



## RESULTS OF SCJA QUESTIONNAIRE OCTOBER 1989

### WITH COMMENTS



These results are based on 462 signed responses. This is an excellent sampling of our members. Slight discrepancies occur on some comparisons and totals, due to individuals not answering some questions or answering some questions both yes and no. (Only these disputable individual questions were discarded, not the entire questionnaire). The Questionnaire dealt primarily with "Hands On Testing" as conducted by the AKC; however, other questions were asked on pertinent subjects. Questions are in "this type." **Results in percentages are in bold type, i.e., 94% YES.** Comments follow the response figures and are in "this type." These comments were gleaned from over 250 members who made comments on the survey. There were also over 50 others who took the time and made the effort to write additional comments with their analysis and thoughts on the items covered in this survey. Remember all reference to "Hands On Testing" (H.O.T.) refers to the AKC version.

We were careful to distinguish between members who had "PARTICIPATED" in H.O.T. and those who had "NOT PARTICIPATED". We also designed the program to give us information on those participating as Group Judges, Breeder Judges, Applicants Passing, Applicants Failing, and Observers. The program also allowed an analysis to determine the manner in which individuals answered combinations of questions. In this regard and in keeping with our policy of individual confidentiality, numbers only were used which were converted to percentages.

Question #1. Have you participated in or observed an AKC Performance Evaluation Test" (Hands On Test)?

**RESULTS: 41% YES**

COMMENTS: This represents 190 of our members responding who have actually participated in H.O.T. and provides an excellent number on which to base an analysis, and comments.

Question #2. Indicate your role in the H.O.T.

**RESULTS: Applicants 42; Breeder judges 19; Group judges 23; Observers 106. Fail rate was 37%.**

COMMENTS: Although the questionnaire asked this question to all individuals who participated in H.O.T., the computer program was designed in such a manner that we could isolate the applicants and thereby arrive at a pass/fail rate for this survey. This figure appears to be in the ball park from unofficial comments. However, only by using all of the tests results, would the figure be 100% accurate.

Question #3. How many dogs were excused because of a difference of opinion between the panel members (i.e., Breeder judge, Group judge, AKC Rep)?

**RESULTS: Dogs Excused - 31**

COMMENTS - ONLY the replies given by Breeder and Group judges were used; even so, allowances must be made since some of the replies could ostensibly have been made by a Group and Breeder judge who were on the same testing panel. Nonetheless, this is very significant. Even if we allowed for an extremely unlikely 100% duplication of reporting for the Group and Breeder judges, we are left with a figure of 16. To

have even two or three dogs that a panel disagrees on discredits the testing aspects of H.O.T. Further, it proves, unequivocally, that the 3 experts could not agree on a dog or dogs. How can we attach any credence to a test on their remaining selections? With just a little imagination, one could easily replace a panel member with one of the applicants, and we would have the panel member failing. Indeed, it is these very same controversial dogs (those excused) which are the so-called problems or differences in the real world of judging Dogs. A judge at a show does not have the luxury of being able to dismiss these controversial dogs. Our judges in the real world have to accept them as they come and take the criticism from individuals like the panel members who would disagree with him or her. As stated previously by the SCJA, the show records of the AKC speak clearly to this issue and indicate every weekend that experienced and respected judges have a wide disparity amongst themselves on any given dog or dogs. When are we going to accept the very obvious and fundamental fact that this difference of opinion is what makes the Dog Game? Yes, we do refer to it as a game; it is not an exact science. The SCJA position has been all along that one cannot test another's opinion.

A serious question arises from the results of the AKC's tests. Is it a valid indication of an individual's ability to judge a breed? The figures based on the AKC's own test, coupled with the overwhelming opinion of those who have observed and participated in the AKC tests, give us a clear answer. NAMELY - "HANDS-ON TESTING", AS EMPLOYED BY THE AKC, IS NOT RELIABLE AND SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A STANDARD TO PASS OR FAIL AN INDIVIDUAL FOR THE GRANTING OF ADDITIONAL BREEDS.

Question #4. Do you believe the AKC Reps being used to evaluate the applicants are qualified to pass judgement on all breeds?

