

**Proposal Title:** Criteria to Hold a NSDTRC(USA) Specialty

**Submitted by:** Francine Kaplan on behalf of the Specialty Guidelines Committee.

**Proposal Description:** This proposal outlines the criteria that the committee reached unanimous agreement on as requirements to qualify an event for consideration as a Specialty.

**Proposal Justification:**

- The Purpose of a Specialty is to attract breeders and exhibitors by providing them an enhanced exhibitor experience in which to present their breeding stock and see others' breeding stock, to create the opportunity for Toller owners to network with each other and share information and perspectives; and to create the opportunity for positive social interactions between Toller owners that are vital to the development and preservation of the Breed.  
Specialties are about working to enhance the exhibitor experience so it attracts the best from inside and outside your area. It is about the surrounding activities in addition to conformation that create the opportunities for quality interactions to happen and opportunities to find the fun.

**Administration:**

- All proposals to hold a specialty shall be submitted simultaneously to the Events Chair and to the Regional Director of the Region where the proposed show is located. Under all circumstances, any proposal to hold a Specialty shall be provided to the Regional Director of the Region in which the show is proposed to take place at least 30 days prior to the proposal being submitted to the Board for review. Prior to the proposal being submitted to the Board, the Regional Director or member submitting the proposal shall notify any other Regional Directors potentially affected if the AKC Division (Specialties are organized and approved by AKC Divisions not NSDTRC(USA) Regions) the show is located in affects more than one Region. For example, a show in Pennsylvania is in Club Region 7 but the AKC Division includes New York, which is in Club Region 1.
- The committee chair, or at least one of the committee members will have been on the committee for a NSDTRC(USA) Supported Entry or Specialty committee in the past. If a member who has never served on a NSDTRC(USA) Supported Entry or Specialty committee wishes to apply to hold or chair a Specialty, they must demonstrate their competency in conformation and events planning in the proposal.

**Events Chair** in addition to the Committee recommendations, the Events Chair recommends the Board form a standing Specialty Committee of at least 3 members to work with the Events Chair to vet Specialty applications. The Specialty Committee should be comprised of individuals representing different regions and should have a two year term. Its membership should rotate equitably across all regions. The Events Chair would be a standing member of the committee. This Committee is necessary to avoid delays in consideration of proposals due to the Board meeting only one time per month.

**Financial Implications:** While Specialties have an inherent risk to the club, this proposal concerning the criteria to be demonstrated in an application and process to approve a Specialty does not have any financial implication.

**Specific Board Action Requested:** We are recommending the Board adopt the guidelines for the criteria to be demonstrated in an application. The committee stands ready to address any questions the Board may have and if none, then should be disbanded.

**NSDTRC (USA)**

**Specialty Criteria Committee Report  
Specialty Shows  
Proposal Criteria**

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## Introduction

The principle mission of the NSDTRC (USA) (hereinafter referred to as "NSDTRC (USA) or "the Club") is to do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever breed and to encourage sportsman-like competition at dog shows, obedience trials, tracking tests, hunt tests, agility trials and any other events in which the breed may participate. The NSDTRC (USA) is to encourage and promote quality in the responsible breeding of purebred Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retrievers and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection. The NSDTRC(USA) achieves these purposes by holding activities to promote the exhibition of Tollers in all the dog sports and encourages owners to become ambassadors of the breed.

The Club encourages each Club region to hold a Supported Entry in conjunction with an All Breed Conformation show. The Club's premier event is its National Specialty which is sponsored by each Club Region on a rotating basis. Members have requested the Board approve Specialties in addition to supported entries and the National.

While Supported Entries are expected to draw only from within a Club Region, a Specialty is expected to attract breeders and exhibitors from within and without a Club Region by providing them an enhanced exhibitor experience in which to present their breeding stock and to see others' breeding stock. A Specialty is meant to create an opportunity for positive social interactions between Toller owners that are so vital to the development and preservation of the Breed. Specialties can also provide enhanced opportunities for the Judge's Education Committee (JEC) to educate judges. The availability of ringside mentoring should be advertised in the premium if a club approved mentor will be available.

Specialties are about working to enhance the exhibitor experience so the show attracts the best from inside and outside the show area. There should be a focus on holding activities in addition to conformation that create the opportunities for quality interactions to happen and opportunities to find the fun.

A Specialty is bigger than a Supported Entry and it is considerably smaller and less labor-intensive than the National Specialty. Generally, Specialties should be "upgrades" of well-established supported entries.

