

RESULTS OF SCJA QUESTIONNAIRE JANUARY 1991

WITH COMMENTS

These results are based on 284 signed responses. This is a very good 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. The first 8 questions were practically identical to the previous questionnaire (1989). The results for this year's are given first, followed by last year's. 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." The comments were gleaned from over 130 members who took the time to write personal comments in separate letters on the survey. There were also over 40 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.

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: 79% YES 1989 Results: 41% YES

COMMENTS: This is a good percentage 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 68; Panel Member 42; Observers 115. Fail rate 29%.
1989 Results: Appl. 42; Panel Mem. 42; Obser. 106. Fail rate 37%.

COMMENTS: 79% of all those participating said they didn't think the present H.O.T. was true, fair, reliable, etc. 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. Some individuals participated in more than one category.

Question #3. For panel members, either Group or Breeder judge, how many dogs were excused because the judging panel members and the AKC Rep could not agree on their grading or rating of the dogs?

RESULTS: Dogs Excused - 24 1989 Results: 31 dogs excused

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.** 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 if the 3 "experts" could not

agree on a dog or dogs, how can we attach any credence to a test on their remaining selections? The SCJA position has been all along that one cannot test another's opinion with an opinion of their own.

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 applicant are qualified to pass judgement on all the breeds they are testing?

RESULTS: 89% NO 1989 Results: 93% NO

COMMENTS - Last year's question just said "on all breeds." By adding "they are testing?" made the question more fair. Still 89% is very high. It is worthy of note that 4 or 5 leading writers in the dog press and one staff writer have voiced this very same opinion. Ask yourself, can 89% of our members be wrong? Should the AKC be critical of the SCJA Board members who voice this opinion when just about everyone in the Dog Game is now taking this position except, of course, those responsible for H.O.T.?

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: 88% NO 1989 Results: 94% NO

COMMENTS - It is immediately evident the SCJA members are equally critical of themselves and 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: 99% NO 1989 Results: 98% NO

COMMENTS - An unbelievable percentage if 99% of the breeder judges won't grade their own breeds in a like manner. How on earth can you lend any credence at all to a pass/fail system with breeder judges on the panel? 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 and consistently test and score a judge's "opinion" on his placings in a class of dogs?

RESULTS: 83% NO 1989 Results: 76% NO

COMMENTS - Here again, an overwhelming percent of our judges believes one of the major criteria for passing a H.O.T. is invalid.

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

RESULTS: 63% NO

1989 Results: 69% NO

COMMENTS - The comments were roughly the same as last year's. Even though almost 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. If we utilize the same panels of group specialists (judging a group more than 15 years) to conduct H.O.T. for breeds within their group it would make the tests:

RESULTS:	Considerably more valid	16%
	More valid	37%
	Less valid	.03%
	No difference	43%

COMMENTS - 53%, just barely a majority, believes using senior judges would make any difference. Since this is less than our required 67%, we shall not press this position.

Question #10. Do you believe the present H.O.T. testing procedure was adequately validated prior to implementation?

RESULTS: 94% NO

COMMENTS - Again, an unbelievable response and a position the SCJA has steadfastly maintained from the very beginning. There should be a moratorium on H.O.T. until most agree it is reliable. Certainly the AKC agrees it needs fixing since they keep fixing it. How about all the good respected judges who have flunked under the old system?

Question #11. The judges have consistently been accused of being self-serving and unable to be objective in analyzing H.O.T. In this connection, do you believe we should poll the handlers, breeders, and club officials to get opinions from the rest of the sport?

RESULTS: 54% YES

COMMENTS - In keeping with our policy, we will not conduct a poll since we must have a 66 2/3% response. Nonetheless, this low percentage, no doubt, will come as a surprise.

Question #12. Do you feel the present H.O.T. a true, fair, and reliable indication of one's ability to judge the breed in question?

RESULTS: 83% NO

COMMENTS - THE KEY QUESTION.....ON EVERY SINGLE SURVEY, THE NEGATIVE RESPONSE HAS BEEN OVER 82%. THIS INCLUDES A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF THOSE WHO PASSED.

Question #13. In your opinion, should SCJA:

RESULTS:	oppose any "Hands On Testing"	12%
	oppose the present "Hands On Testing"	11%
	not oppose the present "Hands On Testing"	4%
	work with the AKC to develop a more meaningful test	68%
	work within the SCJA to develop our own H.O.T. to again present to the AKC	17%

COMMENTS - Over 68% believe we should work with the AKC to improve the H.O.T. Collectively, 85% indicate we should continue to come up with a workable solution even with all the inherent problems. THIS CLEARLY INDICATES OUR MEMBERS WANT TO COOPERATE IN THE AKC ENDEAVOR. Indeed, we offered a substitute system for H.O.T. The AKC tested it for a year, but the tests have still to be jointly analyzed and discussed. We offered to meet with the AKC just so it was not secret. We still think we should get together and discuss the results of over a year's worth of tests.

