

PORTUGUESE WATER DOG CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

TOP TWENTY EVENT

PURPOSE

To showcase excellence in Portuguese Water Dogs, the PWDCA, Inc. has developed the Top-20 Competition to be held in conjunction with the annual National Specialty. This event is intended to educate and entertain judges, exhibitors, breeders and fanciers. It provides special recognition to those PWDs with the most outstanding records in the show ring during the previous year, together with their breeders, handlers, and owners. This event provides a continuing incentive to strive for PWDs that excel in structure, movement, temperament and conformation to our written standard.

The Top-20 Competition offers all who attend a chance to view the very best PWDS in the country based on their competitive standings in breed points from the previous year. Using a point system, each dog is evaluated by three judges according to how closely it conforms to the breed standard. The audience is able to “judge along” using the same score sheet as each judge uses. Although audience judging does not count toward the competition, this can encourage an exchange of ideas during discussions of the breed standard. The event is educational, promoting discussion of the standard and providing spectators an opportunity to see how individual views can produce a consensus decision, which can then be compared to their own impressions.

The Top-20 Competition is held one or more days prior to Best of Breed judging so as not to allow the BOB selections to influence the outcome of the Top-20 Competition.

TOP-20 COMMITTEE

The Top-20 Committee is composed of no more than 12 members. The Committee will consist of members of the PWDCA who must be in good standing with the American Kennel Club and the PWDCA. The Chairperson(s) will be appointed by the PWDCA Board. Committee members will be appointed by the Committee Chairperson and with approval of the Board.

The 2011 Event will have Co-Committee Chairpersons either of which can serve in the absence of the other if necessary. Other positions within the Committee may be appointed. For example; Catalog, Hospitality, Master of Ceremonies, Treasurer, and Trophy Chairperson may be designated as needed.

ELIGIBILITY

The selection for Top-20 Competition will be based on the breed points earned by Portuguese Water Dogs in conformation competition during the previous year. (For discussion purposes, the word "dog" will be used hereafter to refer either to dogs or bitches with no preference given to either sex.) The standings are based on breed-point wins as published in the AKC *Awards* publication beginning for the period January 1 and ending December 31 of the year prior to the Top-20 event. Points awarded are equal to the number of dogs defeated (including 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 "breed competition" only.

Owners and co-owners must be in good standing with the American Kennel Club and the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America, but need not be a member of the PWDCA. Owners and co-owners must agree to abide by all of the Top-20 rules. These rules apply to the finalists' participation in this event and failure to follow these rules may revoke the privilege of future participation, regardless of eligibility.

Spayed bitches and neutered dogs that have been named among the Top-20 may compete in this event. Any previous Top-20 winners are excluded from competition but may be invited and may participate as “Exhibition Only” and will be so noted in the Top-20 Catalog. Any deceased finalist will be invited and will be granted the same honor as the rest of the Top-20 participants, i.e. catalog pages, biography and rosette. Dogs invited to appear for “Exhibition Only” will be charged a partial entry fee to cover printing and rosette costs.

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

When the final statistics for the previous year have been compiled, the Top-20 Portuguese Water Dogs are invited to participate in the competition subject to the PWDCA Top-20 event Rules and Regulations.

The invitations will be sent by the Top-20 Chairperson and will be addressed to the dog, in care of the dog's owner. A response card will be included with the invitation and the owner must RSVP no later than six weeks prior to the date of the event. The number of dogs eligible and invited to the Top 20 is based on the dogs actually ranked in the Top 20 by breed points by AKC. Based on numeric “ties”, the AKC might actually list more than 20 dogs in the Top 20. All of the dogs in the AKC Top 20 by breed points will qualify for this event.

An entry fee, the amount of which shall have been determined by the Top-20 Committee and approved by the PWDCA Board, is to be returned with the RSVP card. In addition, the dog's biography, photograph, and a 4-generation pedigree to be used for the Top-20 Catalog must be returned to the Top-20 Chairperson no later than six weeks prior to the date of the competition.

