

Why The Ramp?

- **The Ramp provides accessibility for thorough assessment of important elements of basset hound breed type and structure...**A judge's use of the ramp demonstrates awareness of the importance of properly assessing the basset hound's unique achondroplastic structure and balance of form to function. The ramp facilitates an assessment of the proper proportion of body depth to ground clearance. It facilitates thorough examination of the depth of chest, prominence of pro-sternum, length of post-sternum, formation of forelegs, strength of pasterns and feet, dovetail fit of elbows to body and spring, smoothness and length of the ribcage. Without use of a ramp, all of these important essentials would be about five inches or less off the ground because of height limitations and build.
- **The Ramp elevates the basset hound for an unobstructed view...**Grass and ground cover can hide feet and create optical illusions about length of leg. When looking down upon a grounded basset hound exhibit various kinds of mismatched fronts are often obstructed by the headpiece and a prominent pro-sternum.
- **The ramp promotes equal examination of every exhibit...**During grounded judging, some basset hounds are likely to receive thorough hands on examination while exhibits later in the assignment unconsciously receive abbreviated top-sided exams. Use of the ramp helps preclude this possibility.
- **Ramped exhibits are better behaved, more confident...**Just as the ramp elevates the hound for judging, it elevates the hound for better control and confidence.
- **The ramp provides opportunity to put hands on each exhibit's *true front assembly*...**A grounded puppy or inexperienced exhibit is more likely to rock back, shifting weight to some degree from front to rear, when approached by a towering stranger. However soundly that individual's front assembly is built, it is more difficult to assess when the individual basset hound is not standing up over his front.
- **The Ramp facilitates full appreciation of the headpiece – an important element of breed type...**Ramped judging allows full appreciation of the functionality, expression and character of the headpiece. Judges performing grounded examinations reach down and draw the head upward for closer examination. The skin folds which are essential to expression and functional for trapping scent and protection fall away when the muzzle is lifted high. Unintentionally the headpiece takes on a less pleasing, less functional, unnatural dry appearance. Usually the ground oriented examination concludes with the judge reaching down and pulling skin forward over the occiput. This is an attempt to restore the functionality and character of the headpiece their examination has just altered.

- **Judging schedule is not in danger of falling behind due to use of the ramp...** Exhibitors train their basset hounds for ramped examinations and quickly place them on the ramp if the hound refuses going up by their own power. A judge should not penalize an exhibit placed on the ramp. Prior notification of the ramp's use is no longer required and superintendents provide this equipment pre-positioned outside the basset hound ring. It takes less than a minute for stewards to move the ramp into the ring and remove it again after best of breed.
- **Basset Hound Club of America encourages use of the ramp...** Basset hounds are ramped at national and local specialty shows. Ramping is has been promoted for some time and is emphasized in the newly distributed judges' education seminar CD. BHCA considers ramping an important element of competent judging of the basset hound.
- **Breeders appreciate and support judges who use the ramp...** Use of the ramp demonstrates a judge's awareness of how much the ramp facilitates proper evaluation of the basset hound and commitment to quality judging. The effort of a judge who examines on a ramp is perceived by basset hound breeders to equal their effort to produce quality breeding stock.

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