**RESULTS: 93% NO**

COMMENTS - This overwhelming response is a clear indication that our judges have no confidence in the ability of the AKC Reps passing judgement during a "Hands On" test. When one realizes that a number of the Reps have never been in the ring to judge dogs, it is little wonder this is the result. On the other side, let us address those AKC Reps who have judged. The AKC Reps were average Group judges, just like 400 plus others. Worthy of note is that a good many of these "other" Group judges have had to take a "Hands On" test. Some all-knowing individuals, at the AKC, decide just which of these Group judges have to be tested. The AKC has not made clear to the rest of the judges, or the entire Dog World, how this average Group judge selected to be an AKC Rep miraculously becomes qualified to pass judgement on all other judges in any breed selected, even in breeds never before judged by him or her. We would like to know the training methods employed by the AKC for their new Reps. A question immediately comes to mind. Since the AKC has a process that can turn former handlers, single breed judges, and Group judges into overnight All-Breed judges, why do they not make it available to all the judges? We should use their system. It appears to be the magic bullet that would make an individual qualified with no need for testing! A good many judges want to know who tests the AKC Reps on breed knowledge.

**IN ORDER NOT TO SINGLE OUT THE AKC REP TO QUESTION THEIR ABILITY TO PASS JUDGEMENT ON ALL BREEDS, WE ASKED THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE TWO OTHER PANEL MEMBERS:**

Question #5. Do you believe all Group judges are qualified to pass judgement on another judge's qualifications on all breeds within their approved Group?

**RESULTS: 94% NO**

COMMENTS - It is immediately evident the SCJA members were not being hypercritical of the AKC Reps. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to believe that 1% of our members were of the opinion the Reps were qualified for all breeds, and the Group judges were not qualified to act as a tester for all breeds within their approved Group.

Question #6. Do you believe all Breeder judges, if given 12-



15 dogs of their breed to rate excellent, good, fair, or poor, would rate them all the same?

**RESULTS: 98% NO**

**COMMENTS** - It is, again, crystal clear that this unbelievable percentage of our members say Breeder judges would not agree on their own breed. Since Breeder judges were used as panel members and are judges themselves, the fact that such an overwhelming number answer this question "NO" is very significant. It is even more significant when we realize that approximately 95% of all our Group judges are Breeder judges. The conclusion again is unequivocal: "Hands On Testing", as the AKC employs it, just cannot be used as a valid tool to determine an individual's qualification to judge.

Question #7. Do you believe it is feasible to accurately test and score a judge's opinion on his placings in a class of dogs?

**RESULTS: 76% NO**

**COMMENTS** - A good many of those answering this question put qualifiers in their answer and they had to be discarded. However, 76% by anyone's standards is a vast majority of those polled. Here again the inference is clear. H.O.T. DOES NOT WORK.

Question #8. Do you believe active judges should be used to test and determine the rate of advancement of fellow judges?

**RESULTS: 69% NO**

**COMMENTS** - Even though over two-thirds answered "NO", a good many of those answering "YES" added a comment to the effect that if we had to have H.O.T., it was better to have judges than AKC Reps involved. This question had a large number of "?" and "YES & NO" answers which could not be considered.

Question #9. Do you believe we should continue to press to have "Hands On Testing" validated, even if we must conduct the test ourselves?

**RESULTS: 73% YES**

**COMMENTS** - A good many of the comments by those voting "NO" indicated the SCJA should not get involved in H.O.T. at all, that by so doing, we were somehow endorsing H.O.T.

Question #10. Are you willing to participate in such a test?

**RESULTS: 75% YES**

**COMMENTS** - It is obvious that 2% of our members who said we should not get involved with our validation test were good sports and agreed to help administer the test, if needed.

**\*\* Question #11. Are you in favor of "Hands On" testing as presently being conducted by the AKC?**

**RESULTS: 88% NO (MOST IMPORTANT AND SIGNIFICANT)**

**COMMENTS** - It is ironic that this is exactly the same percentage of members in our August '88 survey who were opposed to H.O.T. This was while it was still in its experimental stage. AFTER WELL OVER A YEAR, WITH THE AKC SPENDING THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS AND THOUSANDS OF MAN HOURS CONDUCTING SEMINARS ADVOCATING "HANDS ON TESTING", IT IS WORTHY OF NOTE THAT THE PRESENTATIONS WERE DONE IN A VERY PROFESSIONAL



MANNER, EXPERTLY PRESENTED, AND DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO SELL THE PROGRAM TO THE DOG FANCY. NO MONEY WAS SPARED IN PREPARING THE PRESENTATIONS AND IN GIVING THEM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY BY TOP LEVEL AKC STAFF MEMBERS. IN SPITE OF ALL THIS EFFORT, THE AKC HAS NOT MADE ANY CONVERTS. TO CONTINUE TO IGNORE THIS VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE YOU GOVERN IS UNACCEPTABLE AND AUTOCRATIC. WE HAVE HEARD FROM AKC OFFICERS, AND OTHERS ON THE STAFF, THAT EVERYONE THINKS H.O.T. IS JUST GREAT. IT IS PREACHED FROM CALIFORNIA TO MAINE AND FLORIDA. IT IS ABOUT TIME WE PUT THIS MYTH TO REST ONCE AND FOR ALL. NOT ONLY IS IT A MYTH TO SAY SO VERY MANY PEOPLE ARE ENTHUSED ABOUT H.O.T., IT IS A GROSS DISTORTION OF THE FACTS. THE DELEGATES VOTED A YEAR AGO TO HAVE THE BOARD REEXAMINE H.O.T. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS, AND WHERE IS THE DATA?