Dogs that are owned or co-owned by a Top-20 Committee Member are permitted to participate in the Top-20 competition. However, dogs owned or co-owned by the Committee Chairperson(s) are not allowed to compete.

JUDGE SELECTION PROCESS

Judges for Top-20 Competition are selected by the Top-20 Competition Committee as follows:

1. Each member may nominate up to five judges in each category listed below and forward the names to the Committee Chairperson.
2. The Committee Chairperson will then review those judges nominated for eligibility and will prepare and mail a ballot to each participating Committee member.
3. The Committee members will vote independently and return their ballot to the Committee Chairperson. In the event two people from the same household serve on the Top-20 Competition Committee, the Top-20 Competition Chairperson will count their vote as only one in the selection of judges.
4. The Top-20 Competition Chairperson will tally the votes and will confirm the acceptance of the winning nominee judges based on their availability. If the top judge is not available, the Chairperson will try to secure the 2nd ranked judge and so on.
5. The Chairperson will inform each judge that is contracted that he/she is NOT to disclose their selection to anyone, including the Top-20 Committee. The Catalog Chairperson, who will be responsible for the printing of the Top-20 Catalog, will be advised of the judges' selection. The names of the selected judges must be kept CONFIDENTIAL until one hour before the start of the Top-20 Competition judging.

Exclusions From Judging:

- Any person actively serving on the Top-20 Committee.
- Any person actively serving as an Officer or Board member of the PWDCA.
- Any PWDCA Committee member who has any interest whatsoever in any dog eligible to compete.
- Any person who has an association or conflict of interest with a qualifying dog (e.g., breeder, co-owner, stud dog owner, handler, etc.).

Committee members will disqualify themselves if any condition exists or presents itself as a potential conflict of interest, or may be disqualified by the Chairperson.

Judge Selection Process:

The committee will select an individual from each of the following judging categories:

- 1. Breeder or Approved AKC Judge:** A PWD breeder who has been breeding for at least five years, having produced at least five AKC Champions of Record, OR any AKC judge approved to judge Portuguese Water Dogs. The breeder may live in the United States, Canada or Europe and must be in good standing with the AKC, CKC, etc.
- 2. Handler (Past or present):** A professional handler who meets the requirements for membership in any professional handler's organization, though not necessarily a member. The person must have at least five year's professional handling experience and must be in good standing with the AKC, CKC, etc. The person must have at least three years' experience handling Portuguese Water Dogs.
- 3. Multi-Breed AKC Approved Judge:** An AKC judge approved for Portuguese Water Dogs and the Working Group who is not a Portuguese Water Dog breeder. The number of group placements given to Portuguese Water Dogs during the year may be considered when selecting a multi-breed judge. *(For the inaugural 2011 year only, because invitations to judge are being made at such a late date, it might be difficult to acquire a judge meeting all these criteria; therefore, limited concessions in qualifications might be required.)*

Any person who has a vested interest in a Top-20 qualifier will be considered ineligible to judge at the Top-20. This includes, but is not limited to, breeders of a qualifier, owner/co-own of the sire of a qualifier or the handler for a Top-20 qualifier.

CATALOG

Each Top-20 event will have an independent catalog from that of the PWDCA national specialty and shall contain only information pertaining to the Top-20 competition. The catalog will be compiled by the Top-20 Committee Catalog Chairperson. The Committee will select an individual or printing company, either of which must sign a confidentiality statement, to create the catalog.

The catalog will be sold through the Specialty Store at the same time as all Specialty merchandise prior to the Specialty. The Top 20 Catalog will not be distributed until one hour prior to the start of Top 20 judging. A limited number of Top 20 Catalogs will be available for sale an hour before the judging of the event. Pre-ordering of the catalog through the Specialty Store is **STRONGLY** recommended.

