

## **REQUEST FOR MANDATORY RAMP USE FOR BASSET HOUNDS**

Simply stated, the Basset Hound, because of the unique structure, can not be properly examined on the floor. In order to fairly evaluate the front structure, the length of keel, and ribbing, the dog must be elevated.

As a breeder, exhibitor, judge, and educator, my experience with this breed surpasses most of those currently judging this breed (with the exception of my fellow breeder judges). As a breeder, puppies are stack trained at five to six weeks of age on a table. When examining the litter for show quality, they are always elevated for optimum examination.

As an exhibitor, the young dogs are trained for examination on a ramp. As they continue to mature, we continue to always elevate for evaluation. A correct front is the most important and the most difficult to achieve. Proper hands-on and visual evaluation can only be accomplished when the dog is elevated.

As an educator, I stress the importance of using a ramp for every basset. It saves time and physical stress on the judge, the dog, and the exhibitor while affording the best possible angle for a thorough examination. Bassets can be leery of a judge hovering and can easily be spooked. Judging the Basset on the floor forces the judge to hover over the dog, bend over face to face, or cheek to cheek with the dog. All of which may put the judge's personal safety at risk.

The Basset Hound Standard includes a height disqualification. At an outdoor show, a judge is less likely to call for the wicket due to uneven ground on which to measure. Mandatory use of the ramp would afford the judge ease of measurement by providing an even surface, elevation of the dog, and avoid judging delay.

"Examine every dog in the same objective, breed-specific manner" is stated by AKC. Who better to determine "breed-specific" manner than the Basset Hound Club of America? We have strongly urged the use of a ramp when judging our breed for 30 years. Mostly, this has been ignored especially by the more experienced all breed judges. The basset exhibitors pay the same entry fee and deserve the best possible examination.

Judges are hired to judge dogs according to the *Rules, Policies and Guidelines for Conformation Dog Show Judges* as written by the American Kennel Club. When the use of the ramp for examination of the Basset Hound is made mandatory then, and only then, judges will afford the Basset equal evaluation among all breeds.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Deans, Chairman  
Judges Education Committee  
Basset Hound Club of America