

Introduction

This Top-25 Invitational is an independent event held in conjunction with the annual Basset Hound Club of America, Inc., National Specialty show. It is intended to provide special recognition to those Basset Hounds with the most outstanding records in the show ring during the calendar year 2016, together with their breeders, handlers, and owners. This event provides a continuing incentive to strive for Basset Hounds that excel in structure, movement, temperament and conformation according to our breed standard.

Each participating dog is judged independently by three event judges; i.e., Group, Breed, and Handler, using a score sheet and point schedule for categories based on the AKC Basset Hound standard. The score sheets are tallied by a Teller's Committee to determine the Top-25 Winner.

The audience is invited to participate through a "People's Choice" selection as part of the Top-25 Competition. Each attendee will receive a single ballot to be used to declare the dog they individually favor. The ballots will be collected after all judging has been completed and totaled by the Teller's Committee for determining the "People's Choice" winner.

The Top-25 and People's Choice Winners will be announced at the Annual Banquet on Friday evening.

Eligibility

The Top 25 Invitational is based on breed points earned by Basset Hounds in conformation competition during the previous calendar year. The standings are based on breed-point wins as determined by the AKC for the period beginning January 1 and ending December 31 of the year prior to the Top-25 Invitational Event. Points awarded are equal to the number of dogs defeated (including the Best of Breed class) by winning Best of Breed at an AKC All-Breed or Specialty show. That is, dogs will be awarded one point for each dog defeated in the "breed competition" only. Based on numeric "ties", the AKC may actually list more than 25 dogs in the Top 25. Therefore, all of the dogs in the AKC Top 25 by breed points qualify for this event.

Spayed bitches and neutered dogs named among the Top 25 are eligible to compete in this event. Any deceased finalist will be invited so that the owners may enter to receive Top 25 honors, i.e., catalog pages, biography, and rosette.

Top-25 Executive Committee

This year's Top-25 Executive Committee is composed of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson and is supported by the 2017 BHCA Nationals Committee. The Top-25 Executive Committee may appoint assistants as needed, such as Catalog Coordinator, Announcer, Teller Committee, etc.

The Teller Committee is comprised of two individuals who are not related to the exhibitors, nor listed as co-owner or breeder of any participating Top-25 dog. The Teller Committee will keep the identities of the Winners SECRET until announced by the Top-25 Chairperson at the BHCA Annual Dinner.

Rules

After acquiring the official Top 25 list from AKC in January for the previous calendar year, invitations will be sent by the Top 25 Chairperson to the dog, in care of the dog's owner. If multiple owners are noted, the invitation will be sent to the "first" owner on the AKC list, unless determined otherwise. A response card will be included with the invitation and the owner must RSVP no later than the date stated in the invitation.

Every reasonable attempt will be made by the Top-25 Event Chairperson to notify the owner by U.S. mail, email, or phone of their eligibility to compete in the Top-25 Event; however, it is ultimately the responsibility of the owner to ensure their contact information is up to date with the AKC and/or BHCA and reply to Top-25 communications accordingly.

Dogs owned, co-owned, bred or handled by the Top-25 Committee Chairperson and Co-Chairperson are not allowed to compete, but may enter as "For Exhibition Only (FEO)" and will enter the ring and circle for exhibition prior to the competing exhibitors. Any dog owned, co-owned, bred, or handled by a Top-25 judge is not permitted to complete in this event.

Any dog deemed ineligible to complete due to a conflict of interest may be entered FEO and presented, receive catalog pages, biography and rosette.

Finalists will be allowed to compete only if their owner or agent attends the mandatory briefing that is held at least one hour prior to the start of judging.

Judges

Judges are selected by the Top-25 Chairperson and Co-Chairperson. Judges will be selected based on their knowledge, attributes and skills. Attention to avoiding known conflicts, where possible, with participating dogs will be factored into the selection decision.

Three judges will be selected as follows:

1. Judge #1 – Breeder: A Basset Hound breeder who has been breeding for at least five years, having produced at least five AKC Champions of Record from at least three difference litters.
2. Judge #2 – Handler (past or present): A known handler of Basset Hounds who meets the general requirements for being a professional handler, though not necessarily a professional association member. The person must have at least five years handling experience and be in good standing with the AKC, etc. It is preferred that the handler have at least five years of experience handling multiple Basset Hounds.
3. Judge #3 – AKC Approved Group Judge: An AKC judge approved for Basset Hounds and the Hound Group. It is preferred but not required that the judge have judged a major Basset Hound entry at least five times.

Once selections are settled, the Chairperson will confirm acceptance of the assignment and availability verbally and in writing. A written contract will be used to confirm the judge's commitment and include a non-disclosure clause specifying that the judge NOT disclose to anyone that he/she is judging the event. Gifts and/or compensation to judges will be determined by the Top-25 Executive Committee.

