and kept going with it. My hound got almost out of hearing when I called him treed. (You could just barely hear him.)

On the way to my dog, we walked through a gully. With the wind and being below the tree line, you could not hear my dog treeing anymore. The Judge put the two minutes on him. I asked the Judge to walk up to the top of the hill, but they told me no. The two minutes expired, and we had not heard my dog, so he took a minus. Shouldn't I have been allowed to walk up to the top of the hill before the two minutes was started? After the two got him, we walked to the top of the hill, and he was still treed. I re-treed my dog and walked into him after the three was up. It looked like he had been there for quite a while. Thanks for your time.

A: Good question. You should not put the two minutes on a dog if it is not reasonable that you should be able to hear the dog. Sounds like the cast should have walked to the top of the hill before stopping to listen for the dog. Depending on the severity of the terrain, the rest of the cast may make a good argument that you would have been able to hear the dog. You need to use good judgment because you wouldn't want someone walking you around all night listening for a dog that wasn't opening on track but claiming that it was because of the terrain.

See No Evil, Speak No Evil.

The question has come up as to whether or not a handler who didn't happen to witness a questioned situation must vote on how to score that situation. For example, handler A leaves the other three to tie his dog up on a split tree. Upon returning to the rest of the cast, handler A learns that the Judge's decision to minus a dog for being off the tree has been questioned, and the question is being called to a vote. Since handler A was not present to witness whether or not the dog was off the tree, he claims that he is exempt from voting.

Not true. In accordance with the Hunting and Non-Hunting Judges Rule Clarification found on page 61 of the Official UKC Coonhound Rulebook, each handler must vote, or their dog will be scratched. Each handler, regardless of whether or not they were present when the

violation takes place, must make a decision on how to score the situation based on what he knows about the situation and his fellow cast member's statements. When you think about it, it is no different than expecting the Master of Hounds to make judgement decisions that he has obviously not witnessed. In this situation, handler A

must place a vote. If you give a handler the opportunity to refrain from voting whenever he didn't see the actual infraction, it would be an easy out for those who don't want to create any waives by taking a side. Luckily, the Hunting and Non-Hunting Judges Rule Clarification is very clear on this subject.



ATTENTION!

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

Cliff Monroe • Mooresboro, NC • Indefinitely

Chris Simmons • Cramerton, NC • Indefinitely

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



Rev. 12/7/2023

UKC DISCIPLINARY ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Rick Keele of Sedalia, MO was found guilty of UKC Coonhound Nitehunt rule violations. DAC Action – Suspension until 1/3/2025.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Vicky Bassitt of Coshocton, OH was found guilty of habitual unreasonable and argumentative disposition at UKC events. DAC Action – Suspension from UKC events until 1/1/2025.
- UKC's Disciplinary Action Committee determined that Lisa Berry of Los Lunas, NM was found guilty of animal abuse. DAC Action – Suspension indefinitely.

For the full list of UKC Notice of Suspensions visit, www.ukcdogs.com/suspension

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