AGAIN, TO PRESENT AS ACCURATE A PICTURE AS POSSIBLE, WE HAVE BROKEN DOWN THE PERCENTAGES OF THOSE NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T. BY THOSE THAT HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED AND THOSE THAT HAVE PARTICIPATED.

NOT PARTICIPATED, NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....94%  
PARTICIPATED, NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....80%

IT IS INTERESTING TO BREAK IT DOWN FURTHER BY CATEGORY FOR ALL THOSE WHO ACTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN AN AKC "HANDS ON" TEST:

PARTICIPATING GROUP JUDGES NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....42%  
PARTICIPATING BREEDER JUDGES NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....67%  
PARTICIPATING APPLICANTS PASSED, NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....65%  
PARTICIPATING APPLICANTS FAILED, NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....100%  
OBSERVERS NOT IN FAVOR OF H.O.T.....90%

THE FIGURES SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE POINT. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO HAVE ACTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN H.O.T., AS CONDUCTED BY THE AKC, ARE NOT IN FAVOR OF THEM. THIS IS CONTRARY TO THE AKC LINE.

Question #12. Are you in favor of "Hands On" learning (i.e. at matches, by breed clubs, seminars, etc.)?

**RESULTS: 96% YES**

COMMENTS - This response by our judges shows, unequivocally and overwhelmingly, they are in favor of "Hands On" as a learning tool. A good many of our members' comments suggested we replace H.O.T. with "Hands On" learning and have certain judges participate in a "Hands On" learning experience by a recognized club or association. We are still left with solving satisfactorily the mysterious system used to select those individuals, but it would not be a pass-fail situation.

Question #13. Do you believe a system should exist that guarantees a judge has read the standard for any and all breeds applied for?

**RESULTS: 94% YES**

COMMENTS - Speaks for itself. The judges do not want to go back to the old days when there was no guarantee that individuals being granted breeds, or even Groups, had read the standard.

Question #14. Do you believe an Open Book Test requiring a very high passing grade would assure an individual has read a standard?

**RESULTS: 71% YES**



COMMENTS - A number of our members commented to the effect that an Open Book Test would not guarantee the individuals understood the standard. This, of course, is true. However, neither does memorizing the standard. The SCJA previously suggested giving a test on the standard using silhouettes and drawings and having the applicant select the correct dogs, this coupled with an Open Book Test.

Question #15. For members who have taken a Breed Standard Test. Do you believe you could pass the same test today?

**RESULTS: 71% YES**

COMMENTS - A good many of our members indicated in their comments that they probably wouldn't get as high a grade, but would pass the test. Also included in their comments that this would include a "brushing up" on the standard just before the test. In essence, this is what most of the judges do before they judge.

Question #16. Reference AKC Guidelines dated 7-89. Do you believe it appropriate to threaten disciplinary action against a judge for non-compliance with the multitude of very detailed provisions contained therein?

**RESULTS: 84% NO**

COMMENTS - Here again, an overwhelming majority of our members think it is positively wrong to indicate to all judges that the lack of compliance with the Guidelines would result in disciplinary action. There is a serious question as to whether the AKC has acted properly and legally in transforming the Guidelines into rules. The changing of rules comes within the purview of the Delegates and quite obviously, the very title "Guidelines" signifies that they are just that - Guidelines, not rules. (All our members were made aware of AKC's letter of January 19, 1989 and a copy was furnished to each member. The AKC agreed with the SCJA's position that there were many different ways for a judge to successfully conduct his or her ring.) The Guidelines certainly outline DOs and DON'Ts that never before existed.

Question #17. Indicate your status.

COMMENTS - This question concerned years of judging and status in dog clubs. To no one's surprise, our members are extremely active in all phases of the Dog Game.

Question #18. Do you believe the judging has improved as a result of the memory tests on the standards and "Hands On Testing"?

**RESULTS: 80% NO**

COMMENTS - Speaks for itself.

Question #19. For Group judges. Do you intend to apply for additional breeds under the present system? How many complete Groups do you judge?

