



GSDCA Obedience Meeting 2004

Minutes for the Obedience Meeting held at the 2004 GSDCA National in Adelaide
Sunday 2nd May 2004 at 9:00am.
Venue GSDC of South Australia

Present: Dawn Howard GSDCA Obedience Chair, Sharon Thorpe (Sec GSDCQ), Marilyn Wrigley (Obed. Training Administrator GSDCV), Frank Valastro, Merle Sinclair, Peter Howard, Barbara Pownall, Fred and Anne McDermott (GSDCV), Bruce Knight, Ann and Brian Glover (GSDAWA), David Rumble (GSDCSA). John De Lucia (Pres. GSDCSA), Karen Hedberg (GSDL)

The Chair opened the meeting at 9am and welcomed those present. It was especially difficult for people to be in attendance, as the obedience meeting had to unavoidably be held during the running of the Show. The Chair apologised for this occurrence which was due to a judging appointment in Sydney which was accepted and contracted prior to the GSDCA National date being decided.

A list of issues were discussed.

Need to review Obedience judges list as some states do not have enough GSDCA judges badge holders to accommodate their needs, and they cannot afford to bring judges from other states. The suggestion that a Shepherd friendly judges list or supplementary panel, be developed was accepted as a suitable compromise.

Discussion on ways to make competition more special at Nationals and MBE's.

Add Agility and Jumping was suggested.

Concern that some judges set courses which are unsuitable for Shepherds, or any large dog for that matter. This is especially the case with Jumping. Courses can be set with GSD's in mind. Judges can be briefed. Judges that set tight non flowing courses will be avoided. It was reported that proposed rule changes for agility and jumping due to be in for 2006 are expected to include reduced jumping heights.

Suggestion to include some type of tracking test/ demo at Nationals. This would be a challenge of the top dogs rather than an ANKC test.

Herding is growing in popularity in several states. An Exhibition of herding would be of interest.

A Yahoo, Ozdog type email list for GSD people would facilitate communication and discussion. It would need strong guidelines and a strictly enforced Code of Conduct. Could be used to prepare for meetings to get the feeling of the members so that they can get their message through to their clubs. Reg Dwyer from the ACT, has set one up for us, but it will need National Council approval.

Optimum timing for an obedience meeting at the National. For logistical purposes the Friday night prior to the trial or Saturday night after the trial were suggested, with the Saturday night as the preferred alternative. Thursday could be a consideration if the Obedience meeting ever goes back to a meeting of delegates sent and supported by the clubs.

It was noted that, at the 2004 AGM, the clubs decided not to support an Obedience meeting even on a Bi-annual basis due to costs and lack of interest from members. Therefore the alternative of a more informal meeting of obedience people at the National each year, was supported. The clubs can still put forward Obedience related motions to the AGM each year. The obedience chair is to meet with as many club members as possible when attending shows or trials.

John De Lucia arrived at this stage.

Discussion on how the GSDCA can best promote the working disciplines

Suggestion to involve the media.

Institute an award for dual purpose dogs that enter both conformation and one of the working disciplines. Just for entering, not winning. It could be in the form of a certificate.
This idea was well received.

Bruce Knight and Karen Hedberg arrived at this stage.

Brian Glover suggested that the GSDCA sponsor a 2 Day event similar to the highly successful VIMS test run in WA. It was felt that there would be more support for a one day event, as not all states have the people interested at that level. It was suggested that it could be composed of a combination of any of the working disciplines except for man work. ie. Obedience, Endurance, Tracking, Agility or Herding.

Karen Hedberg reported that the SV is requiring that we institute a form of working aptitude test as a pre-requisite to survey. Initially it will be simple to perform, and will test the dogs reactions to various stimuli and their eagerness to work rather than their level of training. We have to get agreement on a suitable test which will give a reliable definition of the dog's temperament and willingness to work, within the next 12 months.

Internationally, the Doberman and Rottweiler Councils have similar tests which look for character and working ability. Karen outlined the Doberman WAC test which may be able to be adapted to suit our needs. It would also present an opportunity to bring the conformation and obedience dogs together, as it would be expected that most GSD's should be capable of successfully completing this type of test.

Dawn Howard outlined a new course on the National Training Framework, It is part of the Veterinary Training Package, which has been approved to start for 2005/6. It can be offered by private training providers, but it is expected to be mainly provided by TAFE Colleges, who are likely to run these courses if they believe they have the numbers to fill them. There are a number of lower level courses in this Training Package but the one that is most likely to interest dog trainers is the Certificate IV in Companion Animal Services. It will not only be of interest to instructors, but will be helpful for those who wish to learn more about animal behaviour.

Bruce Knight as the treasurer of the GSDCA, discussed changes to excellent medallions at the State level, due to increasing costs. The round medals will be used for State shows in future, with the Triangular ones to be used only for Nationals and MBE's.

The National Competition forms and the closing dates were discussed. It is important to raise the level of awareness for these competitions at club level as it is felt that many people may not be aware of the awards available. Dawn Howard is to ensure that they are advertised in the Review and placed on the GSDCA website.

The meeting closed at 11.30, as the show had reached a crucial phase.