

**THE**  
**GRCA NATIONAL**  
**SPECIALTY HANDBOOK**

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**Golden Retriever Club of America, Inc.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Golden Retriever Club of America National Specialty (hereafter called the “National”) is to showcase all aspects of the Golden Retriever -- as a show dog, as an obedience and tracking competitor, and as a companion in the field. To accomplish this purpose, the GRCA Board of Directors has mandated that host clubs **must stage** all AKC licensed events in which the Golden Retriever is eligible to compete, with the exception of AKC Hunting Tests, Agility, Sweepstakes, Rally (obedience) and Variable Surface Tracking which are optional events,. Therefore, the host club is required to hold Conformation, Junior Showmanship, Obedience, Field Trial and Tracking (TD/TDX). The host club must also put on Working Certificate and Working Certificate Excellent tests under GRCA guidelines. This celebration of the Golden Retriever brings together GRCA members, Golden owners who are not GRCA members, and interested individuals from the general public. Since the National serves as an ideal venue for presenting educational material relevant to the continued welfare of the breed to all these people, educational programs will also be presented.

As the popularity of the Golden Retriever has grown, so has the complexity of staging the National. The possibility of more than 1200 dogs converging on one city for what has evolved into at least a week of events is daunting, to say the least. The purpose of this Handbook is to make staging the entire National easier. The knowledge and experience of numerous people who have put on one or more Nationals have been drawn on to provide some general guidelines that will hopefully ensure that the National is enjoyable for exhibitors, spectators, and workers. Successfully completing this event provides enormous pride to all involved resulting in a sense of accomplishment that will last for years.

## PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The increasing popularity of the Golden Retriever has resulted in a much larger GRCA and in increased interest in the National. As a result, the National has grown over the years into a large, complex undertaking that can intimidate some clubs and stretch a host club’s resources (people, time, money) to the limit. With this in mind, we suggest that any club thinking of hosting the National consider their resources and scale the event to match them. It isn’t necessary to keep increasing the size and complexity of the event every year. This has led to unrealistic expectations of the host clubs in their efforts to run a National. An intimate National is just as good an experience

as those on the grandest scale. We hope to provide the tools and help to guide any club to conduct a very nice National that everyone can enjoy.

## **SECTION 1: SO YOU THINK YOU WANT TO HOST THE GRCA NATIONAL SPECIALTY?**

**A. Incentives.** The reasons for choosing to host the National are as varied as the membership of GRCA. Repaying all those other clubs and members that have previously hosted the National is one of the more important reasons. The sense of pride at having organized and held a National is obvious. The opportunity to bring the club members closer together as a group can be another by-product of this effort. Finally, with proper financial planning, the host club can achieve a monetary gain that will further strengthen the club's future. Whatever the reason, your club should collectively want to host the National.

### **B. Major considerations before deciding whether to host a Specialty.**

**1. Number of people.** You will need a core of at least 20-25, and preferably 30-55, people who can make at least a three-year commitment to planning, organizing and executing all of the activities that go into hosting a successful Specialty. A General Chair should be selected before your club makes its bid to host the National because the whole show hinges on the strength and knowledge of this individual. It should be noted that it is strongly suggested that this core group, including the General Chair, should limit their participation in the events of the National they are hosting, to assure that appropriate attention can be given to the smooth running and details of the National so that the best possible event is presented. You will also need at least an additional 50 people or more to help in the actual running of events. These will be spread among the various field, tracking, obedience, conformation and hospitality activities over the course of the entire Specialty week. While it is possible to get by with fewer people, bear in mind that this will dramatically increase the workload of each individual. Some volunteer manpower may be available from local field trial, hunting retriever, obedience, tracking, and all-breed clubs. Nearby Golden clubs may also prove an invaluable source of help. In fact, the participation of these other groups has become one of the best ways to assure that all the desired events can be conducted effectively without overworking the host club's membership. Activities like the field trial, agility, and tracking may be assisted by dedicated GRCA participants from many areas of the country. Some manpower may also be hired from local service organizations.

## 2. Sites and facilities.

a. Show site. You will need room for two large conformation rings, at least 50' X 100', and two to four obedience rings 40' X 50' each. Remember to provide adequate gallery space around the rings. In addition, you need ample areas for grooming, vendors, food concessions, judges' hospitality, catalog sales, show superintendent, the show photographer, the GRCA booth, trophy display, dog exercise, adequate parking (including space for RV's), and restrooms. In general, any facility that can accommodate a large all-breed show and obedience trial would be adequate for the GRCA National.

Indoors vs. outdoors? This will depend on local climate and facilities available. An outdoor site is generally preferred, but not required. Dogs show and photograph better in natural light. Grass provides better traction and more space is generally available at an outdoor site. Most people would agree that the aesthetics at any outdoor site are superior to the nicest armory, arena or 4-H building. However, local weather conditions and site availability may necessitate the selection of an indoor facility. There are advantages and disadvantages to both; each host club is free to make the decision they consider to be best for their situation.

b. Field trial. Choose a site with adequate land and water so that two stakes may be held simultaneously. Grounds that are normally used for all-breed field trials are almost always suitable. Be certain of the availability of water; some areas are low in September and October. At least three separate pieces of water are a minimum requirement. While not always possible, it is desirable to choose trial grounds in reasonable proximity to the show site.

c. Tracking. Grounds suitable for laying a maximum of 12 TD and 6 TDX tracks. For the TD test each track needs to be 440-500 yards long with 75 yards between each track. This is approximately 5 acres per track. For the TDX test each track needs to be 800-1000 yards long, with 100 yards between each track, approximately 12 acres per track

d. WC/WCX. Grounds adequate for setting up WC and WCX tests that fall within the GRCA guidelines. If possible, these should be located in reasonable proximity to the show site. The same grounds can be used for both the Field Trial and the WC/WCX.

e. Optional Events: Hunt Tests require grounds adequate for 3-6 stakes to be held - the

same grounds used for the Field Trial and WC/WCX should be suitable. However, be careful of overuse – one 500 acre site will not support both a trial and a hunt test. Additional grounds must be obtained if a hunt test is going to be offered. Agility trials need one or two 100' x 100' rings on level ground. Sweepstakes should be able to be held in the same area used for conformation. Rally needs one or two 40' x 80' rings. 40' x 50' rings are suggested in the regulations but these really don't work that well. Variable Surface Tracking tests need a multi-surfaced setting such as a college or industrial complex and an experienced judge should be consulted to determine if a potential site is adequate and appropriate.

f. Headquarters Hotel. It is desirable but not required that the Headquarters Hotel have rooms and banquet facilities to accommodate a minimum of 450 people. It is possible to have a Headquarters Hotel and have the banquet facilities at another location. However, the convenience of the exhibitors and the logistics of handling the numbers of participants must be considered when planning for the Headquarters Hotel and Banquet facilities to be separate. Smaller meeting rooms will be necessary for the GRCA board and other committee meetings, as well as hospitality suites. Adequate dog exercise areas and parking must be available. The headquarters hotel should be within a reasonable driving distance of the show site, no more than 30 minutes, and preferably closer. It is also a good idea to contact additional hotels that will accept dogs to accommodate overflow exhibitors. It is easier to work with a hotel experienced in hosting dog events. Depending on the location of the field events, it may also be necessary to arrange for a separate field trial headquarters.

With the trend toward more informal affairs on the show grounds, a host hotel is of lesser importance. Several smaller hotels could adequately serve. Also more people find their own accommodations on the Internet or bring their own RV. RV facilities at the show site have become increasingly important, while a "host" hotel has diminished. The selection should provide adequate space for the needed activities and fit the available resources in the area of the National.

**3. Dates for the National.** GRCA has stipulated that the National will be held between September 1st and October 31st. Keep in mind other local shows (conformation, field, hunt, obedience, etc.) that may help or hinder in choosing the dates. Within this window, the host club is free to select the dates and order of events. GRCA has no standing policy regarding the order in which the various Specialty events are held, other than that the awards presentation is held on the evening of the last day of conformation. Previous National schedules can be found in the

Appendix and on the CD. Since GRCA conducts an Annual meeting and an educational program during the National, the Host club should coordinate these within the framework of the overall event schedule. This is done to allow as many people as possible to participate in these programs.

**4. Finances.** Recent National specialties have had total budgets of over \$300,000. *Don't panic!!* You are not required to raise this total amount prior to the event. You will need approximately \$15,000 - \$20,000 of working capital. Some of this money you will need to raise, some will be available as loans from GRCA. You can also make loans from your club treasury to the National account which will be paid back at the conclusion of the event when other bills are paid. This is the money needed to cover expenses incurred prior to receipt of entry fees or sales of merchandise. Arrangements can be made so that most of the expenses can be deferred until after the entry money comes in. Plan on starting your fund-raising as soon as possible – generally the more fund-raising is done, the less headaches you will incur in your finances.

