

## **Important Exhibitor Information. The National Dog Show .....will go on !!**

The Officers & Committee have been busy planning (and re-planning) for our 2021 Show and are now excited to announce the launch of our Schedule.

We were delighted to hear the Prime Minister confirm this week both the Government Road Map and the UK-wide vaccination programme are still firmly on track. Restrictions will ease again on May 17<sup>th</sup> and hopefully again a month later and we will adapt and update our Risk Assessment accordingly over the coming months. Our final Risk Assessment will then be published on the Higham Press web-site as soon as Local Authority approval is granted.

The Health & Safety of Exhibitors (and their dogs), Trade Stand Holders, Contractors, Stewards, Volunteers and our Management Team remains our key priority. As such, we wanted to share a number of 'COVID -19 Safe' initiatives and logical protocols that will be in place at our 2021 Show.

Our Show will be the first All-Breed Championship Show to be held fully under cover; with our show partly indoors and part outdoors. Our show will be un-benched and we have to assume some social distancing will still be in place in September. To satisfy the local authority, and to ensure exhibitors safety, we have 'spread out' our show. We have invested in a larger clear span pavilion than usual and increased the number of rings being used each day by 6 now making a total of 28 Rings.

We have calculated that there is plenty of room in each covered area/building for the number of dogs (and exhibitors) that we have allocated to each Ring; even if 2m social distancing has to be enforced. These calculations have been made using capacity data provided in Stafford Showground's 'Local Authority Approved' COVID 19-Safe Events Brochure. This does however assume that Exhibitors only use grooming space the size of your 'normal' bench for the dog/dogs you enter. Please be respectful of your fellow exhibitors when considering the amount of show equipment and size of trolleys/cages you bring to the show. For the show to be a success without benching it is essential that exhibitors work together.

All rings will have the usual picket fencing. Before the pandemic we were intending to carpet all indoor rings. However, as all rings and grooming areas will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of each day there will be no carpeting in the rings at the September Show. We hope to bring you fully carpeted rings again at our May Show.

All grooming areas are covered therefore gazebos and exhibitor's tents will not be allowed. It is likely that we will be treating all buildings as simply 'wet weather' accommodation. To ensure maximum ventilation throughout the venue it is likely that all doors will remain open and as such the heating will not be switched on.

Schedules are now on-line at Higham Press and entries can be made with immediate effect. Hard copy schedules have been limited but will be sent to 2019/2020 exhibitors who previously entered by post and can be requested from our Secretary. Postal entries will be taken. To avoid handling cash, all catalogues must be pre-paid. Ring Numbers will be issued with your passes. Exhibitors who entered on-line are responsible for printing their own ring numbers and passes. Passes and ring numbers will only be posted to exhibitors who make paper entries.

The Committee recognise that many exhibits, because of the pandemic, may be out of junior and yet never have attended a show. For this reason we have introduced a Yearling class for ALL breeds. All breeds with numerically high entries have been allocated a full classification which includes the new Crufts Qualifying classes of Novice & Graduate. All Non CC Breeds have a minimum of 10 classes with no mixed sex classes.

As usual car parking is free and care is given when issuing parking passes to try and ensure you are parked as near as possible to your rings.

The security of your dogs is paramount and all dogs leaving the showground will be checked and must have the appropriate pass. To avoid handling paper we would like exhibitors to enter any extra dogs they are bringing to the show as 'Not For Competition'. This saves having to purchase a Spectator Dog pass on the day of the Show. For this reason we have reduced the NFC fee to £7.50. Spectator dog passes issued on the day, at a charge of £10.00, will hopefully be kept to a minimum.

We have over 40 Breed Club Championship Shows joining us in September so there are opportunities in many breeds to compete for two set of CC's on the same day. All Partnership Shows are advertised in the schedule with a reminder below your breed classification.

We are only holding the main Groups for all Best of Breed winners this year. This is to firstly ensure that there is no undue pressure on breed judging. Judging procedures may need to be amended to comply with COVID-19 guidelines and as such breed judging may take slightly longer than the recommended 2 minutes per dog. The Breed Judging and Partnership Show judging has all been planned to try and keep exhibitors in their 'breed bubbles'. To support further support the 'breed bubble' concept and limit the movement of exhibitors around the site there will be no Stakes Classes and no Puppy, Veteran or Special Beginners Groups this year. This decision also allows all indoor space to be vacated in a timely manner each night to allow the cleaning, disinfecting and drying to take place. We will return to our full complement of Groups & Stakes Classes next May.

So in summary, we will have robust and appropriate COVID-19 plans in place, we have shelter from the sun (and the rain) for all rings and grooming areas and a comprehensive Crufts qualifying classification for all Breeds. You will be guaranteed the usual warm welcome and we look forward to seeing you in late September at Stafford.

### **The Officers & Committee**

**Birmingham Dog Show Society Limited – home of The National Dog Show**