Question #14. On H.O.T. and AKC's other requirements for additional breeds, the time and energy spent by the SCJA is:

RESULTS: too much 18%
 about right 55%
 not enough 26%

COMMENTS - Collectively, 81% of our members believe we are not spending too much time addressing this most important subject concerning our judges and of this, 26% indicate we should spend more time. On our very survey, over 95% of our members listed this as their primary concern. We don't believe anything has changed.

Question #15. Regarding "Hands On Testing" and making known our members' views, SCJA should be:

RESULTS: less aggressive 18%
 more aggressive 37%
 as in the past 44.5%

COMMENTS - The validity of Questions 14 & 15 are evident. The total percentages are identical. 81% believe we should continue to present our members' views or be even more forceful.

Question #16. H.O.T. was developed by a civilian management group and chanted frequently by AKC through the months in an honest attempt to improve it. Since the judges (SCJA) have been accused of being biased, in our analysis, do you believe the SCJA should engage an independent testing or management group to analyze H.O.T. and give us their independent report?

RESULTS: 60% NO

COMMENTS - Obviously, our members put little faith in outside management firms who know nothing about the intricacies of the Dog World.

Question #17. To give an indication that an applicant could interpret the words of a standard, would you be in favor of a test composed of silhouettes and photos to include actual excerpts from the standards with the applicant being required to select the three examples as excellent, average, and poor? (A pool of test photos and silhouettes to be agreed on by parent clubs, respected breeders of over 15 years, and senior judges. The pool of excellent, average, and poor examples would remain constant.)

RESULTS: 61% YES

COMMENTS - Most significant and contrary to AKC's continuing comment that the judges don't want to be tested. The judges welcome being tested when a test makes sense and is valid. Not over our required 67%, so we will not pursue this.

Question #18. Last year the majority of our members believed there

should be some form of test to guarantee a judge has read the standard. Do you believe an open book test would achieve the same purpose as a closed book test?

RESULTS: 63% YES

COMMENTS - Not one member has ever said the memory test on the standard was invalid or worthless; however, a good many judges feel the same thing could be achieved by an open book test since seldom can an individual remember the various adjectives years later.

Question #19. How do you believe the testing procedures adopted over the past few years have affected the judging?

RESULTS:

significant improvement	8%
minor improvement	29%
no change	47%
not as good	14%

COMMENTS - Only 8% thought there was a significant improvement in judging while 61% said there was no change or it was not as good. All this money, time, frustration, anger, and division amongst the judges and the entire dog community, for what? Because someone is afraid to say they made a mistake?

Question #20. For Group judges only.

- a. How many complete Groups do you judge?
- b. Do you intend to apply for additional breeds under the present system?

RESULTS: 134 Group judges.

COMMENTS - 38% of our Group judges indicated they would not apply for additional breeds. The more Groups an individual had, the less inclined they were to apply for more breeds. How sad. Our more experienced judges have said enough is enough.

Question #21. Realizing it is impossible for our over 1,000 members to agree on all positions, do you believe the numerous positions of the SCJA through the years are generally representative of your views?
i.e.

(a) judges should get copies of all negative letters received by the AKC (b) judges should not be graded on dress (c) judges should on occasion be awarded the highest grade available on the evaluation form (d) AKC Reps should furnish judges copies of their evaluation forms and judge should sign for it (e) Ringside Evaluation of judges is not practical (f) defeated dogs should not be allowed to compete for BOB (g) "Open Book" breed standard test vs. present "Closed Book" (h) "Hands On" learning is excellent; "Hands On" testing, as implemented has serious problems. (i) Group judges, who actually judged miscellaneous breeds a number of times, should be approved automatically for the breed when the breed is approved (j) complaints on judges at shows should be in writing and signed by exhibitors (k) It is more desirable to have H.O.T. with 2 or 3 dogs and a simple pass or fail with no elaborate scoring (l) be able to take the breed standard tests at colleges and universities around the country (m) all standards in same format and effective January 1 of each year and not to be changed for a fixed number of years.

RESULTS: 92% YES

COMMENTS - We are convinced we are on the right track when an unbelievable 92% of our members are in general agreement on our representations. Even though our policy is that we will not get involved in a project unless 66 2/3% of our members tell us to, the 92% is

most gratifying and tells us unequivocally that our members unable (for good reason) to speak out for themselves do want their thoughts and feelings made known. We shall continue to speak out against the inequities and shortcomings of H.O.T. as long as over 67% of you tell us to.