The size of the catalog will be at least 5 ½" X 8 ½". Advertising shall be limited to the inside front cover, inside back cover, and back cover. These pages will be auctioned off through the Top 20 Committee at least three months prior to the event. Winning bidders ads can be for products or for any of the Top 20 qualifiers. No ads concerning dogs that are not a Top-20 qualifier will be accepted. The Committee may elect to place a minimum bid on each of the three pages. Advertising monies shall be used to offset the costs of hosting the event.

The catalog's cover will have a logo specially designed for the Top-20 Competition along with the words "Top-20---2011" and the date and location of the event. One page will be included that lists the AKC registered and call names of all previous winners, their owners, their breeders, and the year they won. One page will be printed with the final Top-20 participants listed alphabetically by the dogs AKC registered name and the page number that corresponds with the armband to be assigned to the dog. Any previous Top-20 Competition winner(s) will be included in the list although that dog(s) will not be eligible to compete. In addition, the rules regarding the judging procedure must be included in the catalog as well as a copy of the actual score sheet that will be used by the judges.

Each judge will have a photograph and biography printed in the catalog giving a summary of their qualifications and experience in the dog fancy.

The previous year's winner's picture will be printed on a separate page before the section of the current participants (both Top-20 and People's Choice winners).

Each Top-20 competitor, who paid the required entry fee by the closing date, will be given a 2-page catalog layout. There will be no charge for these pages to the owner(s) of the dog. On the left-hand side of the page will be the AKC registered name and number of the dog plus the owner(s) and breeder(s) names, plus a brief biography about the dog (supplied by the owner). The biography shall include, at a minimum, the dog's date of birth and call name).

On the right-hand side of the page, a full body photo of the dog, cropped to show only the dog, will be printed at the top of the page. Underneath it, a 4-generation pedigree will be printed.

The catalog page number of the dog shall also be the armband number of the dog.

Any finalist that does not accept or fails to pay the required entry fee for the Competition and therefore does not participate in the event, will be noted as “not attending” in the listing in the catalog. As it is possible some qualifiers might decline the invitation, it is possible that less than 20 dogs will be competing. In no event will the invitation be extended to dogs that ranked below the twentieth placement to bring the number participating in the event to 20 dogs.

An optional index with the names and addresses of the dog’s owners may be printed at the end of the catalog, but is not required.

STEWARDS

The Top-20 Committee Chairperson will select three non-related people to be ring stewards, one for each judge. The stewards need not be a member of the Top-20 Committee but must be a Member in good standing of the PWDCA. The stewards will NOT be told the names of the judges prior to the start of judging.

During judging, the only communication between the steward and the judge will be confined to questions of procedure.

When a judge has completed his/her scoring of a dog, he/she shall sign their Judge’s sheet, place it in an envelope and seal it, and thereafter give the envelope to the ring steward for further handling. The steward will not open the envelope nor tabulate the scores. As soon as all the judging is completed, each steward must place all envelopes in the designated secure storage container.

JUDGING PROCEDURE (3 Dogs in Ring)

One hour prior to the start of the judging, the Top-20 Competition Committee Chairman will convene a mandatory handler's meeting and distribute arm bands to all participants (arm band numbers shall match the catalog page number of the entered dog's ad). At this time, one drawing will be conducted to determine the order of judging for each entrant. Each group coming into the ring to be judged is made up of no more than three entrants.

A rosette table may be set up alongside the ring, if space allows. There may be a special, ring-side section reserved for the owners and breeders of all the Top-20 Competition dogs. Each entry will receive two tickets for the reserved seating section.

There will be a public address system and a Master of Ceremonies. Each judge will be formally introduced to the ringside spectators by the Master of Ceremonies. The ring stewards will be introduced in the same manner.

