

In Support of Use of Ramp In AKC Hound Group and Best In Show Competition

1. AKC should make every effort to accommodate the diversity of hounds assigned to its hound group. Offering each hound exhibit AKC approved methodology for group and best in show level competition would demonstrate AKC's commitment to making advanced hound conformation competition equal and "exhibitor friendly". Providing three judging stations for the hound group would demonstrate the organization's commitment to equality of examination opportunity for every hound exhibit participating in advanced conformation competition.
2. The typical group and best in show ring is large enough for stewards to set up with three judging stations (floor space, the ramp for ramped breeds and the table for tabled breeds).
3. A pair of stewards "at the ready" would take little time to bring in the equipment, and then remove it once hound group judging is finished. Restoration of the ramp to the ring for best in show judging would also require minimum time and effort. Approved superintendents have this equipment on site at every approved show.
4. Use of the ramp is strongly urged for proper assessment of the Basset Hound's unique achondroplastic structure and the balance of form to function. The ramp provides accessibility for thorough examination and assessment of important elements of Basset Hound breed type and structure. Without it, all important essentials of the breed would be five inches or less off the ground. Grass and ground cover can hide feet and create optical illusions about length of leg. When looking down upon a grounded basset hound exhibit, various kinds of mismatched fronts are often obstructed by the headpiece and a prominent sternum. The ramp elevates the Basset Hound for an unobstructed view and promotes equal examination of every hound exhibit.
5. Basset Hound Club of America has long supported and strongly urged use of the ramp for judging basset hounds. Use of the ramp is supported on our educational CD, in parent club sponsored live judges' seminars and in the mentoring process. All specialty member clubs affiliated with Basset Hound Club of America conduct their specialties with judging on the ramp.
6. Use of the ramp for hound group judging of basset hounds is supported by breeder judge and Basset Hound Club of America's Judges' Education Chairman, Betsy Deans.
7. Use of the ramp during hound group judging is supported by BHCA's appointed AKC Gazette Columnist, Sanda J. Launey, a breeder judge. In November, 2004, AKC GAZETTE printed "WHY THE RAMP" authored by Mrs. Launey.
8. Use of the ramp for hound group judging is supported by the Board of Directors of the Basset Hound Club of America. Four members of the Board of Directors are breeder judges. Use of the ramp for hound group judging is supported by a broad spectrum of breeder judge members of Basset Hound Club of America.

Mrs. Sanda Launey
BHCA Gazette Columnist, AKC Judge