

Duties of Conformation Committee Chair

The duties of the Conformation Chair mainly involve seeing to it that the two PVGRC annual events involving conformation are put together in a cohesive and consistent fashion, those events being the annual specialty and the annual match.

Further involvement would clearly be required if the club was granted permission to hold a GRCA Eastern Regional Specialty or National Specialty.

Obviously, he or she should also function as the chairman of the Conformation Committee in all matters pertaining to conformation that may arise during the rest of the year.

The primary responsibility, as the job seemingly is evolving, consists of finding chairs for the two events, working to complete the judging panels and thereafter providing some guidance when requested.

In doing so, the Chair, along with the Committee, is also responsible for compiling and updating a list of potential conformation/sweeps judges from which judging panels for these events will be selected, most particularly the specialty.

And, when required, actually obtain the judges for the two events.

Needless to say, there would probably also be some interplay between the Conformation Committee Chair and the Obedience Committee Chair for the two events, and probably some involvement between the Specialty Chair, the Specialty Obedience Chair and even the WC/WCX Chair for the spring test held in conjunction with the specialty.

The Conformation Committee Chair (and the Conformation Committee to perhaps a lesser degree) should have a basic understanding of what is involved in chairing either (or both) of these events, perhaps even having done so in the past. Experience with obedience/rally doesn't hurt, either.

Of course, the Chair should have some knowledge of general conformation "ins and outs".

Having been involved in that activity for some time as an exhibitor or owner of a conformation competitor, working with site personnel, superintendents, judges, class scheduling, ring set up, etc. is a good base to start from.

Event Chairs

The job of the Specialty Chair is obviously more complicated than the Match Chair since it involves dealing with a superintendent and also to a greater degree with the AKC.

Certain of the duties are handled by the superintendent, primarily preparing & mailing the premium, taking the entries, preparing and mailing the judging schedule & the catalog, providing equipment and being on site for the show, plus filing certain info with the AKC post-show.

Nonetheless, there must be extensive communication between the Show Chair and the superintendent to make sure they are on the same page and also making sure the Show Chair has certain controls over the superintendent's actions. That is, the Show Chair calls the shots in agreement with the superintendent, not the other way around.

Finally, the Show Chair should be prepared to have no dogs shown by himself or herself, or anyone else, in the specialty. This includes sweeps, regular conformation, obedience & rally.

There is no problem with them entering dogs in the WC/WCX.

The Show Chair is responsible for the following, not necessarily in any order of importance or chronology:

1. Familiarity with AKC regulations concerning specialty shows and access to the various AKC required forms and contact info for the correct departmental personnel in North Carolina.
2. Familiarity with the AKC manual (I believe the club has a fairly recent version, which contains extensive guideline information).

The manual makes suggestions and also outlines the mandatory requirements as to when the various steps need to be completed (or should be, in the case of suggestions) and the suggested timeline to follow.

Since many of the items in the manual pertain to all breed shows, the Show Chair should extract those items that either simply refer to specialties or determine which all breed requirements (or suggestions) should also apply to our specialty.

Nonetheless, the Show Chair is responsible for seeing to it that the AKC requirements, including all necessary paperwork (or now online applications) is completed within the required time constraints.
3. Selecting chairs for the various necessary committees. This includes someone to handle advertising, parking, hospitality, vendors, etc.

Consult the previous year's premium and catalog for those positions that will be required. The duties of those committee chairs should be somewhat self-explanatory, but the Show Chair, in conjunction with previous specialty committee chairs, should be able to provide proper guidance as to what needs to be done by each person.

Don't forget to arrange for an announcer, a loudspeaker system and an acceptable version of the National Anthem. Please do forget any far out, non-traditional versions!
4. Establishing contact with the superintendent's office, developing some rapport with the superintendent and completing the appropriate contract and any other paperwork to secure the superintendent's services.

The contract should clearly outline the charges, the club's requirements for the premium, the judging schedule, the catalog, and the equipment to be provided by the superintendent and that to be supplied by the club, among other things. This includes a timeline for the completion of various things, including the submission and approval of the premium, the mailing of it, the deadlines for such things as advertising, etc.