After introductions, the Master of Ceremonies will call in the first group of three dogs (as determined by the "Draw" before the event). Each dog will be brought into the ring one at a time, at a gait for one circle, and adhere to the following procedure once all three dogs are in the ring:

1. The panel of judges, as a group, will observe the gait of the dogs, who will circle the ring, twice, as a group.

Each judge will begin by scoring the dog on over-all presentation, or Average Placement, before formally judging the dog. By using an Average Placement Scale of 1 through 10, the judge must look at the dog as a whole and place the dog on the scale with a score of 10 being the highest - - meaning that dog most closely matches the judge's picture of the ideal Portuguese Water Dog.

2. Upon completion of the opening gaiting, Dog #1 will be presented for a hands-on exam to Judge #1, then Judge #2, and then Judge #3. Dog #2 initially presents to Judge #2 and then #3 and then #1, and Dog #3 initially presents to Judge #3 and then #1 and then #2.
3. After all three dogs have had a hands-on exam by all three Judges, each dog shall be gaited individually and each judge will score the dog on movement. The dog will then circle the ring and

4. When a judge has completed his/her scoring of a dog, he/she shall sign their Judge's sheet, place it in an envelope and seal it, and thereafter give the envelope to the ring steward for further handling.
5. After the first group of three dogs has exited the ring, the next group of three dogs enters the ring as described above, and the process repeats itself until all dogs have been judged.

After all dogs have been presented and scored by all three Judges, all signed score sheets will be immediately placed in the designated secure storage container and taken to the Counting Committee. The Counting Committee will consist of three pre-selected members chosen from the current PWDCA Board of Directors and Top-20 Committee Members, for tallying. The results will be kept secret until the evening of the Awards Dinner. (Any Judges who remain at the specialty will present the winner with their prizes. Dogs are not brought to the banquet.)

6. When the judging is completed and all dogs have been evaluated and scored by all three Judges, the Master of Ceremonies will make a last call for People's Choice ballots to be placed in the voting box. Upon closing voting (no more than five minutes after 'last call'), the entries will enter the ring, one at a time, starting with the first dog in the catalog. The Master of Ceremonies will announce the dog's registered name, call name, owner(s) of record, and breeder(s) of record, and the dog shall gait once around the ring and exit, and then the next dog in the catalog will be called into the ring and announcements made, and so on until all entries have been individually presented by the Master of Ceremonies.

The People's Choice ballots are tabulated (the Top-20 Competition Committee will select two people, who must not have any ties to any of the competitors, to count the ballots). After the tabulation is complete and all dogs have been individually presented in catalog order, all dogs will come back into the ring in catalog order, and the Master of Ceremonies will announce the People's Choice Award winner. The Judges shall present the winner with its prizes.

7. All Judges must remain after judging for photo ops.

SCORING

Each score sheet for each dog from the three judges will be tabulated. The scores will then be added together and divided by three to determine each dog's average overall score. The dog with the highest overall score will be declared the winner.

In the event of a tie, the Counting Committee will determine the winner by adding the judges' "average placement" scores (refer to #1 under Judging Procedure) to the dogs' tie score, and the highest combined score is the winner. If the dogs' scores remain a tie, then there shall be Co-winners for that year.

PRIZES

Each dog entered in the Top-20 Competition will receive a rosette, the size and color to be determined by the Top-20 Competition Committee. The rosette will have the dog's name, Portuguese Water Dog Club of America Inc, date, location, and Top-20 Competition printed on the streamers.

The Top-20 Competition Committee will decide the type of trophy or medallion to be awarded to the winning dog. In addition, the Top-20 Competition Committee may also decide to award a medallion to each judge for their services.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNER

The Chairperson of the Top-20 Committee shall have possession of the name(s) of the winner(s) of the Top-20 competition, which name(s) shall be in a sealed envelope. The Chairperson will make the announcement of the winner(s) at the Awards Dinner at the conclusion of the Specialty and, at that time, the trophy or medallion will be presented to the owner(s) of the winning dog by any judges of the event that are available to make the presentation, or if none are available, by the Chair(s) of the committee. No dogs will attend the banquet.