## **SECTION 2. GRCA POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS.**

**A. Approval.** The National rotates on a three-year cycle between the Eastern, Central, and Western Regions of the country. Only GRCA member clubs may apply to host a National Specialty. Once you have decided to ask for approval, send a letter requesting this to your Regional Vice President approximately three years or more in advance. This letter should include the proposed Specialty dates, along with tentative sites, hotels and schedule. Deciding on the Specialty dates is of paramount importance, since all further commitments (judges, sites, etc.) are tied to these dates. The Vice President then submits your request to the GRCA Board of Directors in the form of a resolution. Should additional detail or information be required, you will be notified prior to any action on the resolution. You will be subsequently notified by the GRCA Secretary as to the decision of the Board. A list of dates and host clubs of previous National Specialties can be found in the CD files. Additionally, an application form can also be found in the Administration file on this CD.

**B. After Approval.** Once you have received approval for hosting the National, there are a variety of other GRCA policies that should be understood. The following information covers the many aspects of hosting the National that are covered by GRCA policies.

**1. Communication.** After approval has been granted, it is imperative that host clubs maintain contact with GRCA through the GRCA Secretary and the Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC). If you want to, you could send the Chair of SAC copies of minutes of meetings held by your National Specialty Committee for comments and suggestions. All contracts that entail a potentially large amount of money (for example, grounds rental, host hotel, catering, etc.) need to be sent to the GRCA Secretary for review by the GRCA Legal Resource Committee prior to final signatures. This is done to assist the host club in making sure that no undesirable surprises occur after the contracts are signed and unexpected situations arise. It is also helpful if the National Specialty General Chair and the SAC Chair maintain contact by phone or e-mail to answer any questions that may arise. The Chair of the SAC should keep the GRCA Board of Directors apprised of the progress of the planning for the National Specialty. See the *GR News* or the GRCA website for all current officers and chairpersons.

## 2. Roles of GRCA Officers and Committees

a. **GRCA Secretary.** The AKC application forms for the events of the National will be sent to the GRCA Secretary from AKC following the close of the previous year's National. A series of forms are provided in the Appendix that collects all necessary information for completing the AKC application forms. The host club will complete these forms for the events they are holding (except for GRCA signatures) and return them to the Secretary. The Secretary will complete the application forms, sign them and submit them to AKC, along with GRCA's check for the application fee. They and the check will be sent to AKC via Federal Express so a tracking number can be obtained. AKC approval will be forwarded to your show secretary/superintendent and the GRCA Secretary. Although it is your show secretary/superintendent's responsibility to keep you apprised of AKC's reports and instructions, the GRCA Secretary will send copies to the General Chair. In addition, the GRCA Secretary or the Chair of the SAC will forward to the host club all actions of the Board pertinent to hosting National Specialties. This will include information required for the premium list and/or catalog, as well as any dates and facilities required for Board and other committee meetings at the National. *Before the premium list is submitted to the show superintendent for printing and distribution, a draft must be submitted to the GRCA Secretary and SAC Chair for proofing. In addition to proofing for typos, the Secretary should pay particular attention to GRCA's requirements for various classes and events.* (A copy of several example Premium Lists is provided on the CD available from the SAC Chairman or on the GRCA website.)

b. **GRCA Treasurer.** Contact the GRCA Treasurer for financial aid (see Section 2.B.4 below) and proof of insurance. (See Section 27.D.) The Treasurer will forward checks for loans and payments. The Treasurer will also receive GRCA's portion of the profits from the National together with a complete financial report. The Treasurer will be the Board's contact with the hotel and will set up a master account for GRCA expenses. The hotel will also be supplied with a Board rooming list indicating arrival and departure dates and what expenses are covered.

c. **Membership Coordinator.** Contact the Membership Coordinator for the GRCA membership list to be used for mailing premium lists. This can be supplied to the superintendent on a disc or as labels, whichever is preferred. (See section on Premium List mailing. Section 24.a.)

d. **GRCA Trophy Curator.** You must coordinate with the GRCA Trophy Curator

regarding the shipping, storage and display of GRCA trophies. The Trophy Curator will send to the host club a complete, accurate and updated list of GRCA trophies for inclusion in the catalog.

**e. Specialty Advisory Committee.** The GRCA Specialty Advisory Committee was established to advise and assist clubs that are hosting GRCA Specialty events. This committee can be contacted to answer questions regarding any aspect of hosting a National Specialty. The current chair's name, address and phone number can be found under committee chairs in the *GR News* and on GRCA's website.

**f. Club Banner Chair.** This individual will arrange for the shipment and display of the GRCA banner and the member club banners either at the show site or at the hotel. Location and set-up and take-down must be coordinated between the Banner Chair and the host club's representative—usually the Grounds person.

**3. Dates.** The GRCA National Specialty rotates yearly through the Eastern, Central and Western Regions (see Appendix 1). Actual dates for the National Specialty must fall between September 1st and October 31st. GRCA has no standing policy regarding the order in which the various Specialty events are held, other than that the awards presentation is held on the evening of the last day of conformation. Again, please remember that the Annual meeting and Educational seminars need to be included in the National schedule and should be arranged in cooperation with GRCA to provide the best opportunity for most GRCA members to attend.

**4. Financial Aid.** GRCA will provide financial aid in a variety of ways. These funds should be requested from the GRCA Treasurer by the host club. GRCA requires a complete financial statement after each National Specialty, thus it is important to keep thorough, accurate records. A sample of the financial statement form currently used by GRCA can be found in the Appendix, along with copies of previous clubs' financial reports. This form must be submitted to GRCA within 120 days of completion of the National Specialty.

**a. Loan.** GRCA will loan host clubs up to \$6000 interest-free to be used at the host club's discretion. GRCA will loan, interest-free, an additional \$2,000 one year out from the National. These loans must be paid back within 90 days after the close of the Specialty.

**b. Trophy donation.** GRCA will donate up to \$100 for each of the following trophies: Best

of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, High in Trial, High Combined, First Place in the Open stake and First Place in the Amateur Stake in the Field trial. Receipts may be required by GRCA.

c. **Annual meeting.** GRCA will contribute up to \$250 towards the cost of the room (if any) and refreshments for the Annual Meeting. Receipts may be required by GRCA.

d. **Mailing and printing.** GRCA will donate up to \$1500 towards the printing and mailing of the National Specialty premium list. Receipts may be required by GRCA. As of 2007, premium lists are no longer required to be mailed to all members. The premium list may be available electronically with only a limited few printed upon request.

e. **Grounds and Maintenance.** GRCA will donate up to \$500 towards grounds and maintenance, including rentals and cleanup, at the hotels and/or show site. Receipts may be required by GRCA.

f. In summary, GRCA will loan (interest free) up to \$8000 and will donate up to \$2850 for trophies, annual meeting room, premium list printing and mailing and grounds/maintenance.

**5. Checking Account.** A separate checking account must be established by the host club. This account should not bear the name or initials of the Golden Retriever Club of America. Instead, the host club should be listed on this account. Example: "MHGRC National Specialty Account" or "CVGRC National". This will provide a separate accounting of funds being spent and received during the entire process of planning and running the National. This account will also be useful when preparing income tax forms after the national.

**6. Stationary.** An ample supply of GRCA stationary will be forwarded to the National Specialty General Chair by the GRCA Administrative Assistant. This stationery is to be used for all official correspondence including communications with judges, hotels and vendors. If desired, the host club may also have its own stationary with the logo of that year's National Specialty.

**7. Golden Retriever News.** The host club is provided with up to twelve free pages of black/white advertising in the *Golden Retriever News* in the issues beginning with the November-December issue of the year preceding its National Specialty. These pages may be used in any multiple (one, two, three, etc.), or all 12 in one issue. These black and white pages may be upgraded to color at the host club's expense. Check with the Editor for pricing on upgrades. Host clubs can

also use their "Member Club Report" column and the "Specialty & Events Calendar" in each preceding issue of the *GR News* to promote and provide information on the National Specialty. Utilize this free advertising for your National – remember that not everybody is on the internet! The Internet is also a viable means of communication today. You should plan on putting together a National website, whether it is on your club's website or stands alone.

**8. Insurance.** Many show sites, hotels, and trial grounds may require proof of insurance. GRCA carries insurance for auto comprehensive liability, comprehensive general liability, and a floater policy for GRCA trophies. **GRCA also obtains riders (files the forms and pays the fees) to cover the venues for all the National events.** GRCA insurance is for sites only. If equipment such as generators need to be rented, the host club must cover the cost of the insurance rider. Give the current GRCA treasurer the name of the individual to whom proof of insurance should be sent and this will be provided. **GRCA insurance only covers GRCA!** Host clubs need to carry their own insurance for their own protection. Any third party events are NOT covered under GRCA's policy. Such events must make their own arrangements with hotels and show sites and must supply proof of their own insurance. (See Section 27) Allow adequate time for obtaining this proof of insurance. Do this early and completely. Each piece of property or site you use requires a separate rider. Submit your requests to the Treasurer in one package at least four months out. Delay may cause your site not to be insured!

**9. Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting is an important and integral part of the National. The GRCA Secretary should contact the General Chair to specify what arrangements and equipment are needed. The room should be set theatre style; there should be a raised platform with long skirted tables for the Board to sit at. This set up should accommodate 14 people: the Board, the Administrative Assistant and a Parliamentarian. A microphone and podium should be provided. Floor microphones may also be used. The meeting room should accommodate approximately 350 people. GRCA will conduct the annual meeting. There is generally no cost for the room, since it is offset by the sleeping rooms and the food service already contracted for at the host hotel (be sure to discuss this with the hotel when you are discussing contracts). Should there be a charge or should refreshments be offered, GRCA will contribute up to \$250 towards the cost. The host club should consult the GRCA Secretary before finalizing the schedule. Since 2006, the GRCA trophies for accomplishments during the previous year are awarded at the Annual Meeting. Coordinate the set-up of the room and trophy display with the Trophy Curator and the GRCA

President.

