

## **Senior Conformation Judges Association, Inc.**

Wallace H. Pedé *Chief Executive Officer* 7200 Tanager St., Springfield, VA 22150 (703) 451-5656 Fax (703) 451-5979

Email: wally@scja.org

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Mr. Alan Kalter, AKC Chairman of the Board  
All AKC Board Members  
Mr. Dennis Sprung, AKC President  
Admin. Copy Mr. James Crowley, AKC Executive Secretary  
The American Kennel Club  
260 Madison Ave.  
New York, NY 10016

Subject: Judging

Dear Alan, All AKC Board Members and Dennis:

The SCJA would like to sincerely thank the AKC Chairman, Board members and AKC President for once again considering the entire problem concerning AKC judges which has been going on for well over 30 years. We had intended to send each AKC Board member the different studies that have been accomplished in the past 30 years; however, often times (and this is one of those times), to simplify a very complicated subject, we are enclosing just a letter - a letter that has been forwarded to some senior people within the Dog World and a few of the AKC Board members, all of whom have abided to our request not to divulge the letter until it was decided how to best utilize it.

The time has come to remember this very, very simple but positive comment that – **“BEAUTY IS IN THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER.”** In the subject at hand, selecting the correct dog in a class or group is in the “eyes of the beholder”. In this case, we have enclosed the AKC’s official position from the former AKC VP Dog Show Judges expressing the AKC official position in defending an AKC judge’s placements, a copy of which was sent to the AKC President and other AKC officials.

**ONCE AGAIN, THE SCJA STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THE AKC BOARD COMPLY WITH ALL THE PROVISIONS EXPRESSED IN THE ENCLOSED AKC OFFICIAL LETTER, ESPECIALLY WITH THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH QUOTED BELOW:**

***“It is the responsibility of judges to interpret the rules and breed standards and apply them accordingly; therefore, how a judge conducts the ring and the specimens they select are at their sole discretion.... Further, a judge’s decision is precisely what an owner seeks when he or she enters a dog in a show. Just as it is practically impossible for anyone to be completely objective about their own dog, it is equally certain that no two judges are going to see the same dog, even at the same moment, in exactly the same way. The whole point of a dog show is for exhibitors to put the question of relative merit up to one particular person at one particular time.”*** (underlining added)

Dedicated to serving for the good of all associated with the dog world

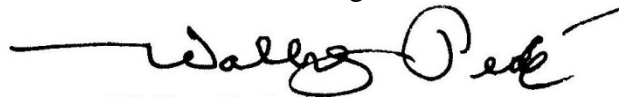
We trust that we can all agree this official position makes it crystal clear that no one outside the ring can correct the judge's opinion with their own, be they judge, handler or AKC Rep.

Final reminder - "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder." Exhibitors are paying for one judge's opinion on the day. Let's try simplifying things since all of our efforts for the past 30 years have not solved the problem. The one thing we can all agree on is that we have been trying since the 80's to fix the perceived problem with all good intentions. The very fact that we all keep bringing up the subject and trying new actions proves beyond a shadow of a doubt we haven't been successful. Let's all agree, **IT'S ONE PERSON'S OPINION.**

Rather than bring up the subject of the required basic course for judges, we intend to write a separate letter, since in the past, it has not proved effective to discuss both subjects at the same time. Concerning breed-specific education, it is most worthwhile for the parent clubs to have breed-specific education and other recognized authorities within the breed to express their opinions on a particular breed.

We would like to close by expressing our true appreciation on behalf of all of the judges and especially the future judges for the interest and time that the present Board has expended with this important subject in their attempt to solve this seemingly unsolvable problem.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wallace H. Pedé". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Wallace H. Pedé  
Chief Executive Officer

WHP/kms

Enclosure: AKC's Official Position Justifying a Judge's Selection



# THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

**DARRELL HAYES**  
Director of Judging Operations

TEL (919) 854-0192  
FAX (919) 854-0109

6, 20

Ms.  
170  
GA 30223

Dear Ms. :

This will acknowledge receipt of your March 27<sup>th</sup> letter to Mr. Al Cheauré regarding judging issues. This is an area that is of the utmost concern to us as well.

You may already be aware of AKC's efforts to improve the quality of judging through educational endeavors such as the three institutes we now conduct each year. We feel strongly that judging in the United States is probably the best in the world, as well as the fairest and most consistent. There is, of course, always room for improvement. Further, our Field Representatives do observe and report on judges and discuss those observations with them.

Although I appreciate and understand your concerns, in accordance with Chapter 7, Section 15, of *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*, "A judge's decision shall be final in all cases affecting the merits of the dogs," and Mrs. was correct in advising you that you may not file a complaint with the committee regarding Mr.'s selections for awards.

It is the responsibility of judges to interpret the rules and breed standards and apply them accordingly; therefore, how a judge conducts the ring and the specimens they select are at their sole discretion. A judge's selection, regardless if you or I disagree with them, is not considered conduct prejudicial to the sport of purebred dogs [see Section IV in enclosed booklet "*Dealing With Misconduct*"]. Further, a judge's decision is precisely what an owner seeks when he or she enters a dog in a show. Just as it is practically impossible for anyone to be completely objective about their own dog, it is equally certain that no two judges are going to see the same dog, even at the same moment, in exactly the same way. The whole point of a dog show is for exhibitors to put the question of relative merit up to one particular person at one particular time.

We believe the statistics prove beyond any doubt that most of the champions finished at AKC events are by owner/handlers. Professional handlers make up less than ten percent of all exhibitors. Do professional handlers exhibit only superior dogs? Are all judges crooks? Is the system perfect? I believe we all know the answer to these questions is "no." However, we at AKC are working to make this sport as good and fair as it can possibly be, and we appreciate receiving feedback from the fancy. Ultimately, it is our hope that you will come to respect our efforts as much as we respect your concerns.

I trust this incident will not dampen your enthusiasm for the sport, and your letter will be made a part of Mr. [redacted]'s file. Please note that under current AKC policy, judges do have the right to receive correspondence pertaining to their judging qualifications, and if requested, copies of your letters will be sent to Mr. [redacted].

Sincerely,



Darrell Hayes  
Director of Judging Operations

DH/rf

c: Al Cheauré  
Linda More  
Mari-Beth O'Neill  
[redacted] KC

encl: AKC's "Dealing With Misconduct" booklet