

**THE TOP 20 COMMITTEE
SELECTION, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS
(Approved June 2017)**

1. Under supervision of the ACA Show Chair, the Top 20 Committee shall be responsible for producing the Top 20 Invitational competition at each year's National Specialty.
2. Rankings and eligibility will be determined by statistics based on published data from the AKC Awards online reports.
3. The National Specialty show chair shall chair the Top 20 Committee, and shall have a term as designated by the Akita Club of America (ACA) Board of Directors (BOD).
4. The committee members shall have a term as determined by the ACA BOD.
5. In the event the ACA arranges for food and/or beverages (F&B) for exhibitors and spectators at the TT event, F&B for TT exhibitors will be approved by the board annually since venues change from year to year.
6. Formal dress is requested of those attending the Top 20 event to recognize and honor the top-winning dogs in our breed.

SELECTION AND ELIGIBILITY OF TOP 20 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. The Top 20 Committee shall be comprised of members in good standing with the ACA. These members shall be recommended by the ACA show chair and approved by the ACA BOD.
2. Each year a new committee will be formed of qualified members. Committee members must guarantee that their activities remain entirely secret until the competition actually begins.
3. Qualification and selection of the committee members are approved solely by the ACA BOD.
4. Committee members and National Show chair may not own or co-own, or in any other way be connected to any dog eligible for Top 20 competition for the upcoming year's National Specialty.
5. **Committee Responsibilities**
 - a. Due to the need for complete confidentiality in the selection of the Top 20 conformation placements, committee members must assume all duties culminating in production of the Top 20 Invitational event at the upcoming year's National Specialty.
 - b. The Top 20 Committee is a sub-committee of the National Show Committee and is directly responsible to the ACA BOD.

- c. The Top 20 Committee is responsible for compiling breed and group point wins as published in the AKC Awards online reports for the eligibility period. The eligibility period shall be determined based upon the official AKC statistics that are available for the time period from June 1 of the previous year through May 31 of the current calendar year. This allows the committee no less than one month to compile statistics before posting eligible dogs to the ACA website and mailing invitations to owners and co-owners.
 - d. The closing date for the acceptance of the invitation and entry into the event shall correspond with the closing date for entry in the National Specialty. Entry shall be made on the official ACA entry form approved by the ACA BOD and mailed by the ACA designated superintendent.
 - e. The ACA show chairman, along with the committee, will be responsible for verifying that each dog entered is eligible for competition.
6. In order to maintain complete confidentiality, the Top 20 committee members & ACA show chair shall be solely responsible for the selection and engagement of the judges required for the event. The importance of carefully thought-out judging selections commensurate with the importance and prestige of the event should be foremost in each committee members mind.
7. The Top 20 committee shall contact its selection of the event's judges no later than six months prior to the event. The judging panel will be composed of the following:
 - a. An AKC approved all-breed judge or working group judge (who is not connected to breeding, owning, or co-owning Akitas)
 - b. A working dog professional handler judge (Must be either active or retired from making his/her living handling dogs; is not connected to breeding, owning, or co-owning Akitas)
 - c. A breeder judge that will be selected by random drawing from qualified persons who meet all the requisite criteria as breeder judge, and who express an interest in judging this event. The breeder judge must guarantee that he/she does not have any connection to any dog entered in the Top 20 competition by signing an eligibility form to determine such qualification. (See Attachment D)
 - d. Judges must either be an AKC approved judge or meet the 12/5/4 criteria established by AKC for judging application eligibility.
 - e. Any individual who judges the Top 20 will be placed on an eight-year blackout period and will be ineligible to judge the Top 20 during the blackout period. This does not exclude a judge from participating in judging a national specialty regular AKC class, provided they are not in a blackout period which applies under the national specialty judging rules. Selection of and acceptance by each judge is to be kept strictly confidential and that information is limited solely to the Top 20 chair and three committee members.
 - f. It shall be a condition of acceptance by all selected judges that they maintain strict secrecy regarding their invitation/assignment and participation in the event until

after the event has occurred. Selected judges will not be ringside at national specialty events or out socializing with exhibitors prior to judging the event (no exceptions).