**10. Annual Awards Presentation.** Because of the recent shift in emphasis of the National, the nature of the Annual Awards Presentation has changed. This no longer needs to be a formal affair, although it is perfectly acceptable to be so. The style of this presentation should be consistent with the “ambience” created by the Host club for the entire National. The Annual Awards banquet should be held in accordance with guidelines detailed elsewhere in the handbook (Section 21).

**11. Top Twenty Gala and Art Auction.** The Art Auction and Gala are the responsibility of the Golden Retriever Foundation (GRF) and is their prime revenue-producing event of the year. Arrangements for this will be made by the Foundation; the host club is not involved in this activity, other than allowing room for it in the week’s schedule and communicating with representatives of GRF what facilities are being used and what might be available for their use. The GRF may need someone local to help arrange the site. Also, the reservation monies may be handled in part through your RSVP page. The actual date of this event in the schedule is entirely the responsibility of the host club. However, remember that the Gala is the primary fund-raising event for the Foundation. The Foundation staff should be consulted before finalizing the date. Two nights before Best of Breed is preferred, but this may not always be possible.

**12. GRCA Sales Booth.** GRCA must be provided with booth space for the sale of GRCA items. Check with the GRCA Secretary and the GRCA Sales Manager for preferable locations and equipment desired. GRCA and the host club booths should be within close proximity to one another or may share space. Generally a 20’ x 20’ space with adequate tables and chairs are needed.

**13. GRCA Board of Directors Meetings.** Arrangements must be made with the headquarters hotel to provide the GRCA Board of Directors with a meeting room. The GRCA Secretary will notify the host club regarding the details and times of these meetings. There is typically an "Old Board" meeting during the first days of the National and a "New Board" meeting following the National. Typically, this is negotiated as part of the overall agreement for rooming, meetings, etc.

**14. GRCA Delegates' Meeting.** The host club's GRCA delegate and the Regional Vice President are responsible for setting up a GRCA Delegates' meeting. Arrangements must be made to provide a room at the headquarters hotel or at the show site which will accommodate 50 people

theater-style. If there is a charge, GRCA will pay for the meeting room. The host club's Delegate should work closely with the GRCA Secretary or her appointee in disseminating all necessary information and requesting input regarding agenda items. The GRCA Regional Vice President in the host club's region will chair this meeting.

**15. Educational seminars/meetings.** As of 1999, the host club is no longer responsible for an educational program. These educational seminars cover a broad range of topics pertinent to today's Golden Retriever owner or breeder including but not limited to health, reproduction, temperament, training, etc... The local club may make suggestions on topics and speakers to GRCA. The scheduling of these Educational Seminars needs to be coordinated between the GRCA Breed Education Committee and the host club organizers. Since GRCA is responsible for any educational seminars, the money collected must go directly to GRCA. While these events should be included in the schedule, they should not be listed in the RSVP page. A separate individual will receive payment and registration.

**16. AKC Conformation Judges' Education.** The GRCA Judges' Education Subcommittee of the Breed Education Committee is responsible for organizing and executing this program. If there is a charge, GRCA will pay for the meeting room. The host club's responsibility is to provide a meeting room, separate space for dog evaluations, and seats at ringside during Conformation judging. Contact the GRCA Judges' Education Subcommittee Chair for specific requirements. When possible, the attendees should also be taken to a field event to see Goldens performing their original function. Because these seminars are limited to judges only and are not open to all, they should not be included on the RSVP page and limited mention of them should be made in the schedule.

**17. Rescue Meeting.** A meeting of the member clubs' rescue delegates and other interested individuals is also held at the National Specialty. This can be scheduled to be held at the same time as the Delegate's Meeting or, more appropriately, after the Rescue Parade when most interested parties will be at the site of the parade. A room or space suitable for 50 people is needed; if there is a charge, GRCA will pay. The Chair of the National Rescue Committee will chair the meeting.

**18. Participation of the General Chair and Other Members of the Organizing Committee.** It is GRCA policy that the General Chair shall not enter or have shown a dog in any

Specialty event except the Honors Parade. It is also a long-standing tradition that members of the Show Committee and those involved in Judges' Hospitality also do not enter or show dogs in Conformation or Sweepstakes. *There isn't time to do justice to both dog and show committee duties and it could be a potential conflict of interest.* Imagine a protest against the Winners Dog and a show committee member owns the Reserve Winner. This is a no-win situation regardless of outcome. This problem can be avoided by not entering. Limitations on other committee members (such as hospitality) should be decided by the host club and defined in the premium list. Chairs and committee members of other events such as the field trial, obedience, etc. are typically free to participate in conformation/sweepstakes without restriction, as long as this does not interfere with the performance of their duties for their event.

Additionally, a major concern throughout the National is to make sure that the Chair of any event is free to provide full attention to conducting a smoothly run and problem free event. That can best be accomplished by excluding the chair of any event from participating in that event. This is a strong suggestion but not a requirement. The chair of any National event should remember that their primary obligation is to the event itself.

**19. Mailing of Premium Lists.** In 1993, GRCA required that premium lists for all National events be mailed to all GRCA members. This ensured that all members received the same information from the same source. In 2007, the means of distributing the Premium list to all members was changed to accommodate the availability of electronic communication. A mailing list can be obtained upon request from the Membership Coordinator. The mailing date for the Premium List should be early enough to accommodate a closing date about a month before the National, as well as additional time for advertising and RSVP information. This has traditionally involved about 9-10 weeks before the National. Also plan on time to prepare the material, get it proofread by GRCA before submitting it to the Superintendent or Secretary for publishing and mailing. Discuss the requirements of mailing the premium lists to Canadian and overseas members with your show secretary/superintendent. Details on timing, proofreading, etc. are covered in Section XXIV.

## **SECTION 3: ITEMS TO BE SUPPLIED TO THE HOST CLUB BY GRCA**

### **A. Provided before bid or immediately after bid for National submitted**

1. A copy of this handbook. (from the GRCA Administrative Assistant, as soon as requested, or from the GRCA website.)

### **B. Provided when bid for National has been accepted**

1. An ample supply of GRCA letterhead and envelopes. (from the GRCA Administrative Assistant, as soon as the bid is accepted.)

2. Copy of GRCA's insurance policy for the show site, hotel(s) and landowners. (from the GRCA Treasurer when requested.)

3. Requirements of the GRCA Board of Directors for the GRCA annual membership meeting, Board, and other committee meetings. This should include times, places, equipment, food, etc. (from the GRCA Secretary, four months prior to the event.)

### **C. Provided at time of Premium List preparation (6 months prior to National – Feb-Mar of National year)**

1. Membership list. (from the Membership Coordinator upon request.)

2. Labels and/or disc of mailing addresses for mailing the premium list with e-mail addresses. (from the Membership Coordinator upon request.)

### **D. Provided at time of Catalog preparation**

1. Accurate list of GRCA trophies for inclusion in the catalog. (from the GRCA Trophy Curator, six months before the event.)

### **E. Other times**

1. Die of GRCA logo for rosettes. (at time rosettes are to be ordered – 9 months before National)

2. Requirements of the GRCA Board of Directors at the show site. Items such as booth space, tables, electrical outlets, etc. (from the GRCA Secretary, 6 months before the event.)

3. List of Board members and Committee chairs requiring hotel rooms. Block of 25 to be reserved by host club before reservations are open. (supplied by GRCA Treasurer, 2 months prior to the event.)

4. Banners representing all GRCA member clubs. (from the Banner Chair, 1 month before the event.)

**F. Monetary Contributions (from the GRCA Treasurer, upon request)**

1. Loan up to \$6000 (available immediately after National bid has been accepted)

2. Loan of up to \$2000 (available one year prior to event)

3. Trophy donations up to \$600 (6 months prior to National)

4. Postage and printing donation up to \$1500 (at time of Premium List preparation)

5. Annual meeting donation up to \$250 (6 months prior to National)

6. Grounds and maintenance donation up to \$500 (6 months prior to National)

## SECTION 4: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL CHAIR

**A. General Considerations.** The entire Specialty is the responsibility of the General Chair. This is the person who holds the event together, who answers or finds the answers to all questions, who deals with GRCA, and who enables the Specialty Committee to function. A General Chair should be selected before your club makes its bid to host the National Specialty. Bidding first and then trying to find someone to hold this position simply does not work. If your club doesn't have an individual who is both willing and able to take on this assignment, perhaps you're not yet ready to host the National.

**B. Time Commitment.** This should be at least a three-year assignment, with busy periods occurring at the beginning for organization and planning, at about a year along for finalizing sites, judges, etc., and throughout the final year with a whole host of activities (premium list, catalog, merchandising, etc.) leading up to and through the event. There is also a two to three month period after the Specialty is over when letters of appreciation are sent, the financial statement is prepared, and the Specialty Report is submitted. It can seem at times that the job is never done!