The superintendent must adhere to these timelines; they are vital to getting the revenue producing items out to the public. The advertising submission deadline in particular is always an issue.
5. Determining the show site to be utilized and completing the necessary paperwork to secure it.

This includes ascertaining if there are governmental or facility requirements which must be met, what exactly is included in any property rental fees, etc.

Some sites restrict such things as alcoholic beverage consumption, require that you use their food vendors, place certain areas off limits, etc. Check to make sure there is no confusion on these items, they will need to be made known to potential entrants ahead of time by means of the premium list and judging schedule.

Since we frequently use the same facility on an annual basis, previous premiums should help identify any such issues, although the site contract (and contact) should be checked to make sure there have been no changes from previous years.

At the same time, a list of suitable accommodations must be prepared with the understanding that they must be confirmed. That is, it is not simply enough to assume that a hotel or motel from previous years wishes to be listed for the current show. Also, the dog policies of that establishment should be confirmed and published, as well as any special show rates.
6. Establishing early contact with the conformation/sweeps judges, introduce one's self and determine if they (the judges) or the club will handle their travel plans. If the club is to

handle, get some preliminary plans in place. An idea as to when they will be in town, how they plan to get here, etc. Some of these judges are very specific about their requirements; make sure we know what they may be.

This should be done in a coordinated fashion with the Obedience Chair.

Then, when the travel plans are known for sure, appropriate reservations can be made.

The chair will be the person most likely to also serve as “Judge’s Hospitality Chair”.

This means planning a judges’ dinner for all the judges (including obedience/rally) and hosting it. The club president and Obedience Chair should also be invited.

Most likely the judging panel will already have been selected and contracted for before the Show Chair is in place, but if not, the Show Chair will work with the Conformation Committee to complete the panel.

All judges must have signed contracts specifying the terms of them serving. If we don’t have one signed when the chairman assumes their position, they must secure them.

Generally speaking, we have tried to geographically balance our panels. That is, if we have one judge coming from some relatively distant place, we try to find a second one who is somewhat more local.

Make sure that arrangements are made to have someone with club check writing authority available to pay the judges at the conclusion of their assignment. The fees should be spelled out in the contract and the judges should submit a “bill”. Most judges have a form they use, which is more than satisfactory.

Finally, as for the judges, determine who in the club will arrange for the judges’ gifts and make sure they are presented at an appropriate time. Also that there are ringside baskets or bags with goodies, towlettes, etc. which the judge may find useful completing his/her assignment.

7. Make sure that a person (or people) is in charge of providing all food and refreshments for the judges, stewards and other workers. This includes appropriate refreshments ringside and the same person should be in charge of the lunch for judges and workers. The tradition has been to have the food donated by club members. Many of them like to show off their culinary skills while saving the club substantial amounts of money.
8. Secure the services (by contract) of an experienced show photographer for the specialty. A club member with photographic skills is satisfactory for the match.
9. Review the premium list when it is prepared and seek additional experienced people to help with its review and approval.
And coordinate with the WC/WCX chair, to be held the Sunday after the specialty, on the best way to publicize it in the premium.
10. Review the judging schedule and seek additional experienced people to help with its scheduling. The scheduling of breed is important in that we wish to avoid as much as possible conflicts in the Open and Bred By classes for dogs and bitches.
Also, because we restrict who can exhibit in Sweeps, it is advisable not to have sweeps and the regular classes going on at the same time.
Experience with our current superintendent has shown that they pretty much can be relied on to properly schedule obedience, but they need to understand that we use the same rings for obedience as for rally. Therefore, there must be sufficient time between the two to allow for reconfiguring the rings, allowing the judge to set out the first rally course and the first walk-thru.
Obedience will always precede rally.
11. Round up sufficient people to help with the set up the day before the specialty (and make sure of adequate personnel to tear down after the show).
12. Be prepared to submit the results of all the show events to the Golden Retriever News, including photos all of the class winners in breed, sweeps and obedience (and perhaps rally), along with winners of major awards.

Details on the submission of the results can be found in issues of the News and past issues can be consulted for the appropriate format.

13. For conformation/sweeps, make sure you have adequate, and hopefully experienced, stewards to cover the multiple rings. Two stewards for each ring should be sufficient as long as at least one has more than just a passing knowledge of what to do.
14. Coordinate any ring and general site decorations.
15. Make sure the rosettes and trophies are ordered or made.