**RESULTS: 42% NO**

COMMENTS - THIS ONE ANSWER IS VERY SIGNIFICANT AND, WITHOUT QUESTION, IS A VERY SERIOUS INDICTMENT OF THE ATMOSPHERE PREVAILING IN OUR JUDGES' FRATERNITY. It is positively unacceptable to say that 42% of our Group judges do not intend to advance in their judging career under today's system. It varies from those with 1 Group, in which 38% do not intend to apply for additional breeds, to those with 3 Groups with 53% who do not intend to apply for additional breeds. What a tragedy for the Dog Game that so many of our senior people have decided not to advance.



Question #20. Do you believe programs, publications, and other matters affecting our judges, should be, at the very minimum, coordinated with the judges organizations for comments and recommendations before being presented to the AKC Board for their consideration?

**RESULTS: 91% YES**

**COMMENTS** - Another figure over 90%. It is inconceivable that the AKC would not think it appropriate to coordinate with the judges organizations on proposed policy changes, programs, and the like which affect our judges. It goes without saying that the AKC Board and Delegates are responsible for administering the entire Sport. **HOWEVER, NOTHING WHATSOEVER IS LOST, AND SOMETHING MIGHT BE GAINED, BY SEEKING INPUT FROM KNOWLEDGEABLE, EXPERIENCED ASSOCIATIONS.**

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** At least two panel members on a "Hands On" test, who flunked the applicant, made the point that the applicants were people they see often on judging panels and on one occasion, had to ride to the airport with the applicant the next day. They made the point that judges are approved to judge dogs, not other judges. Others indicated they are not trained for this and felt uncomfortable being put in this position. There was the question of intimidation by knowing the fact that they were asked to act as a panel member and that this would be placed in their files. Others thought it caused much dissension within the judging fraternity. The question of liability came up as well. Are the panel members working for the AKC? Would they be on their own in a liability action? Another incredulous fact brought out is that under today's set-up, we could have multiple Group judges judging a breed in Best-in-Show competition for which the AKC flunked them on in a "Hands On" test. **ARE THEY - OR ARE THEY NOT - QUALIFIED TO JUDGE BIS?** What would be the legal position of the owner of the dog in the ring for BIS competition for which the AKC specifically said the judge was not qualified to judge their breed? Could they withdraw or register a complaint? **THE OVERALL RESULT OF WHAT IS GOING ON WITH OUR JUDGES HAS CAUSED MORE AND MORE OF THE EXHIBITORS TO LOSE RESPECT FOR OUR JUDGES.** We must address some of these problems which are causing so much unrest in the judges' fraternity and the entire Dog Game. We should all ask ourselves why so many honorable, intelligent individuals have devoted such a large part of their lives in a sport that is so very much in need of change, or is it really that bad? We think not -improvement, yes; a major overhaul, no.

All of the problems with the dog show scene seem to be falling on the shoulders of the judges. They are, by inference, incompetent in their judging and dishonest in their appraisal of H.O.T. We keep hearing the judges are incapable of making a sound analysis of H.O.T. since they simply do not want to be tested in any manner whatsoever. This is an insult to all of us who care about the Dog Game and want to improve it. We have some extremely competent individuals in the judges fraternity. We have been reminded more than once that the people who helped put the H.O.T. program together have their Ph.D.'s. Our people not only have their Ph.D.'s in education, they have the distinct advantage of having judged for years and years. If the SCJA representing a 95% view of its members disagrees with an AKC position, the SCJA is called confrontational. We are duty bound to represent the majority view of our members.

A governing body, who ignores the fact that over 50% of its very senior judges have no desire to continue advancing, ignores opinions, polls of 80% or 90%, and continues to say "Hands On Testing is here to stay period", needs to re-examine its position. Indeed, the AKC Delegate body, by an almost unanimous decision, has asked the AKC Board to do just that on Performance Evaluation. They were thwarted by a parliamentary maneuver. "Hands On Testing", as presently conducted by the AKC, is too much a hit or miss proposition, or more appropriately, the luck of the draw.

We need some answers and some action. To those that pass a "Hands On" test, it matters little if the test is not accurate. To those that fail unjustly, it is ruinous to their careers and, in some cases, has caused truly dedicated dog people to give up in utter disgust. **THE SCJA WISHES TO REITERATE WE STAND READY, WILLING, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, ABLE TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES THAT WOULD ASSIST IN A MORE MEANINGFUL APPROVAL SYSTEM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF OUR JUDGES. ALL OF THIS TO BE DONE IN THE OPEN WITH THE ENTIRE FANCY AWARE OF WHAT IS GOING ON.**