### **C. Requirements.**

1. a. Experience in organizing at least one major dog event-- show, field trial, hunting test, etc, OR

b. Experience in organizing similar non-dog events-- seminars, conferences, etc. Such experience does not, however, preclude the necessity for having a working knowledge of and active participation in dog events. Some knowledge in all events is needed. The General Chair doesn't have to have run a dog in all events, but he should have attended them, know people who actively participate in them, and become familiar with the special circumstances and potential problems related to each event.

2. Ability to work productively with people, to avoid or resolve conflicts within a group of volunteers and to handle bad/negative comments. It is important to be able to keep the working group within the club working together and not to fracture over decisions about judges, grounds, etc. Understand that not everyone will be happy with all decisions and that some comments may be made out of frustration or disagreement. These are just part of the job.

3. The ability to make decisions and to follow through on projects both big and small. Be fair and include the committee and other members in the decision-making process. However, there will be times when a decision needs to be made and the General Chair is the one with ultimate responsibility.

4. Strong organizational skills. Have a view of the big picture and understand the route to getting there. Keeping all the parts working as a unit will be a key to success.

5. Good communication skills, both written and verbal. Let everyone know what the goals are, how they are going to be achieved and provide feedback to everyone as activities are completed successfully. Share the successes as they occur.

6. Willingness to sacrifice the participation of one's own dog(s) in Specialty events. It is vital that the General Chair devote all his energy toward making sure that everything comes off without a hitch. Running a National doesn't happen every year and sacrificing showing for one National is not much to ask for making sure the National provides a good reflection of the club acting as host. Besides, everyone else is looking to you for leadership and this sets the right kind of example for the other members of the committee.

7. Ability to delegate responsibility. You can't do it all and you must rely on those working with you to handle their jobs. Your task is to make sure they understand what they need to accomplish, provide whatever support they need to be successful and keep tabs on their progress as time moves along.

8. Good sense of humor. Take time to laugh at some mistakes and issues while maintaining a focus on the job at hand. Getting too serious can lead to trouble.

This sounds like a job description for a management position, because that's what it is. The General Chair becomes the CEO of a business operation for three years. The Chair will manage an enterprise that deals with \$100,000-300,000 of revenue, that has over 100 "employees," and that serves over 1000 "customers." It is not a trivial pursuit.

#### **D. Duties.**

1. Organize club members into a functioning unit now called the National Specialty

Committee. Appoint all committee chairs, provide them with job descriptions, and serve as a resource person when questions arise. It is important to select persons who have experience in the areas they will be working and who work well with the Chair and each other. It is also important to know that the people selected for all positions will do their job and not just occupy a position. A non-working chairperson can cause more problems than not having someone in that position. Coordinate all activities so that the Specialty functions as a cohesive event, not as several independent ones.

2. In coordination with the National Specialty Committee, select and hire judges for all events. The manner in which judges are selected should involve a consensus of the host club or committee or both. Be sure this is established before any decisions are made. Also, the criterion for selecting judges should be openly discussed and agreed upon before starting this process. Contacting judges can be delegated to individual event chairs, but the group as a whole should agree on the potential candidates. Making all major decisions as a group goes a long way towards promoting unity and harmony. All committee members should be made to feel that their opinions are valued and given serious consideration.

3. In coordination with the National Specialty Committee, investigate potential hotels and sites for the events. Select hotels and sites and sign contracts. (Again, be sure the process is agreed upon and openly discuss all alternatives before making any decisions.) Make sure contract proposals from prospective sites/locations are sent to the GRCA Legal committee before signing, as a review of these contracts can help avoid undesirable issues that may arise.

4. In coordination with the National Specialty Committee, select and hire a show superintendent and/or secretaries. **The selection of a superintendent should also be discussed with GRCA so that unexpected issues are not considered before a decision is made.** The experience of past National Chairs and GRCA with regard to the responsiveness of the various superintendents and secretaries can help avoid unpleasant results.

5. Be available as a resource person for questions about all events, both planning and execution. Make sure that all individual chairs are communicating with you and with each other. Communication is the one activity that is a must for a successful National.

6. Chair regularly scheduled National Specialty Committee meetings. Make sure a record is

kept of discussions and decisions.

7. Keep a balance between the various events and activities, making sure that each has its proper allocation of time and resources.

8. In coordination with the National Specialty Committee, GRCA and other organizations (GRF, rescue organizations, etc.), establish a Specialty schedule. Examine and understand the schedules used in the past and listed in the Appendix.

9. Maintain contact with the GRCA Board of Directors, especially the Regional Vice President and the Chair of the Specialty Advisory Committee. The GRCA Secretary is the contact with the AKC. All AKC and GRCA forms will be completed by the Secretary after the appropriate forms are completed by the host club and returned to the Secretary. The forms will subsequently be completed and submitted to AKC by the GRCA Secretary.

10. a) Prepare and proofread the premium list. As of 2004 it is required that a draft of the premium list be sent to the GRCA Secretary and GRCA Specialty Advisory Committee Chair for proofing before it is sent to the show superintendent for printing and distribution. Pay particular attention to the GRCA requirements for various classes and events. Examples of previous premium lists are available on the CD from the GRCA SAC or on the website.

b) Prepare and proofread information that will be published in the *GR News*.

11. Proofread the premium list again.

12. In coordination with the National Specialty Treasurer, make sure the financial report submitted to GRCA is complete, accurate, and on time.

13. Prepare a detailed report of the entire Specialty for the GRCA Board of Directors and the Chair of SAC.

14. Write letters of appreciation to committee members, hotels, judges, suppliers, and anyone else deemed appropriate.

15. Serve on all show and trial committees.

16. Make sure that the write-ups and appropriate photos of all Specialty events are submitted to the *GR News* according to requirements.

17. Delegate, delegate, delegate...but remember that the ultimate responsibility is yours.

### **E. Participation in Specialty Events.**

It is customary that the General Chair does not show or run a dog in any of the competitive Specialty events. There simply isn't enough time to do justice to both a dog and the Specialty. The General Chair should be available at all times to deal with any snags that arise, and thus must have his energies focused on the event itself and not his dog's performance. Further, if he were fortunate enough to win, both he and the host club would undoubtedly come into some criticism. Why put yourself and your club in such an uncomfortable position? If an individual is unwilling to give up exhibiting at this one National, the General Chair is not the job for that person.

Your club also needs to decide who else (if anyone) should not exhibit. AKC regulations state that the following persons may not exhibit or enter for exhibition at the National any dog that they own or co-own: 1) The Show Secretary. 2) The Show Superintendent, any employee of the Superintendent, or anyone residing in the household of the Superintendent. 3) The Show Veterinarian. 4) Conformation, Obedience, or Sweeps judges or anyone residing in their households. Immediate family members no longer residing in a particular judge's household may exhibit/enter/handle at that show if they are not under that particular judge's officiating. 6) Stewards cannot exhibit under a judge for whom they stewarded at that same show.

By custom the Show Chair and the Hospitality Chair do not generally exhibit. Some clubs have specified that anyone on the Show Committee, or the current host club president, or the judges' Hospitality Committee will not exhibit. Others have specified that the chairs of each event cannot show in that event. This decision needs to be made early in the organizational stages, since it will affect people's willingness to accept assignments. A statement of this policy should be included in the premium list.

## **SECTION 5: TREASURER**

A Specialty Treasurer must be appointed to deal with the funds, accounts and monies generated by all aspects of the National.

### **A. Requirements.**

1. Above all, the person must be accurate and honest.
2. The person should have some experience in managing budgets and finances of some sort of large undertaking.
3. Computer skills and equipment are a must, including the ability to prepare financial spreadsheets.

### **B. Duties.**

1. Establish National Specialty account(s) that are separate from the host club's treasury. "Golden Retriever Club of America" or "GRCA" should **NOT** be used in the account name. Account names like "2001 National Specialty" or "Mile-Hi National Specialty" are appropriate. The account should have two signatories, the Treasurer and the General Chair, so that money will be accessible if the Treasurer is unavailable to sign checks. Having both signatures required, however, is cumbersome and unnecessary.

2. The Treasurer will receive all monies paid in, keep accurate records, and pay all authorized bills. Make sure all committee members know what will be reimbursed and that they need to turn in receipts. Entry money will go directly to the secretary/superintendent for each event. It is preferable that the Treasurer receives the money directly for other items, with the following exceptions:

a. Catalog advertising. The checks for the advertisements should be sent with the ad copy directly to the Advertising/Catalog Chair.

b. The Field Trial, Tracking, Agility, Parade and WC/WCX may have their own secretaries to whom the entries and checks will be sent. These secretaries must verify the accounting for their event before turning the monies over to the Treasurer.

c. Trophy donations may be received by the Trophy Chair, who makes an accounting before turning the monies over to the Treasurer.

d. RSVP income is typically received by the RSVP Chair, who makes an accounting before turning the monies over to the Treasurer.

3. The Treasurer should work with the General Chair and other Committee chairs to assemble a budget document. This document is used throughout the planning stages to understand the potential income and expenses of each event and how these interplay to provide the overall budget of the National Specialty. These “budgets” have been used to good advantage by many clubs to help plan entry fees, costs of trophies, the level of hospitality, etc. that fits into their potential income. The use of this approach cannot be over-emphasized in planning the overall National and its financial outcome.

