Carolina PBGV Club
Board of Directors' Meeting

Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday, April 22, 2025
Time: 7:00 PM ET
Venue: Remote via Zoom

Attendance

Board Member	Present	Absent
Phyllis Lindquist, President	X	
Vickie Willmann, Vice President	X	
Sharon Kimble, Secretary/Treasurer	X	
Patty Bateman, Director	X	
Pat Reading, Director	X	
Charlie Johnson, Director	X	

Agenda

1. **Current Membership List (Sharon Kimble)**
    - **16 memberships**
        i. 8 Household
        ii. 7 Individual
        iii. 1 Lifetime (Roger)
    - Action Items: Send updated list to AKC; upload list to website; send to members
2. **Treasurer's Report (Sharon Kimble)**
    - Account Balance: $7,394.76
    - March Hunt P&L:
        i. Income: $1,950.00 ($1860 hunt entries+$90 raffle baskets)
        ii. Expenses: $1,840.19
            1. Higher expenses this hunt due to slight overage on lunches due to taxes/charges for individual boxes but less than $25; RV reimbursement, and cost of field rental at Tokeena is higher than Tarheel.
        iii. Profit: $109.81
    - Club P&L as of 4/22/2025:
        i. Income: $6,989.35
        ii. Expenses: $5,688.00
        iii. Profit: $1,301.35

**A detailed report is available upon request.*

3. **Hunt Titles – Petition to End Excellent Titles (Phyllis Lindquist)**
    - Detailed information provided by Mary Fluke; see attachment.
    - Discussion on this proposal:
        i. Pros: Eliminating the Excellent track (PCJHX, PCSHX, PCMHX) could reduce the strain on juggling more entries than time slots available; it could reduce the need to limit entries based on stake (for example, only one solo or brace per household); we could potentially pursue adding a title such as "Rabbit Hunter" or "Pack Hunter";
        ii. Cons: Many people like having a title to strive for; having the Excellent track provides a reason to continue entering hunts after achieving Master Hunter; this group is conflicted about the proper path of decision and felt that this would be best lead by the executive hunt committee to the parent club board and general membership; concerns over potentially creating a reason for losing competitors if there was no further path/no reason to enter hunts; questions if we were trying to solve a logistics problem by changing a title path – are there other ways we can solve that problem?; the way it would be structured for the RHX or Elite titles would need to be done so that people didn't feel like it took forever to achieve
    - **Action Items**: Table any decision until we can gather more feedback; Vickie will talk about this at Roscoe Hunt. Add this to the next Board meeting agenda.
4. **Carolina Foothills/Greenville Show (Sharon Kimble)**
    - Show dates: July 23-27, 2025
    - Greenville, SC
    - Our club sponsored the ribbons and rosettes on Sunday, July 27.
    - Some board members are planning to go to the show to enter and/or spectate.
    - We may have an informal gathering one evening; Mike Williquette has offered to host and so have Beverly and Tony Childs. We will get more information as the dates of the show get closer.
    - **Action Items:** Sharon will include information about the show in communication with members; hopefully, we will have a good showing of PBGVs entered.
5. **2025-2026 Hunt Season (Phyllis Lindquist)**
    - Hunt Chair
        i. Patty Bateman would be willing to be Hunt Chair (depending on her health)
        ii. Vickie may be willing to be Hunt Chair; also Hunt Secretary but not both
        iii. There can be co-chairs; they could divide the tasks
    - Vickie asked us to think about dates for three hunts so PBGVCA can put together a calendar. We decided to plan hunts on the same weekends as 2024/2025 for the next season:
        i. December – 5-7, 2025
        ii. January – 9-11, 2026
        iii. March – 6-8, 2026
    - **Action Items**: Phyllis will draft/Sharon will send communication to members; "looking for co-chairs and could share the responsibilities." Vickie will send out a guide for Hunt Chairs for people to review and see what their responsibilities are.