Question #22. In general, SCJA:

RESULTS: should be less aggressive in its dealings with AKC 19%
 is presently working as close as necessary with AKC 49%
 should be more aggressive in its dealings with AKC 32%

COMMENTS - Again, a validation of our questions. The same 81% of our over 900 members believe we should represent the views of our members. A few commenting suggested a synonym for "aggressive" and indicated "forceful" would have been a better word than "aggressive". We agree.

Question #23. Ideally, SCJA Judges Institute should be:

RESULTS: independent from the AKC school 9%
 independent, but with the cooperation of AKC as was the first
 SCJA Judges Institute 42%
 as a combined effort, i.e. SCJA/AKC Judges School 49%

COMMENTS - 91% of our members believe there should be close cooperation between the AKC and the SCJA. Indeed, there was superb cooperation on the first Institute put on by the SCJA, and again on our very recent one in August 1991 at the University of Oklahoma.

Question #24. Concerning the recent law suit filed against the SCJA by the AKC. Do you believe the SCJA responded:

RESULTS: too aggressively 17%
 about right 70%
 not aggressively enough 12%

COMMENTS - A good many of those who responded made the correct statement saying they did not know enough to comment or vote. It is obvious that the 17% answering yes had no idea of what was going on since the law suit was filed against us and we at the very least had to defend ourselves and **we did not**. This is close to that 19% who always think differently than the other 80 - 85% of the members. Although one of the recommendations by one attorney was for us to counter sue. We did not. The suit was dropped by mutual consent. If you are one of the 17%, do read the report on the way the law suit was handled.

Question #25. Should our members rate the AKC Reps in a positive manner by voting for the AKC Rep of the year or similar?

RESULTS: 56% YES

COMMENTS - Not a 2/3 majority although there were a few comments about the way the question was worded "positive manner". We can try this again improving the wording.

Question #26. Should the SCJA work more closely with the all-breed and specialty clubs and Delegate body so that they receive first hand our various positions?

RESULTS: 86% YES

COMMENTS - A very positive approach and we shall most certainly comply. The mailing costs are considerable and thought is being given to utilizing one of the dog publications to put out a monthly SCJA column.

Question #27. The establishment of an ombudsman for the AKC would be:

RESULTS: very desirable 46%
 desirable 44%
 not desirable 10%

COMMENTS - 90% believes AKC should appoint an ombudsman. This would certainly ameliorate the major problem of the AKC being judge, juror, and executioner.

Question #28. In view of the increase of major disputes within the sport involving attorneys and the courts, the establishing of an independent arbitration committee within the sport would be:

RESULTS: very desirable 49%
 desirable 37%
 not desirable 13%

COMMENTS - 86% believe we should establish an arbitration committee. It is obvious from the responses to Questions 27 & 28 that our members believe the differences in the Dog Fancy should not be handled autocratically. This is an overwhelming percentage of our members making a statement that there is definitely a lack of due process within the Dog Game. **The SCJA is working with the highest levels of the U.S. Government on this same subject.** The AKC has sued its judges, major organizations are suing each other, and we now have a club suing the delegates and an AKC Board member. The judges are divided into camps, the professional handlers are divided, boards of directors are divided, individuals who have been friends for years are now divided. **The Dog World is in a chaotic state, and something must be done to mend the divide.** We should call a blue ribbon meeting of selected individuals representing the major interests in the Sport to include journalists, judges, Delegates, handlers, exhibitors, and club officers to address the problems facing the Fancy. A white paper to be published and made available to the entire Fancy. When is the leadership going to start listening to the people they govern? Bill Kendrick often said the Delegates were the sleeping giants. They are stirring. The time has come for a major revamping. Let's do it the democratic way with debates, discussions, suggestions, and solutions.

INCOMPETENT JUDGES OR INVALID "HANDS ON TESTING"?

Either we have some of the least qualified Group judges in the world, or the H.O.T. is invalid....**WE SAY IT'S THE FLAWED TEST.** Just look at some of the respected judges who have flunked their H.O.T. There was a time when AKC judges were held in high esteem throughout the world. No more. In just a few short years, the American judges have been denigrated. Imagine all the BIS judges who have flunked individual breed tests. What happens when that breed is in their BIS ring? Does the judge disqualify him or herself because they are not qualified to judge the breed, or does the exhibitor refuse to show for the same reason? What a sad commentary for the American Dog Scene. Talk about shooting yourself in the foot. Furthermore, we forecasted years ago that this would divide the judging community, and it certainly has in a most damaging way. Is this inane test worth it? 82% say no.

Let us hear from you with suggestions for subjects for the next questionnaire or even more desirable, an actual question.