4. The Treasurer should prepare a "Reservations" page to go into the premium list and/or *GR News* material. This task can also be delegated to a RSVP Chair. This allows the Treasurer to focus on the overall financial aspects of the National. This page should include everything but the entries: reservations for meal functions except the GRCA educational events, all events, any sale items such as pins, hats, or clothing, a space for trophy donations, and space for any other paid events or items. This form will save the exhibitor time, will jog the memory for things that might otherwise be overlooked, and will provide a simple, accurate accounting of who spent money on what. This information can then be stored as reference material for future host clubs. Use whole dollar amounts for the price of all items. If your state requires that you collect sales tax on items sold, build that into the price you are charging for each item. Photocopying the completed forms and placing them alphabetically in a 3-ring binder to have at the show will help answer numerous questions from individuals who forgot what they ordered. (See the section on Premium Lists – Sect. 24)

5. The Treasurer should establish an account with MasterCard/Visa to allow use of those cards for all Specialty functions and items. Many clubs have found this satisfactory and the small fee to be money well spent. The money is available immediately (no waiting for checks to clear the bank), and it prevents dealing with an enormous amount of cash at the Specialty itself. **Be sure of the details of the agreement with the credit card agency before making a final decision.** Some online agencies, for example PayPal, seem attractive but funds might not be readily available when needed.

6. The Treasurer will pay all bills, both prior to and at the conclusion of the Specialty. Funds in the National Specialty account will have to be paid out before any significant income is generated by entries, fund raising, etc. Many clubs “seed” the account with funds from their own treasury in the form of a loan, which is paid back at a future date. The GRCA loan of \$6,000 can also be used for this purpose, although you will need to have a National account open to receive it. Bills for the three most expensive outlays-- trophies, catalog printing, and premium list mailing -- may come due prior to depositing the entry money. The Treasurer should make sure there is enough money in the account to cover these items. The loan from GRCA must be paid back within 90 days of the conclusion of the Specialty. After all other budgetary items are reconciled, 20 % of the profit from the Specialty is paid to GRCA. Should there be a deficit, GRCA will assume 20% of the loss.

7. The Treasurer will then prepare a financial statement in the GRCA-approved format (see Appendix). After sending GRCA a check for 20% of the profit, the Treasurer will close the National Specialty account and deposit the remaining funds into the host club's treasury.

## SECTION 6: BUDGETING AND FINANCES

**A. General Considerations. Budgeting is perhaps the single most important preparatory consideration for a host club.** Proper financial planning can mean the difference between a reasonable profit and a large loss on a National, and thus the success or failure of all the host club's efforts. Financial reports from several recent Nationals are provided (See appropriate section of Index material on CD or at website) to present a general idea of how budgeting should be done and the sorts of budget items that need to be considered. Please remember that some clubs included expenses in different categories than others. The most helpful suggestion, however, is to take advantage of other clubs' expertise. Contact the General Chairs and/or Treasurers of past Nationals as well as the Specialty Advisory Committee Chair and ask questions. Learn what worked and what didn't; then profit from their experience.

When planning the budget, begin with the assumption that you wish to break even when all income and expenses have been accounted. Experience has shown that it is best to use low estimates for income based on anticipated entries and high estimates for expected expenses. Use entry numbers from GRCA National Specialties held in your Region in recent years as base estimates; this will most likely be a conservative estimate, since entries have been steadily increasing. This "base entry estimate" will prove invaluable in setting your entry fee. Another good guideline in setting the entry fee is to base it on that used successfully by other host clubs recently, or by all-breed clubs in your area. Don't be afraid to raise the entry fee if it is necessary to balance your budget. Overestimates can be returned to exhibitors in a variety of ways, especially in the area of hospitality.

When preparing the budget, keep in mind that the bulk of the income will come from conformation, obedience and agility (if offered) entries, catalog sales, merchandise sales and fund-raising. Several clubs have been able to equate final profit to the amount of fund-raising done in support of the National. If a Sweepstakes is held, remember that the host club may keep only 35 % of the entry fee-- the rest is returned as prize money-- so it is unlikely that any profit will be made on this event. Another event that does not traditionally turn a profit is the Honors Parade. The Honors Parade should be budgeted to cover the cost of the entire event, not just the rosette and/or memento that is given to exhibitors. A properly planned and executed field trial and WC/WCX should break even and perhaps even turn a small profit. Tracking, however, will almost certainly lose money, since the entry is limited and may not even fill. Budget categories like grounds,

trophies, hospitality and administrative costs (if used in a budget as separate items) are also major cost factors. **Think of the National as a whole, not as separate events that do or do not pay for themselves. Make the “whole event” balance or provide a small profit when considering costs and income for setting costs for events and entry fees.**

One approach for assembling the various parts is to allow the Chairs of each category (Events, Grounds, Sales, etc.) to assemble the budgets for their events and to pull these all together. Once the assembled budget is examined, then balance the overall budget by adjusting entry fees, vendors fees, sales item cost, etc. This way, no one person has to do the entire budget from the outset. This works well with the concept that each event need not make money but the overall event should break even or show a modest profit.

Banquets and other food-related projects, while adding to the amount of money collected and spent, are usually "washes" in the sense that the amount of money charged should cover the actual costs. Host clubs that have lost money on these programs have done so because they forgot to include sundry items such as name tags, table cloths, flowers, etc. when budgeting these events. Remember to include this type of expense when figuring what to charge per person. For example, if the hotel is charging the club \$35 per person, charge \$40 to cover table favors and other incidentals. This mark-up can also be used to cover the "free" dinners given to judges and/or other special persons at the banquet.

**B. Fund Raising.** Fund raising projects can often make the difference between profit and loss at a National. Income derived from projects that result directly from the National (e.g. Specialty pins and clothing) should be included as income in the Specialty budget. Other funds that clubs raise from non-National related activities (e.g. stewarding, running a food concession at all-breed shows or holding a seminar), which are then used as working capital for the National, should be considered a part of the host club's treasury. Application of these funds to the National should then be done in the form of a loan from the host club to the National Specialty account. If there are any questions about determining if a fund-raising event should be handled in the club account or National Specialty account, please contact the Specialty Advisory Committee.

Many clubs have raised substantial sums of money at the National by holding silent auctions and raffles. Unique, handmade items such as stained glass, needlepoint, and quilts, seem to do best in these sorts of activities. Sporting dog related items are also popular. There are many, many good possibilities. It's probably best to avoid locally-donated services, since only a small percentage of the

exhibitors will be present for more than a few days. Host clubs can also do very well selling Specialty-related items. Pins, polo shirts, tote bags, sweatshirts, visors, etc. that bear the logo associated with that National always seem to sell out early. However, avoid investing too heavily in items that are strongly dependent on weather for successful sales--umbrellas only sell well when it's raining or very hot. Items of clothing require an inventory of sizes and colors. Find out from other clubs that have sold clothing recently what you might expect in the way of sales, what styles and colors are most popular, and if any extraordinary circumstances affected sales (were they selling sun visors in a downpour?). A spreadsheet from one National is provided in the files on CD as an example of color and sizes sold at a National. Be very careful of ordering excess items as this unsold inventory will dramatically reduce your profit. One of the best strategies is to encourage placing orders via the RSVP page in your advertising in the *GR News* and then have enough stock of items available without having to over-stock. If your local supplier is capable of filling out orders during the week, you can work with even less stock and avoid over-estimations. Be prepared to take and fill orders after the National; keep a few "demos" around so those who wish to place an order can have a first-hand look at the merchandise. It is better to sell out of inventory than it is to have it left over.

**C. Sponsors.** In the past several years, host clubs have actively sought and received corporate sponsorships. These are usually the big dog food companies, such as Purina or Iams, but they could be other corporations as well. In return for a large donation (at least \$10,000) the company receives the right to have its name and logo included as part of the National advertising. It can also restrict other similar companies from being vendors or donating goods. GRCA has no policy on corporate sponsors; this is a decision left to the host club. If you choose to use a corporate sponsor, make sure you have a contract with the company, spelling out exactly what the terms of the agreement are. Using a corporate sponsor can save a host club a lot of work in pre--National fund raising and has been an effective source of revenue. Be sure that the money is available prior to the National; receiving it after the event is less helpful.

**D. Superintendent or Show Secretary?** In figuring expenses, one question that always arises is whether to contract for the services of a professional show superintendent or a show secretary. Self-superintending is no longer a practical, feasible option; the National is just too big and complex for a non-professional to handle.

Using a professional superintendent is the easiest but also the most expensive way to go.

Some are considerably more expensive than others. If you plan to use a professional superintendent, it will save you money to investigate all available superintendents and compare their rates. Compare the contracts carefully, since some include services in their base contract that others provide only as an additional charge. Also, consult with GRCA on the experiences of host clubs and GRCA with various superintendents. The superintendent will print both the premium list and the catalogs. He will provide a mailing list of Golden exhibitors who may not be GRCA members. The superintendent must be provided with mailing lists or labels of GRCA members, which can be obtained from the GRCA Membership Coordinator, so that he can mail these along with his own mailing list. Be sure these two lists are merged prior to mailing to avoid duplication. Other individuals who must be mailed premium lists are the vendors and all of the judges. The superintendent will pay all costs associated with printing and mailing the premium lists. He will collect the entry fees and do all the necessary processing of entries. He will mail out the judging schedule to all exhibitors. All superintendent fees are then deducted from the money received as entry fees, and a check will be issued for the remaining balance the day of the show. The superintendent will provide all ring equipment, including the wicket. He will be responsible for having all of the necessary items at the show, and AKC will hold him responsible for any procedural errors. At the conclusion of the show, he will forward the results and all necessary paperwork to AKC.