Only Specialty Clubs having met the requirements and sanctioned by the AKC may hold a Specialty of its breed at an All-breed or Group Club event. Therefore, the NSDTRC (USA) must give permission in writing for a NSDTRC USA Specialty.

Committee Comments: At the outset of the endeavor, the Show Committee should understand who they need approval from which in this case is the Board before they proceed.

AKC limits the number of Specialties a club can hold per year before the club is charged a fee. Therefore, in order to give all regions equal opportunity to hold a Specialty, the Parent Club Board will have final review.

In order to aid the Board in determining when to approve a Specialty the Board formed a Committee in 2018 to help draft criteria that a proposal to hold a specialty is expected to contain.

### **Criteria for Proposal Contents**

In addition to the prescribed Club format for proposals, proposals to hold either a stand-alone, designated or concurrent Specialty, shall include an explanation of how the proposed specialty show demonstrates the following:

1. As a threshold matter, all proposals to hold a specialty shall confirm that the proposal was submitted to the Events Chair and to the Regional Director of the Region where the proposed show is located at least 30 days in advance of it being submitted to the Board.

If the proposed show location is in an AKC Division that spans two or more NSDTRC Regions, the proposal shall be submitted at least 30 days in advance to the Regional Directors for each Region comprising the AKC Division. For example, a show in Pennsylvania is in Club Region 7 but the AKC Division includes New York, which is in Club Region 1.

Committee Comments: The Committee discussed whether the RD should be the person to submit the proposal to the Board. The Committee felt that could unnecessarily slow down the process. Therefore, the committee recommends a middle ground, where advance notice to the RD is required but the RD does not have to submit the proposal to the Board.

2. Because a Specialty should not be held unless a large entry will be present, it is imperative that the membership in the entire NSDTRC Region, and others be supportive of the application process and planning of the show in order to ascertain if there is enough interest and support for a Specialty. This should be ascertained prior to making an application. Although not required, it is encouraged to consider all-breed/group club shows that offer other activities in association with their conformation show because of the versatile nature of the Toller.
3. Application for a Specialty must be submitted in a timely fashion well enough in advance of the event to meet the AKC timelines for Show Events, as they may be amended from time to time.

Committee Comments: The Committee discussed at length placing a hard number on this such as 8 months in advance or 10 months in advance of the event and decided against such. Leaving this open we are not hamstringing people

while still preserving the purpose of such a rule, which is to have good timely conversations and communications between the Board, Show Committee, All Breed Show, AKC and our membership. We also recommend tying the deadlines to the AKC deadlines as they may change from time to time. The committee discussed members should be encouraged to plan two and three years ahead to maximize the chance to get their chosen judges on the host club show panel or at least have input on choice of judge from the existing host club show panel.

4. Proposals shall include the names of at least 4 NSDTRC members that have committed to be on the show committee.

The Committee was concerned that a proposal should not be brought by a single member but should demonstrate existing regional support. On the other hand, the Committee did not want an unduly burdensome requirement of requiring the proposal contain all the committee member names prior to the event even being approved. Therefore, the Committee arrived at 4 members as a compromise.

5. The committee chair, or at least one of the committee members will have been on the committee for a NSDTRC(USA) Supported Entry or Specialty committee in the past. If a member who has never served on a NSDTRC(USA) Supported Entry or Specialty committee wishes to apply to hold or chair a Specialty, they must demonstrate their competency in conformation and events planning in the proposal.

Committee Comments: The Committee discussed a requirement for the Show Chair to be, or the Show Committee to contain a member who has experience running a NSDTRC Supported Entry or Specialty but want to ensure that the criteria should not preclude new members who have particular skill sets and experience running shows. Of equal concern was that persons running events understand our club traditions and expectations. In all cases, the Events Chair is to serve as a Mentor to the Committee, if not a member of the committee.

6. The location of the show and the time before or after the National will be taken into consideration by the Board when granting or denying the proposal.

Committee Comments: The Committee discussed but did not come to a consensus concerning creating a black out period before or after the national specialty that a specialty can be held, such as: "The proposed specialty show shall not be within 300 miles and 90 days prior to or before that year's National Specialty." The idea was to continue to preserve and protect the National as the premier event given its importance to the breed. There are members that strongly argue there are not enough Tollers showing in Conformation at this time and the holding of any Specialty impacts entries at the National.