Next Meeting

May 20, 2025
7:00pm ET
Via Zoom

From Mary Fluke, 4/20/2025

PBGVCA Hunt Program At Risk

The PBGVCA Hunt program was developed between 2002 when the first hunt seminar was held, to 2005 when the first scored tests were offered, then finally through 2008 when the first hunt test was held using the first iteration of the official PBGVCA Hunt Test Rules and Standard Procedures. The Rules and Standard Procedures were created using the French hunt rules and the AKC Beagle and Basset Hound hunt test rules as inspiration.

The earliest rules (before 2008) included 3 titles: Junior, Senior, and Master Hunter, plus the Elite title. Prior the approval of the official 2008 rules, a second tier of titles was added (Junior, Senior, and Master Excellent). The rules were first revised in 2010 with a line-by-line review. Later revisions included the addition of the Rabbit Hunter Excellent Title and the revisions to the Elite title with the most recent revision completed November 2024.

When the hunt program was developed, the rules didn't explain how to put on a hunt. The protocols that we take for granted now were developed in the early years by learning from experience and making adjustments as unanticipated things came up, but there were still structural problems. As the program grew in popularity and more hunt venues were added, those problems became more apparent.

The "baked in" flaws are as follows:

1. Judges are also handling dogs at the same hunts (so any kind of elimination puts their entries at risk).
2. 60 minute run time limits the number of runs that can be accommodated in the available daylight.
3. Pre-arranged packs put limits on how the secretary can build packs and puts the individual pack entries at a disadvantage.

This means that a limited number of runs can be accommodated while protecting judges' runs from elimination and providing opportunity for new handlers to run their dogs. The current solution has been to do Saturday and Sunday overflow runs on Friday to avoid eliminating entries. The problem is that the demand for solos and braces has been climbing steadily to the point that up to half of the runs in a given weekend are devoted to these stakes.

As things stand now, we are on the cusp of a serious problem with overfilled hunts for the coming seasons. It takes a minimum of 18 runs (after HIT) to get to MHX which include 11 pack, 5 brace, and 2 solo for each dog (which equates to going to 9 hunts, getting all the stakes that you enter, and qualifying on every run). We had 41 dogs pass HIT last year (2022), all of whom will be added to the pipeline to compete for entries to earn titles. If all these dogs were campaigned to Master Hunter Excellent, that translates to 451 pack entries, 205 brace entries, and 82 solo entries (assuming that all the dogs pass each run on the first try). That's 90 pack runs (5 dogs per run), 102 brace runs, and 82 solo runs for a total of 274 runs. Each hunt can accommodate an average of 18 runs based on available daylight. That means that these dogs alone could take up all of the available runs for the next 15 hunt weekends. In 2021 sixty

different dogs were awarded 84 titles and all those dogs and more will be competing for those entries as well.

Obviously not all of 2022's HIT dogs will be entered in all the upcoming hunts, but it helps to understand where the demand comes from and also to see how the current titling scheme affects the demand for brace and solo runs. Two thirds of the 274 runs are brace and solo. It might take a few weekends to get the point where some of those dogs are starting to enter brace, but the deluge will come over the next 2 years and will be spread around all the venues. Handlers who live farthest away from multiple venues will be disadvantaged more than the ones that have more options within a day's drive.

Many people say that the solution is to add more hunt tests to accommodate the demand for solo and brace, but we have been scheduling 10+ hunts a year for several years and the demand is still unmet without Friday overflow runs, and that flawed option is being relied on to the detriment of open run time. If we want new people to come to hunts and have any opportunity to train their dogs and be mentored as handlers, open run time needs to be preserved. Brace/Solo Only trials might help a bit but as yet no hunt group has pioneered this option.

Various solutions that have been suggested such as 3 day trials, saving runs for judges so they don't get eliminated, shortening run time, etc. All of these would all materially change the hunt program into something that many of us would no longer recognize. Furthermore, these solutions won't affect the demand for solos and braces. It will get better if people get discouraged and quit entering hunts, but that's not a sustainable option.