Another alternative is to hire a professional show secretary. A show secretary will handle mailing of the premium list, receipt and processing of entries, and can also be used to produce the show catalog. He does not usually provide any ring equipment. The show secretary will be present on the day of the show to handle any problems related to entries. He will not be responsible for any problems not directly related to his contractual duties. However, since the duties of a show secretary are less extensive than those of a superintendent, the fees will be lower. Any host club contemplating using a show secretary needs to be certain of having access to all necessary equipment required for the show and obedience trial. A detailed description of the duties of show superintendents and show secretaries can be found in the *AKC Show Plans Manual*.

If you elect to have a professional show secretary, make certain that individual can handle the large numbers of the National. The person who does a fine job for your local independent of 200 dogs may be overwhelmed by an entry of over 1000.

Although both a superintendent and a secretary will print and mail the premium list, you will need to prepare it yourself. The National premium list contains many unique sections and cannot be

based on an all-breed premium list. There are numerous examples of previous premium lists to assist you in this endeavor. These can be found on the CD provided by the SAC or on the website. Contact previous General Chairs and obtain electronic copies of their premium lists which you can use by changing names and dates. Before the premium list is sent to the superintendent for printing and mailing, a draft must be sent to both the GRCA Secretary and to the Chair of the Specialty Advisory Committee for proofing. See Section 24 for a complete discussion of the premium list.

## SECTION 7: SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

GRCA specifies that the National must take place between September 1 and October 31. Within that window the host club is free to determine the dates and order of events.

### A. Length of time.

1. The conformation portion must be allocated three days. Nationals for which a large conformation entry is anticipated may wish to schedule four days. The obedience portion should be allocated two days, although three can be used if necessary. Experience has shown that holding obedience concurrently with the first two days of conformation works best.

2. The field trial should be allocated three days.

3. Tracking requires one day, plus an additional day for setting up. It takes lots of manpower for two days, but can accommodate only twelve TD and six TDX entries. It is best to schedule it as the opening or ending event of the National.

4. The WC/WCX requires a full day with several sets of judges, provided there is adequate land and water to accommodate both stakes at once. Like tracking, this is best scheduled as an opening or ending event, although it has also been a satisfactory bridge between the field and show portions of the National. If it is scheduled before conformation judging, remember that many people will enter both and may have to bathe their dog. Be sure to provide access to bathing facilities in a timely manner (i.e. the day of the WC/WCX) to prevent grooming in hotel rooms.

5. If at all possible, no two events should overlap; thus in reality the National should extend over at least eight days. Some clubs have used the full eight days, while others have allowed a one day overlap between the conformation/obedience portion and the field trial.

6. Additional events will require additional time. Think of your schedule before deciding to offer non-required events such as Sweepstakes, Agility, Rally Obedience, a VST or a Hunt Test. Sweepstakes will take an additional day, usually before the regular classes of conformation. Agility will take a full day. Rally Obedience may or may not fit into the regular obedience schedule but will require either additional time or space to accommodate. A VST will take a different location and both time and manpower to conduct. A Hunt Test will take grounds (possibly the same grounds to

be used for WC/X or Field Trial) and at least a day, if not two days, to conduct, depending on what tests are offered.

At a few Nationals, there have been two separate Agility trials held in GRCA's name. This practice was halted in 2006 although a few host clubs have also held an agility trial in their own name in addition to the one held in GRCA's name. GRCA's policy is that there should be only ONE of each event at the National. Although your members may request a second agility chair, try to explain that one of each event is the best policy and does not elevate one activity above another.

## **B. Temperature/Weather**

1. Generally, the further south the National is held, the later in the window it is scheduled. The host club should know the time period that will have the most accommodating weather, but should be prepared and plan for the little jokes of Mother Nature. Nationals have been held in drenching downpours, record heat waves, and unseasonably early snowfalls. If at all possible, it is a prudent idea to have an indoor show site in reserve.

## **C. Local Events**

1. Other shows. Be careful of scheduling against an established all-breed show within the AKC 200 mile limit. Although AKC will allow overlap between a national specialty and an all-breed show, it is best to avoid this situation if possible. The other show committee will have to release Goldens and may not be willing to do so. Obtaining permission will delay AKC approval of the National applications. If you know there is a potential conflict, try and get written permission from the other event before submitting the application. Sometimes clubs change their dates without your knowledge. This, too, can be handled with AKC.

2. Field trials. The National is frequently scheduled around field trials in the area, either on an adjacent weekend or on weekdays following a local trial. If participants can run two trials in one trip the entry will be larger. If the trial is held on weekdays make certain the necessary help is available-- not everyone can get off during the week. As a courtesy, tell the other local trial committees that their entries will probably increase. They may need additional judges and/or workers to handle all the Golden entries. Do not schedule the trial on a weekend opposite a local retriever club trial. They have the right (and will probably exercise it), to protest the Specialty Trial,

and that protest will be upheld.

3. Scheduling seems to be a more severe problem in the Eastern region. You may want to consider tracking and WC/WCX on the first Sat/Sun., the field trial Mon./Tues./Wed. and conformation/obedience on Wed./Thurs./Fri./Sat. Not perhaps an ideal schedule but workable -- and it avoids protests.

4. If at all possible, try to avoid scheduling any portion of the National during religious holidays. Also, although it is not possible to accurately know the airline embargoes that will be in effect, try and take this into consideration when setting your schedule.

5. Use local events in your area (dog shows, field trials, non-dog events) to your advantage by scheduling the National before or after these events. The increased opportunities for participants will help build your entry.

#### **D. Other Scheduled Events**

**1. Annual Trophy Presentation Event.** The “banquet” is held on the evening that conformation is completed. It is preferable if this can be held at the same site as the GRCA trophies are displayed. If there is a separate site for the banquet, the trophies have to be repacked and moved which is an enormous undertaking. See the section on this event (Section 21), as the nature of this event has changed recently.

**2. GRCA annual meeting.** Sometime during National week GRCA must hold its annual membership meeting as specified in the By-Laws. The GRCA Secretary is responsible for organizing this meeting; that individual should contact the host club to arrange for the room and anything else needed. Should there be a charge for the room, GRCA will assume the cost. Make sure that the hotel is told how the room is to be configured (usually theatre style), if there is to be a raised platform for the Board members, whether a podium with a microphone is needed, whether floor mikes are also needed, or if there is to be an audio-visual presentation.

**3. Art Auction and Gala.** Started in 1991, the Golden Retriever Foundation holds its Annual Art Auction and Gala on a separate night. This is the primary fund-raiser for the Foundation. The host club is not responsible for this event, except as to act as a liaison between the

Gala site and the representative from the Golden Retriever Foundation. While the final decision of the date is the host club's responsibility, the GRF prefers it to be held two days before Best of Breed. This request should be accommodated if at all possible.

**4. Member education program.** In 1999, GRCA assumed responsibility for providing an educational program for breeders and members. A representative from the Breed Education Committee or its subcommittees will be in charge of this event which is frequently held on one of the opening days of the National. The host club bears no responsibility for this event, except to act as liaison between the GRCA representative and the site. Information on this program should be included in the premium list. The Judges Education Subcommittee of the Breed Education Committee traditionally holds an educational session for prospective judges of Golden Retrievers including, if possible, a trip to the field trial and ringside mentoring. The host club may be asked to designate appropriate seating for these individuals which should be done during set-up. None of the educational events should appear on the RSVP page; monies and reservations should be handled directly by GRCA.

**5. Special hospitality considerations.** It is a nice touch if hospitality can be available at the events not associated with the main body of the show, such as tracking, the field trial, and the WC/WCX. Another tradition with considerable merit is some sort of welcome dinner the night before conformation begins. This is more informal than the awards banquet and gives people a chance to meet old friends. A friendly social event like this can set the tone for the rest of the week. A separate social event for the field contingent is appreciated. This usually means something similar to a traditional field trial tail-gate party during the days of the trial. The annual field trophies can also be presented at this event or a Field Trial Banquet may be held at the conclusion of the trial.

**6. Third Party Events - See Section 27 for this policy.**

## SECTION 8: TROPHIES AND RIBBONS

**A. Selection of trophies.** Selection of trophies is a major decision which will consume a large portion of the budget. Trophy donations must be actively solicited to offset their costs. A win or placement at the National is a significant accomplishment and participants always appreciate a trophy as a memento. While trophy costs shouldn't cripple the budget, the quality should reflect the significance of the event. The trophies selected reflect both on the host club and on GRCA. It's useful to remember that many people fly to the National, so trophies shouldn't be too large or too fragile. Some clubs have given trophies that represent their geographical area or items for the dogs, like dishes or toys. Handmade items are unique and make wonderful trophies, provided you have the talent, time and manpower to produce them. The list of possibilities is seemingly endless, so start early and look at a variety of items before deciding on what to select. Examples of class trophies at recent Nationals have been cross-stitched wall plaques, picture frames, hand-carved decoys, ceramic items and silk-screened wooden boxes.