- g. The committee is urged to select judges from the general geographic region of the national specialty site to reduce costs.
 - h. Judges will be given one night's lodging and dinner at the event.
8. The committee shall invite and rotate eligible ACA members in good standing to assist as stewards and event assistants for the Top 20 Invitational event.
9. Trophies
- a. The pewter bowl trophy will be sponsored as other trophies are sponsored by members' donations for the event winner. If the trophy is sponsored, it is the responsibility of the Top 20 committee to purchase the trophy, and it must be in the possession of the committee prior to the date of the national specialty. It shall be the obligation of the committee to have such a trophy properly tagged and displayed at the trophy table and at the ACA national banquet. The TT committee will deplete pewter bowl trophies in ACA inventory prior to purchasing additional bowls.
 - b. The ACA will provide each entered dog a complimentary rosette embossed with the dog's name.
 - c. The ACA will provide the winner a similar but somewhat larger rosette.
10. People's Choice
- a. Please see Attachment A for procedures.
 - b. Ballot will be given to all spectators with their paid entry fee. The fee will be determined each year by the show/TT committee as costs from each venue change based on hotel costs. The winner will be announced immediately following the event.
11. Top 20 owner handler competition will be simultaneous with the overall Top 20 event. Please see Attachment B for eligibility requirements and procedures.
12. The Top 20 committee is governed by the ACA BOD and any deviations from the established rules must be approved by the BOD. The Top 20 committee will report to the show chairman concerning all entries, entry eligibility verification, arrangements for judges' rooms and dinners, ordering of rosettes, catalog pages and ads, and any other logistical needs for holding the event with the national show.
13. For any issues/problems that would involve an exhibitor's participation who is entered:
- a. A decision and any forthcoming action would be determined solely by ACA Board to protect the committee from any perception of unfairness.
 - b. The ACA board members present at the event will convene immediately to render an opinion and decision.
 - c. The exhibitor will not enter the event until said opinion and decision is made by the ACA BOD present.

ATTACHMENT A

Akita Club of America Top 20 Event People's Choice Award Procedures (Approved 9/1/2012)

1. Each spectator will have the opportunity to receive a score sheet (sample attached).
 - a. The score sheet will be the same score sheet that is used by each of the judges with the exception that the spectator will have one score sheet with score boxes for each dog on one sheet, whereas the judges use a separate score sheet for each dog. **NOTE:** The score sheets are for the spectator's use in scoring the dogs **ONLY**. The score sheets themselves will **NOT** be submitted to the committee for tabulation or determination of the winner. **ONLY** the **OFFICIAL BALLOT** will be submitted to the committee for determination of the People's Choice Award winner. The ballot will have a space for the spectator to vote for his/her top placing dog.
 - b. Each spectator will vote (place) his five favorite dogs in order, first through fifth.
 - c. Any ballot having less than five placements will **NOT** be considered valid and will **NOT** be counted.
 - d. The Top 20 committee will give points for each dog for whom the spectator has voted from the following schedule:
 - First place = 5 points
 - Second place = 4 points
 - Third place = 3 points
 - Fourth place = 2 points
 - Fifth place = 1 point
2. The dog with the highest point tally will be the winner. In the event of a tie, the dog with the most first place votes will be the tie-breaker.
3. The Top 20 Committee will tally the scores along with one board member at the time the judges' score sheets are tallied.
4. The People's Choice winner will be announced immediately following the event.