It is imperative that the judges keep their identities confidential until officially announced at the Event.



Ring Stewards

A minimum of two ring stewards will be assigned for the Top-25 Invitational, one to serve as an “in-ring steward” for the judges and the other to serve as “gate steward.” The stewards will not be related to the exhibitors, nor listed as co-owner or breeder of any participating Top-25 dog. The stewards will NOT be told the names of the judges prior to the start of judging.

Ring stewards will be required to attend the mandatory handler’s briefing one hour prior to the start of judging to receive instructions and distribute arm bands.

During the judging, the only communication between the ring stewards and judges will be confined to questions of procedures. Ring stewards will respect the confidentiality of the scoring process throughout the judging and refrain from interacting with the judges until provided the completed score sheets.

The in-ring steward will be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality and security of judges’ score sheets in accordance with the below procedures.

The gate steward will be responsible for managing the order of exhibitors in and out of the ring in accordance with the below procedures.

Procedures

One hour prior to the start of judging, the Top-25 Chairperson and Co-Chairperson will convene a mandatory exhibitor briefing and distribute arm bands. Location for the briefing will be held in a private area and restricted to the exhibitor (owner or agent) only. Upon conclusion of the briefing, exhibitors will be excused and given a 30-minute break to collect their dogs and report to the ring steward at the designated gate.

At the start of the competition, the Announcer will formally introduce each judge.

After introducing the judges, all Top 25 exhibitors will enter the ring in catalog order and stack their dogs. After the judges have viewed the stacked dogs, the Group Judge will have the dogs circle the ring twice and exit the ring. The first exhibitor shall re-enter the ring and present his/her dog on the ramp for examination by Judge #1, then Judge #2, and then Judge #3. Each judge will have a separate score sheet provided by the ring steward and shall score the dog

independently and without collaboration with the other judges. After the judges have examined the first dog, the dog shall be gaited individually, circle the ring and exit while the judges complete their scoring.

As each judge completes his/her scoring of a dog, he/she shall sign their Judge's score sheet, fold it in half, and hand it to the "in-ring" steward. Without unfolding the score sheets, the in-ring steward will collect the score sheets from each judge and seal them into a designated envelope displaying the dog's arm band number on the outside. The in-ring steward will place the envelope into a secured container to be provided to the Top-25 Teller Committee at the conclusion of all judging.

The gate steward will call in the next dog and the process is repeated until all dogs have been judged.

After all dogs have been presented and scored, the Announcer will call all exhibitors back into the ring for the presentation of the rosettes by the Group judge.

During this time, the Announcer will direct that all People's Choice ballots be placed in a designated ballot box to be provided to the Teller Committee for tallying. No People's Choice ballots will be accepted until the conclusion of all judging.

The Teller Committee will provide the results to the Top-25 Chairperson to be presented at the BHCA Annual Dinner. Results will be kept SECRET until presented at the Annual Banquet.

Prizes

A personalized Top-25 Invitational Participant rosette, catalog, and gift will be presented to each dog entered and participating in the Event.

A rosette will be presented to the Owners of the Top-25 and People's Choice winners by the Top-25 Invitational Chairperson and any attending Top-25 judges at the BHCA Annual Dinner. Note: No dogs will attend the banquet.



Top 25 Basset Hounds of 2016 Invitational Event

POINT SCHEDULE & SCORE SHEET

Dog/Armband#: _____

Judge #: _____

- # 1 – Group Judge
- # 2 – Breed Judge
- # 3 – Handler Judge

Judges Note: "Awarded Points" are not to exceed "Maximum Points" shown for each "Section Covered." "Total Score" will be calculated by the Teller Committee.

SECTIONS COVERED	DESCRIPTION	MAX PTS	AWARDED PTS
General appearance	Breed type, balance, coat, body, etc.	10	
Size & substance	Height, weight, bone, proportion	10	
Head	Shape (planes, stop, proportion), ears (length, fold, set), Eyes (expression & color), Teeth (size & bite), Muzzle (flew & dewlap)	10	
Neck, topline, body	Neck, topline, rib structure, tail-set, elbows	15	
Forequarters	Shoulder placement, layback, angulation, pro sternum, chest, feet and pasterns	15	
Hindquarters	Bend of stifle, angulation, muscling, hocks, feet, tail	10	
Temperament	Friendliness, responsiveness, confidence & reaction to environment	10	
Movement	Reach & drive, fluidness, front, rear, functionality	20	
	<u>THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TELLER COMMITTEE</u>		
	TOTAL SCORE:	100	

Judge Signature: _____

Points calculated and verified by:

Teller Committee Member Signature

Teller Committee Member Signature