The rosettes can be ordered in the same manner and number as previous years.

The probability exists that there are other issues the Show Chair will have to deal with, But this list probably covers those that would be considered the most important.

It would be wonderful if we could have a Show Chair waiting in the wings. That is, a person agreeing to chair the following year, so that they might “apprentice” this year’s chair and therefore have a good grip on what the job entails.

The Match Chair shares some of the same responsibilities, but on a much smaller scale. Since our match is Sanctioned, we do have some requirements that less formal matches do not have to deal with. And, like the Show Chair for the specialty, the Match Chair should not anticipate participating in any of the events.

It doesn’t look good from the standpoint of the necessary interaction with the judges and the chair should have too many other things to be concerned with.

There will be no need for a superintendent, although we have been able to get judge’s books from the show superintendent we have used for the past number of years.

On the other hand, the club must provide all of the necessary equipment. Hopefully, whoever is judging rally will have the course signs needed.

We still must comply with certain AKC requirements. PVGRC annually holds our sanctioned B/OB match in late August or early September.

The match consists of sweeps/conformation/obedience/rally, the same events we have for our specialty. Therefore, this is a good training ground for a potential Specialty Chair. The AKC publishes a match rules and regulations booklet that spells out what is required from their standpoint.

A quick review shows that their requirements are much less stringent. For instance, they require that a formal request to hold the match must be made only at least 4 weeks prior to the event date.

Nonetheless, permission must be granted, additional classes (sweeps/rally) must be requested, etc.

A copy of the updated AKC pamphlet should be in our records, but even if not, can be reviewed on the AKC website.

The Match Conformation Chair should be able to work with the Match Obedience/Rally Chair to insure a smooth running event.

The idea of a match is two fold. It provides a less formal atmosphere for people to display their dogs and also offers the judges (and club) experience in putting on an event similar to a real show (or specialty).

As such, and to a lesser degree, many of the requirements of the specialty are repeated here. Ribbons (not rosettes for most awards) for placements, ring decorations, site planning, food, etc. are all items to take into consideration. We do not offer trophies at the match.

As we have begun to offer sweeps at our match, we have had to find a second judge who has a basic knowledge of sporting dogs. I believe the 2005 specialty sweeps judge had judged sweeps at the match the year before and displayed a good knowledge of the breed standard in both instances.

Since the AKC still requires that people applying for judging licenses judge matches, the person selected to judge the “regular conformation” class at our match should hopefully be some who is either currently pursuing a license to judge goldens or is likely to sometime in the future.

The Match Conformation Chair is responsible for either finding these judges or works with the Conformation Committee to locate suitable ones. The Match Chair will be the contact person for the judges and no formal contracts would be required.

In regard to other aspects, club members, who have been involved in the match from previous involvement, can be relied on to help. For instance, securing the site, providing the equipment the club has, suggestions as to who can provide lunches, where to get the ribbons, etc.

Generally speaking the match is not a moneymaker, so it is important that we keep a close eye on the expense side of the ledger.

Judges are typically local; we try to avoid travel/lodging expenses.

Even without a superintendent, we still must publicize the event. The match entry info will appear in the club newsletter, but we hope to attract non-member golden people, also.

Flyers can be printed and, with permission, handed out at other dog events. Also, Internet sources can be used to promote the match. Simply stated, this is an event which is much more word of mouth than the specialty, which has many sources of publicity. The best resource for the Match Chair, besides the AKC booklet, is the club records. The same should be true of the Specialty Chair. Although I have not looked at them for quite some time, I suspect they are up to date and will provide the necessary guidance.

That should summarize the job of the Show Chair for the specialty and the Match Chair. Surely, questions from those filling those positions will arise and may not have been addressed here.

At that stage the Conformation Committee Chair & Committee should be in a position to assist in any way possible. Until then, the primary responsibility of the committee remains to establish and maintain a list of judges approved by the club for the specialty and assist, if necessary, in suggesting match judges.

We gained a lot of what might seem to be superfluous experience with the 2005 GRCA National, but much of what we dealt with there may help with any questions which may arise here. Certainly, we faced all the logical issues (and some highly illogical ones) in Gettysburg.