

# COONHOUND ADVISOR

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**H**appy New Year! I hope everyone reading had a great holiday season. As of this writing, Thanksgiving has just passed, and Christmas is on the horizon. Then, both of my daughters' birthdays come up in January, so it's sufficient to say that both are in good spirits. Outside of the cold weather, my cup is running full as well. I know that shortly after this writing, my year will start quickly. First, a trip to Orangeburg, South Carolina, to the Grand American quickly followed by a trip to Batesville, Mississippi, for the Winter Classic. Two of my favorites. Here is to hoping I get to catch up with some of you all there to chat about what's been going on. Until then, let's talk about putting on events.

I am far from the expert here. There are folks that I talk to every day who have far more experience than me in putting on quality events. I do, however, have the task of talking to unhappy people every so often after a rough weekend. I think this insight could be beneficial to those out there conducting events throughout the year.

### Before Putting on Events

The preparation for putting on quality events doesn't start on the day of. It starts well in advance. The most successful coon clubs out there have meetings regularly to discuss issues that are prevalent to their club. Being on the same page as your club membership makes for much smoother events. What are some things to think about?

- What are our dates, and do they work considering work schedules, extracurricular events occurring, and even other registries event schedules? It is great to get each of the event confirmations done well in advance, but it can be counterproductive if you haven't discussed what events you want to hold, deadline times, hunt times, etc. Changing deadlines, dropping events, and trying to make late changes make up the biggest number of complaints that come in and ultimately can affect attendance at a club.

- Speaking of that, making sure you understand the difference between an event being scheduled and confirmed is paramount. This is an issue we don't see much of, but it does happen every now and then. An event a club holds one year carries over to the next as long as it doesn't have an existing issue with it. Having said that, just because the date is tentatively held on your schedule doesn't mean it's confirmed. To ensure it gets confirmed with UKC, you need to provide entry deadlines, fees, and

hunt times. Obviously, there are multiple ways to do this. You can fill out the confirmation form online and email/mail it to UKC. You can still call in and confirm entries with the Hunting Ops Department. And soon, you will be able to confirm events online. That will be a game-changer. Once the event is confirmed, it will show up on the online events calendar.

- Having officials lined up and always have a backup plan. Things happen. The Master of Hounds, Hunt Director, Bench Show Judge, etc., that you have lined up could fall through. Illnesses, car trouble, family issues, and many other variables can pop up at inopportune times. I always suggest clubs have a member close by that could step in. Right now, it's easier than ever to get licensed for Master of Hounds or Bench Show Judge. The application and test are right online. It's an open-book test, and you guessed it; the rulebook is right online as well. Late cancellations due to not being able to secure a judge is something we keep track of and can lead to a club no longer being approved for UKC-licensed events.

I could go on, but I think we hit some of the high points. Let's move on to some things clubs can do at events to be successful.

### While Putting on Events

I think we can all agree that this section has the most variables and where folks may have differing opinions. Luckily, there are procedures that go into greater detail in the UKC Rulebook about putting on events than I will put here. I just want to mention a couple of hot-button issues that should be addressed.

- Deadlines, deadlines, deadlines. Deadlines are what they are. Deadline extensions to get another dog or two entered may seem like a good idea at the moment but that will ALWAYS wind up causing issues down the road. Your best bet and the stance UKC has always taken since I've been familiar with them: no excuses and no exceptions. If you are consistent in enforcing the deadlines, then you will be fine. If you make one exception, then you will have issues. Period.

- Assign your best judges first. Don't draw casts, and then pick the best of that cast. The number one thing to do to ensure you have trouble-free casts is to assign the best judges you have first.

- Follow the procedures. There is no doubt that there are ways to bend the rules to make things easier for hunters and clubs. The thing is, easier doesn't always mean better or correct. Again, once you start bending the rules and procedures, bad things tend to happen. And again, doing things wrong procedurally can lead to the club not being approved for UKC-licensed events.

- If issues pop up after a weekend hunt, it seems to always be with a doubleheader. I will start out by saying the late-round entry deadline is what you set it at. We all like to get some sleep when it's available, but going out and hunting before the entry deadline gets there isn't an option. If a club is unable to accommodate the time that it takes to put on a quality doubleheader, I would recommend a single-round hunt.

- Under no circumstance should a club be sending a cast out with two scorecards, one for the early round and one for the late round. That is not the correct procedure. The cast would need to return their early round scorecard, and then another cast draw would need to take place. Things can change quickly if you have dogs that don't reenter or if you have additional dogs that hunt late that didn't get to hunt early. That is the point of a doubleheader: to try to optimize the entries in one night and give hunters a chance to get a couple wins in one night.

- When a cast is done, the completed scorecard must be turned in to the hunt official. This has been the procedure in UKC nite hunts since its inception. Sending

pictures of the scorecard to the hunt official is not the correct procedure. I hope that clubs are able to keep their casts close to where driving a scorecard isn't a big hindrance, but it does need to be turned in before the deadline.

### After Putting on an Event

Here is the biggest no-brainer of the whole article. When the event is over, make sure you get your report in ASAP. The entrants at your event who have spent their money attending deserve that much. Right now, it's as easy as it's ever been to get paperwork turned in. You can still mail it, but there are easier ways. A lot of clubs these days are taking good, clear photos of the entire report and emailing them to the UKC Hunting Ops Department at [huntingops@ukcdogs.com](mailto:huntingops@ukcdogs.com). As we speak, the programmers are working on a program online where clubs can enter their results online and get everything done that way. When this is done and ready to be used there will be information and tutorials available online and in this article.



### ATTENTION!

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

**Andrew Ratliff • Winchester, KY • January 1, 2025**

**Cliff Monroe • Mooresboro, NC • Indefinitely**

**Chris Simmons • Cramerton, NC • Indefinitely**

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



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