7. Specialty applications should demonstrate the event will be financially self-sufficient. The proposal should explain any financial incentives inuring to the benefit of the club and contain the plan to keep the event cost neutral to the club. The proposal should indicate that all contracts will be submitted to the Board and Events Chair for review prior to signature.
8. Attendance Number of class dogs/bitches.
  - a. A Specialty show confers the honorific of BISS on Best of Breed and therefore the proposal should demonstrate a high concentration of Tollers in the proposed location to help ensure appropriate attendance. This information can be obtained from the Events Chair who obtains it from records of prior event and statistics from the AKC. States with sparse Toller populations should continue to hold Supported Entries until they build participation and population in the area.
  - b. The proposal must demonstrate the events wishing to become specialties have a track record of 4-point majors in dogs and bitches for two (2) the last three (3) years prior to the proposed event.

Committee Comments. The committee was particularly concerned that the criteria not be too prescriptive. A hard and fast prior number of entries is too inflexible. The criteria should be flexible enough to give the Board the flexibility to approve events. We should be a big tent and include more and more people, as opposed to excluding activities. The Committee discussed if a hard number was imposed perhaps it could be a formula like 2x the total number of entries it takes in that Division to establish a 4-point major. However, even that seemed potentially prescriptive. Not having criteria for a hard number of entries in prior years opens the door to encourage events in other areas and grow the club.

The Committee Members felt a Specialty will always attract Champions, the key is to ensure the presence of class dogs and bitches. The Committee discussed the requirement that an applicant demonstrate the show had 5-point majors in one sex for the two years prior to the initial application and that to be allowed to recur, the specialty had to have 5-point majors in both sexes. The general concern was that a fluke year could preclude an event that would otherwise be successful.

- c. The committee can provide a survey of individual exhibitors that are likely to come to the show or a written plan that demonstrates that there will be majors in dogs and bitches if the host show is a new location.

**Committee Comment:** The committee is cognizant of NSDTRC Regions that have long running Supported Entry events that may change locations or that a NSDTRC Region could propose a new location that does not have a track record of entries. The Committee wanted to make sure the criteria was not so prescriptive that the criteria would preclude new locations.

9. **Recurring Specialty:** Approval of permission to hold a Specialty in one year does not guarantee approval in the next year. If a Specialty does not demonstrate enhanced attendance and at least, the same requirements of 4-point majors in both sexes, then a Specialty may be declined and a Supported Entry approved instead.

**Committee Comment:** The committee discussed the suggestion in Proposal 7 on the October 2019 in person meeting agenda that if a Specialty is held that does not draw 45 entries and 5-point majors in both sexes, it should automatically not be permitted to recur.

The Committee rejected this notion as too inflexible. If the show does not perform and the proposal for the following year does not demonstrate why and how the prior year's lack of attendance will be remedied, then the Board has the authority to deny the proposal and grant the proposal as a Supported Entry for the following year.

Again, hard numbers take away flexibility and deny events. The Committee recommends the Board be seen as inclusive and encouraging events.

#### 10. Selection of Judges

The proposal should indicate if you will have input on the selection of the judges.

#### **Conclusion**

A Specialty is bigger than a Supported Entry and it is considerably smaller and less labor-intensive than the National Specialty.

All proposals to hold a specialty shall be submitted simultaneously to the Events Chair and to the Regional Director of the NSDTRC Region where the proposed show is located.

Communication and responses for a Specialty must be submitted in a timely fashion within the Club to meet the AKC time lines for Show Events.

Proposals shall include the names of at least 4 NSDTRC members that have committed to be on the show committee. It is imperative that the membership in the entire NSDTRC Region,

and others be in support of a Specialty.

At least one of the committee members will have been on the committee for a NSDTRC(USA) Supported Entry or National Committee in the past. It is important that persons running events understand our club traditions and expectations. In all cases, the Events Chair is to serve as a Mentor to the Committee

The location of the show and the time before or after the National will be taken into consideration by the Board when granting or denying the proposal.

Specialty applications should demonstrate the event will be financially self-sufficient.

A Specialty show confers the honorific of BISS on Best of Breed. The proposal should demonstrate a high concentration of Tollers in the proposed location to help ensure appropriate attendance.

Approval of permission to hold a Specialty in one year does not guarantee approval in the next year.

The proposal should indicate if you will have input on the selection of the judges.

Above all, the representing Specialty shall protect and advance the interests of the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever breed and encourage sportsman-like competition at any event in which the breed participates and encourages owners and their dogs to become ambassadors of the breed through education and action.