

March 27, 2010

It has always been the goal of OSDA to help our member handlers and their dogs progress to their full potential. The Novice & Ranch classes are intended to be a starting place and not a destination. However we need to keep in mind that not all handlers and dogs progress at the same pace, and they should be the best ones to determine if they are as a team ready to move up to the next level, and not feel so uncomfortable as to not enjoy the dog trialing experience.

In keeping with these goals we make these 3 proposals..

1. Novice and Ranch classes shall not have an entry fee of more than 20.00 per dog per class. There will not be paybacks in the Novice and Ranch classes, however ribbons or awards will be given. All entry fees after expenses shall be placed in a fund to be kept solely for the purpose of putting on training clinics, judging clinics and playdays, in an effort to help all our handlers progress to their full potentials. There shall not be any requirement to move a dog up from the novice and ranch classes however no dog shall be awarded the dog of the year award for more than one year.
2. While it is my belief it is a very beneficial for Open handlers to be able to start a young dog in the ranch class, they do have an advantage in experience over a handler who has just moved up from novice and just been in the ranch class for a short time and therefore should not be eligible to receive dog of the year awards in the ranch class.
3. In order for Oklahoma to advance more handlers and their dogs to the national level in the Novice class it is necessary to have more entries in this class. Novice and Ranch handlers have hesitated to run the in Novice class as it requires them to then move up to the Open Ranch class. Therefore, Novice and Ranch handlers should be able to run in the Novice class, if age appropriate and still remain eligible to run in novice or ranch. This would also give these young dogs another opportunity to gain experience on the trial field. The Novice class should be run last in the trial in order to not give these dogs an undo advantage in novice or ranch placings.

It has been suggested that if a dog wins a Novice class they be required to move up to Open Ranch at that time however this does not seem necessary, as if they are expecting to qualify on the National level it would be in their best interest to move up to Open Ranch on their own in order to get more experience in order to compete on a national level. Handlers would have to still keep in mind that while this may be the rule in OSDA if they expect to compete in Ranch or Novice in other states it is not likely that they will have the same rule and you may be required to either run exhibition or Open Ranch in that state.

These are just proposals and everyone's input will be appreciated as long as we all keep the well-being and the objective of all our dogs reaching their full potentials in mind.