**B. Conformation trophies.** (See Section 24 for definitions of the non-regular classes.)

1st through 4th place in each of the following classes for both dogs and bitches:

Puppies 6-9	Veteran I (8-10 years)
Puppies 9-12	Veteran II (10-12 years)
12-18	Veteran III (over 12 years)
Novice	Field Trial
American Bred	Hunting
Bred by Exhibitor	Brace
Open	Stud Dog/Brood Bitch

On 1/09 Novice will become the Amateur Owner Handler class.

Junior Showmanship will need first through fourth in whatever classes are being offered.

This makes a total of 112 class conformation trophies, plus trophies for Juniors and excluding the optional team classes. In addition to the class trophies the following conformation trophies are awarded: Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, Best of Winners, Winners Dog, Reserve

Winners Dog, Winners Bitch, Reserve Winners Bitch, and Best Junior Handler. Best In Puppy Classes and Best In Veteran Classes are optional trophies but are frequently awarded. This makes a total of eight required and two optional special conformation trophies.

Beginning in 1989, "We Made the Cut" buttons were offered for those making the cut, but not placing in the conformation classes. These have been extremely popular and have ranged from simple buttons to rosettes to scissor pins. They are handed out by the stewards, take little time, and provide a nice souvenir.

### **C. Obedience trophies.**

1st through 4th place in the following classes:

Novice A	Graduate Novice
Novice B	Veteran Novice
Open A	Veteran Open*
Open B	Veteran Utility*
Utility A	Brace
Utility B	Team
Versatility	

\* Jump heights for these classes are set at half the dog's height at the shoulder.

This makes a total of 64 class obedience trophies.

Note: This is getting very complex as AKC is changing many of the now optional "fun" classes, to titling classes. GRCA hasn't made a decision as to whether or not these will change from "optional" classes to "required classes". Any changes made by AKC or GRCA must be considered when generating a list of trophy/ribbon needs.

In addition, Obedience must have trophies for High in Trial and High Combined that are comparable to that given for Best of Breed and Best of Opposite Sex.

Additional obedience trophies may also be awarded if the host club so chooses. Some examples are:

Highest-Scoring Champion of Record

Highest-Scoring Dog Handled by a Senior (over xx years of age)

Highest-Scoring Veteran from the Regular Classes

These additional trophies should all be awarded from the regular classes and should be so specified in the premium list. A nice touch is having special rosettes or prizes for the dogs competing in the Veterans classes, regardless of scores.

#### **D. Field Trial Trophies**

1st through 4th place in the following stakes:

Open

Amateur

Qualifying

Derby

This makes a total of 16 field trial trophies.

The trophies for First place in the Open and Amateur stakes must be comparable to those given for Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, High in Trial and High Combined.

**E. Tracking and WC/WCX.** Since these are not competitive events, trophies are not awarded for placements. A memento for a successful completion, however, is nice to give to participants. Since the number to be presented won't be known until the event is finished, these need to be relatively inexpensive and somewhat generic. Based on past Nationals, a general rule of thumb is that 8 of 12 TD's pass, 2 of 6 TDX's pass, approximately 50% of WC and 25% of WCX entries pass. Some clubs have also given rosettes for successful completions. Alternatively, a memento like a duck band can be given to all participants regardless of completion. Clubs have also made special tracking flags which are then given to the dog that ran that track number.

**F. Agility.** If agility is offered, trophies should be awarded for first-fourth place in all classes. A High Scoring Agility Dog Trophy should be avoided since it is too difficult to compute and does not recognize the difference in requirements between the classes. A top agility dog from the Excellent B Standard and Excellent B Jumpers could be offered, if desired. Ribbons for “clean run”, “title” and “Double Q” can also be presented if desired. MACH and PAX bars and rosettes should be available in case an agility team finishes one of these titles at the national. Agility requires an enormous number of trophies and ribbons because of the number of classes, levels, and jump heights. If trophies are offered, be sure their cost doesn’t strain the National budget.

**G. Rosettes.** Rosettes need to be ordered for all class placements as well as for the major award winners (see above). A 14-inch 3-streamer rosette is appropriate for the class placements; use 16-inch streamers for the major award winners. The *AKC Show Manual* specifies the appropriate color for all regular and non-regular classes. A ribbon company which has been satisfactorily used for several Nationals is:

R.B. Powers Co.  
118 West High Street  
Ashley, OH 43003-9774  
(740) 747-2121

Check with previous National committees for names of other reliable ribbon companies.

#### **H. Specific Ribbon Colors for Various Awards**

AKC lists these in the various event booklets, but as of yet there is no single place where all the various awards are compiled. The following is the most accurate list available at this time.

##### **1. Regular classes**

First	Blue
Second	Red
Third	Yellow
Fourth	White
Winners Dog/Bitch	Purple

Reserve Winners Dog/Bitch	Purple and White
Best of Winners	Blue and White
Best of Breed	Purple and Gold
Best of Opposite Sex	Red and White
High in Trial	Blue and Gold
High Combined	Blue and Green
Qualifying score in Obedience	Green
Qualifying score in Agility	Green
JAM	Green
Qualifying score in Hunt Tests	Orange

## 2. Non-regular classes

First	Rose
Second	Brown
Third	Light Green
Fourth	Gray
Best in Sweepstakes	Pink and Green
Best of Opposite in Sweeps	Lavender
Best Junior Handler	Pink and Green

**I. Judge's Award of Merit (JAMs).** These are awarded in both the field trial stakes and in the Best of Breed class. A 14-inch 3-streamer rosette is appropriate. The specified color is bright green. Order six per stake for the field trial and 10% of the Specials entry for conformation. These are not to be awarded to the Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, or Best of Winners recipients. Make sure the judge understands the purpose of the JAMs and who is eligible before judging begins. **Also understand that there is no ranking within the group of JAM's.** Generally the final cut should equal the number of JAMS available plus BOB, BOS, BOW.

**J. GRCA Trophies.** These are the large traveling trophies presented at every National. They are the responsibility of the GRCA Board of Directors and the GRCA Trophy Curator. The Curator should furnish a current, accurate list of these trophies for their inclusion in the catalog. Since they do not meet AKC guidelines, they **may not** be listed in the premium list.

The Trophy Curator is responsible for arranging the receipt, polishing and display of these trophies. Display of these trophies should be coordinated with the individual in charge of the Trophy Presentation Event. The trophies are displayed at the event, but they may also be displayed at other times. Bear in mind, however, that these trophies are large, numerous, heavy, and very valuable. Display in the Hospitality Room or in an adjoining room is desirable but it may not be possible in every situation. Refer to the GRCA Trophy Guidelines (Appendix 4) for additional information.

The trophies for annual field trial performance and for performance at the National are awarded at the Field Trial Dinner. Trophies for annual performance in conformation, obedience, etc. are awarded at the Annual Meeting. The only trophies awarded at the Trophy Presentation Event are those for achievement at the national itself: conformation, obedience, agility.

**K. Optional Events.** If you choose to offer Agility, rosettes and trophies must also be awarded. If you have a Hunt Test, orange rosettes must be awarded to those passing the tests. If Variable Surface Tracking is offered, participants should receive a similar memento to those entered in the TD and TDX tests.

## SECTION 9: HOSPITALITY

**A. General Considerations.** Hospitality in all its myriad components reflects the overall tenor of the Specialty. Long after people have forgotten how their dog did, they remember what kind of time they had. Their overall impression and final memories are mostly based on things dealing with hospitality. Here's the place to concentrate a lot of your time, energy, budget and personnel. Don't skip or skimp on hospitality--not everything you do has to be expensive, but all the little niceties add up. Some aspects of hospitality have changed over the years but this is where you make your impression of the National.

**B. Hotel Relations.** The selection of hotels for the National is very important. These hotels house the participants and will create a significant portion of the impression that participants have of the National and the host club. The choice of utilizing several large hotels for the specialty or using one main hotel with a selection of satellite hotels is yours to make. This depends on the availability of hotels and the logistics of location/transportation/convenience of the hotels being considered. Choose what best fits your location and needs.

The choice and performance of the Specialty Headquarters Hotel can make or break a Specialty. Exhibitors will understand rotten weather, and may be philosophical about not winning, but they will neither forgive nor forget poor hotel accommodations and food service. The services of a conference hotel and the attendant food service are not inexpensive, but they will save hours of aggravation and gain rave reviews of appreciation. Remember, the National is not intended to be a fund-raiser; money spent with the hotel and on food service will be repaid a thousand-fold in good will. The contract the host club signs with the hotel is extremely important. Make certain you understand exactly what you will be charged for. This is the time to negotiate since the hotel wants your business. **It is required to have the GRCA Legal Committee review the hotel contract before you sign it.** (You may also want an attorney or an experienced travel agent to review the contract before submitting it to GRCA.) Clubs have been threatened with law suits due to contract provisions they did not understand or review carefully.