It's important to note that if we look at the origin of the current titling scheme (in that period between 2005 and 2008), the reason for adding the excellent tier is that the hunt participants at the time got through Junior, Senior, and Master Hunter pretty fast (total of 10 runs, with 7 pack, 2 brace, and 1 solo—could be accomplished in 5 hunt weekends) and they wanted to have more titles to shoot for.[1] AKC had yet to show us the option of 10 qualifying scores to create an indefinite titling scheme. If that had been done at that time, we wouldn't be in the situation that we are in now. The addition of the excellent tier was arbitrary, and no consideration was given to the long-term consequences which we now face. On the Parent Club Title Recognition page of the AKC site no other breed club has a second tier. AKC only recognizes our Junior/Senior/Master tier.

Our program will become unstainable if we don't do something to drive more entries to pack stake instead of brace and solo. Economically, it's better to have more pack entries ($125 per hour in the field at the current PBGVCA entry fee as compared to $75 per hour for brace and solo). The expenses for each hour are set by the rental for the field, the costs of 2 judges per run, plus the incidental costs for hospitality, paper and ink, supplies, and rosettes, etc. Pack

[1] One person has stated that the excellent tier was to create a bigger challenge for handlers and that it was not intended to build on the JH/SH/MH titles.

runs are more lucrative per hour. Overflow runs produce additional income but at the expense of the stress on the judges and handlers and the loss of open run time.

Brace runs are good tests for the dogs and are better for judging the dogs as individuals than pack runs (since many of our dogs don't pack up like they should). It makes sense to have each dog run in brace at least a couple of times.

Solo stake is a poor test of our pack dogs. Dogs that are good pack dogs are rather forlorn without their pack mates and dogs that are good solo dogs are often independent and don't hark to their packmates. The justification for the solo run is to reference the "poor French farmer who can only afford one dog and needs to get a rabbit for his family to eat." The French farmer would be better off setting a snare or two. A single solo test is plenty for our purposes.

The current titling scheme is unachievable for anyone that can't commit to more than a few hunt weekends a year and can't drive a thousand miles at least twice to get to a second hunt venue. If what we want is to have a program that works for everybody instead of just a select group, something needs to change.

If we could get handlers to the point where they enter pack stake for Rabbit Hunter Excellent more quickly, hunts would be a lot easier to manage and would be much less stressful than they have become with so many braces and solos to be accommodated. Friday overflow runs are not a good long-term solution and we still have to eliminate entries even with Friday runs.[2]

I believe that the titling scheme needs to be changed to make the hunt program sustainable for everyone.

First option:
Create three tracks to get people to the indefinite multiple of 10 titles. The current track to Rabbit Hunter Excellent would be preserved. The second track would be to create a title called Rabbit Hunter (10 qualifying scores with a prerequisite of Master Hunter). The third track would be to create a title called Pack Hunter (10 qualifying scores with a prerequisite of Junior Hunter). There would need to be some consideration to figure out if people could bounce back and forth between the schemes or whether the 10 scores had to be consecutive (as a further aid to reducing demand for brace and solo). Reduction in demand for solo and brace would depend on how many people took advantage of the tracks that required fewer runs.

Second option:
Sunset the Junior/Senior/Master Hunter Excellent tier over the next 2 years (gives time for those that are already in the pipeline to get to MHX) and go to a single scheme of Junior/Senior/Master Hunter followed by Rabbit Hunter (10 consecutive Q's with MH as prerequisite).

[2] Handlers have had runs eliminated and hunt organizers have given up runs voluntarily to avoid eliminating other entries, which is a form of elimination, so it's already happening even though most handlers have been spared.

From Mary Fluke, 4/20/2025

I think that the second option is best in that it is easier to administer and allows the greatest amount of participation without us altering other aspects of the hunt program and risk changing it beyond recognition for those of us that were lucky enough to be involved from the beginning. I know that critics will say that this waters down the titles, but if we keep in mind the need for a sustainable program, and the arbitrary addition of the excellent titles years ago, this seems to be an unnecessary concern.

The question is what is more important, creating opportunity for PBGV owners to get out in the field to hunt with their dogs, or focusing on titles to the detriment of participation.

Mary Fluke
2022

Addendum

Third option:
Change the prerequisite for RHX to PCMH and let the excellent titles die out on their own. I have now come to believe that this is the most efficient way to solve the problem.

Mary Fluke, January 2025