ATTACHMENT B

Akita Club of America Top 20 Event Owner Handler Competition/Award (Approved June 2017)

1. This award is intended to recognize those individuals who choose to owner-handle their dogs and have successfully qualified for the Top 20 Invitational.
2. This is an additional award, not a separate event, and does not preclude these Akitas from winning the Top 20 event.
3. In order to be eligible for the Top 20 Event Owner Handler Award, the dog must first meet the basic Top 20 eligibility requirements.
4. The dog must have been shown to the Top 20 eligibility by one of the owners or co-owners. All owners/co-owners must have been legal co-owners of the dog for the entire eligibility period.
5. The dog/handler will be **INELIGIBLE** if the handler has been a paid professional handler (i.e., having received payment for handling any dog) at any time during the previous five years.
 - a. Owner Handler Top 20 entrants must sign a disclaimer stating that the dog has been handled for the qualification period only by an owner or co/owner who satisfies item #4 of this attachment.
 - b. If a dog is designated as owner-handler eligible and it is discovered that the dog had been handled by a professional handler for any show(s) during the qualification period, the dog will be deemed ineligible to compete in any fashion and entry fee(s) forfeited for the event. If the ineligibility is discovered after the event, any and all awards won at the event will be disallowed and forfeited. If the owner is an ACA member he/she may be brought up on charges to the Board for unsportsmanlike conduct.
6. The owner-handler eligible dogs will compete for this award simultaneously while competing for the Top 20 competition. An asterisk (*) in the catalog will designate the entry as owner-handler eligible.
7. The eligible owner-handled dog receiving the highest score will be considered the winner. Tie breaker, as with the Top 20 Event, will be the dog who accumulates the highest total scores given at the "group" level competition.
8. Entry will be made on the official ACA/AKC entry form for the National Specialty as an additional class entry (Top 20).
 - a. The box at the bottom of the form stating "Owner Handler Eligible" **MUST** be checked "Yes."
 - b. The entry fee will be sent along with the entry returned to the ACA National Specialty designated superintendent.
 - c. Entry fee (for Top 20) will be determined each year by the ACA BOD.
 - d. The show chairman will verify each entrant's eligibility status.
 - e. There will be no **ADDITIONAL** fee to be eligible for the Top 20 Owner Handler competition/award.
9. A rosette of equal size and value to the People's Choice Award winner will be offered.
10. Winner will be announced at the Akita Club of America Annual Banquet.

ATTACHMENT C

Akita Club of America Top 20 Event Owner Handler Competition Eligibility Disclaimer (Approved 5/2015)

By signing this document I am stating that:

1. I have not in the last five years accepted payment to handle a dog for another owner.
2. I own either alone or with a co-owner(s) the Akita I have entered in the Top 20 Event.
3. This Akita has been handled exclusively by me or a qualifying co-owner(s) for the entire Top 20 qualifying period.

By signing this document, I understand that if it be discovered that this Akita has, in fact, been handled by anyone other than myself or a qualifying co-owner at any time during the qualifying period, I will be eliminated from the competition and forfeit my entry fee(s). I understand that I am an ACA member, and as such I may be brought up on charges to the ACA Board of Directors for unsportsmanlike conduct, and all awards won at the event will be disallowed and forfeited.

Signature of Owner

Date

Signature of Co-Owner

Date

Signature of Co-Owner

Date

ATTACHMENT D

Akita Club of America Top 20 Event Breeder Judge Eligibility Form

By signing this form, I am stating my interest in judging the Top 20 competition at the Akita Club of America National Specialty, and further declare that I meet the following qualifications:

1. I am a member in good standing of the Akita Club of America.
2. I am not the owner or co-owner of any dog in the competition.
3. I am not the breeder or co-breeder of any dog in the competition.
4. I am not the owner or co-owner of the sire or dam of any dog in the competition.
5. I have not bred or co-bred a bitch to any dog in the competition, nor have I bred or co-bred a dog to any bitch in the competition.
6. I do not own or co-own any puppies produced by any dog/bitch in the competition.
7. I have been involved in the breeding and exhibiting of Akitas for a minimum of 15 years, and have produced at least five conformation AKC Akita champions as published in the AKC awards.
8. I am eligible to judge and have not judged this ACA category for the past 8 years.

Signature _____ Date _____