**1. Choosing a hotel.** Selection of a Headquarters Hotel should be among the first tasks after receiving the bid to host the National Specialty. There are many factors to consider in this selection:

- a. Location and proximity to the show site (conformation/obedience/agility, etc.).

b. Location and proximity to Tracking, the Field Trial, and WC/WCX events. It is desirable to use the same hotel for all events, but this is not always possible. A rule of thumb to use is that all events should be no more than one hour's driving distance from each other. However, this requirement becomes increasingly difficult as available land for field and tracking events becomes harder to obtain and is removed from population centers. Work with what you have.

c. Ability to provide sleeping rooms for approximately 800-1000 people and a banquet facility for 450. (The necessity of the banquet facility has been reduced in recent years due to the introduction of less formal functions but this facility is useful for more than the Awards Banquet.)

d. Experience in dealing with large groups who will check in and out simultaneously.

e. Experience in dealing with dog groups. This may not be possible, or previous experience with other dog groups may have been negative. If this is the case and you really wish to use this hotel, you will have to persuade them that GRCA members are different and better than previous groups. It will be helpful to have them contact previous Headquarters Hotels for an endorsement of GRCA. Provide them with the names of contact persons at hotels that previously served as headquarters for the National. The GRCA Specialty Advisory Committee has material that may be helpful when approaching and negotiating with a potential hotel concerning the presence of dogs. Specific rules to be followed by owners can be provided to help alleviate the concerns of the hotel about having dogs on site.

f. Cost of sleeping rooms. Is it a flat rate or per person rate? Will this rate depend on the number of rooms taken by participants? What happens when the percentage of rooms set aside are not completely filled by participants? Is the rate competitive for your area? Will all rooms be at that rate? Will there be an occupancy number limit (people and/or dogs) per room? What are the beginning and ending dates the rate will apply? Will there be the ability for people to transfer rooms from one name to another? If they need to change their plans, will their deposit be refundable? Is the first night only deposit non-refundable? Will there be a "pet deposit" fee (refundable or non-refundable)? If people book directly on the Internet, is a lower price available? Will rooms booked in this manner count towards the block reserved? Make sure that this type of information is agreed upon in the contract and that it is communicated via your web site and the premium list to those making reservations. The day that the hotel is open for reservations is always a frantic one. Review

with the hotel staff the type of questions they will be getting and **make certain they understand that their phone lines will be bombarded on opening day.**

g. How many free (comp) rooms per paid sleeping room will be given to the host club? One per 50 is a standard ratio. These free rooms can be used to house judges, various chairmen, or as hospitality rooms.

h. Cost of food service and willingness to try new approaches and new ways of serving if necessary or desired. Often, it can be negotiated that basic services (pop, alcoholic beverages, etc.) are provided by the hotel while still allowing the host or other organizations to bring food onto the hotel grounds for functions. Be clear on the need and work with the hotel to make these arrangements.

i. Parking availability. This should cover both automobiles and other vehicles that participants make bring to the National. Typically, RV's and other large vehicles are parked elsewhere but be clear on what can and cannot be accommodated.

j. Provision for exercise areas. These can be either a piece of lawn or ground, or an area of the parking lot set up with rented chain link fencing and sod, sawdust or wood shavings. These exercise areas should be large enough to handle the number of dogs present in the facility – the larger, the better! Be careful about what material you use here because it will probably be tracked into the hotel. Be sure to have maps made of the allowable areas with signs directing participants within the hotel to the designate zones. Also, negotiate and work with the hotel to determine who will provide the supplies needed in these areas (plastic bags, pooper scoopers, etc) and that periodic cleanups will be handled. If the hotel will not handle these chores, the Host organization should make arrangements.

k. The hotel staff. Most hotel sales people, the people who will take you on a tour of the hotel and will sell you on their facilities, are friendly and easy to talk with. That is what they're paid to do. You should also ask to meet the people you will be actually working with after you've made a commitment to the hotel. These include the food service, housekeeping, grounds, and maintenance staffs. These are the individuals who will determine what actually goes on during Specialty week. Make a point of being very clear on the needs of the group, what special services might be needed, how the grounds will be used and other special topics that may affect the daily routine of the hotel

staff during the event. Another point to remember is that sales staffs have a high turnover rate, so don't expect the person you dealt with three years ago to still be in the same job the week of the Specialty.

**2. Your responsibility to the hotel.** Plainly stated, hotels are in the business of renting rooms and selling food. To ensure that the hotel also has a pleasant experience with a dog group, be very certain that they understand that you will not tolerate any abuse of their rooms, grounds, or property. GRCA has an excellent reputation as a considerate dog show group. Hotels check with previous sites, so provide them with the names of the hotels used for the past three years' Nationals. It is your responsibility to ensure that next year's hotel will receive a favorable report from yours. In keeping with this goal, here are some suggestions that have proven successful in the past:

a. Provide the hotel with a list of rules for occupants/participants that lays out the do's, don'ts, can do's and can't do's very clearly. Some of these rules are mentioned here. These rules should also be available to the potential participants on the website premium list of the host club with the room reservation information.

b. Provide plastic sheeting free of charge to each exhibitor for each crate in the room. This will protect the carpet, can be purchased inexpensively in large rolls, and can be given out at check-in.

c. Limit the number of crates in each room to four. This is two dogs per person in a double room. If an exhibitor has more dogs than this, they should book another room or have the dogs stay in a vehicle. It is a hotel room which allows dogs, not a kennel which allows people.

d. Dogs left unattended in rooms must be crated.

e. Dogs must be on lead in all hallways, elevators, and hotel grounds.

f. Have the hotel designate a grooming room. Have the furniture removed and the floor and part of the walls covered with plastic sheeting. Have a telephone shower installed in the bathtub. Provide lots of old towels (which the hotel will usually launder free of charge) and a few grooming tables. Publicize the fact that a grooming room is available and that all grooming is to be done there. People will bring their own dryers and tables and are usually more than happy to have all the hair and mess in a room other than theirs. In fact, the grooming room can turn into quite a social

center and provides a venue for meeting new people. If the weather is good, a bathing/grooming area can also be set up outside at the hotel and/or the show site. For this, you might solicit donations of “Booster Baths” that can be raffled off after the National is over.

g. Designate exercise and non-exercise areas. Make sure the exercise areas are big enough (not a narrow strip along a fence). Provide numerous, heavy-duty, plastic lined trash containers, scoopers and/or poop bags. Police the exercise areas and the other grounds once or twice a day. Off-duty hotel employees can often be hired for this-- they are usually glad for the extra money. Golden owners have a good reputation for cleaning up after their dogs and wanting to leave the property in good condition. It is your responsibility to provide them with the means to do so. If you receive reports that people are not cleaning up after their dogs, send someone out with a video camera. Again, provide maps in the material provide upon arrival and use signage to direct owners quickly to these exercise areas.

h. Hotels usually have extra sheets that are too worn for current guest use. Ask if they will provide them to put over bedspreads to keep them unsoiled. They usually welcome this suggestion and are happy to comply. The bedspreads can also be removed and stored prior to check-in.

i. Have the hotel charge each guest a damage deposit, to be refunded if no damage has occurred. This serves as a good faith gesture on your part demonstrating how committed you are to protecting their property. Consider forming a committee to inspect rooms before guests are allowed to check out of the hotel. Hold those not conforming to the rules responsible for any damage. (Note: Check-out can be as hectic as check-in and inspections probably cannot be done at check-out. Hotels may do inspections post-departure and bill you for damages guest is not aware of. Watch out for hotels taking advantage of this.)

j. Accidents will still happen. Make sure the guests feel comfortable enough to report them and get clean-up help, rather than trying to hide the evidence until it is impossible (or very expensive) to clean up.

k. Make sure that the exhibitors understand that the hotel is part of the show grounds and that hotel abuse can fall under purview of the Show Committee. If you do have such an incident, use the power of the Show Committee to deal with the individual. Both AKC and GRCA will stand behind you. **Print a notice to this effect in the Premium List so that all exhibitors are aware**

of it.

1. Check daily with the heads of housekeeping, grounds, and maintenance to see if any problems have arisen. In this way you can deal with them immediately and effectively. If they do report problems, deal with them immediately—don't hope they'll go away. The dog that barked in the room last night will undoubtedly do so again unless his owner is told to correct the situation.

**3. Hotel Contract.** The hotel contract is a very important document. Be sure to cover all the topics discussed above with the hotel during the negotiation phase. Make sure that all requirements from both sides are included in the contract. Also, it is important to make sure that all liability is covered. A recent topic of concern would be the introduction of anti-dog legislation. Be sure to include some language in the contract that covers this topic. For example, the following wording might be included: "If the city of XXXXXX, State, which is located in XXXXX County, should not allow the Golden Retriever breed to assemble, The Golden Retriever Club of America and the XXXXXXXXX Golden Retriever Club will not be liable for any cancellation charge or subject to any penalties." This is meant to provide protection in case any such legislation is introduced into the area where the National is to be held.

**4. Other hotel assistance.** Hotel personnel can be invaluable in handling odd requests such as ones for baby sitters. They deal with these sorts of things all the time, so make use of their knowledge and expertise. If possible, arrange to have the GRCA trophies shipped directly to the hotel and stored there. This can save a lot of work. The hotel may also be willing to store dog food for pickup, items to be sold, GRCA items, centerpieces for the banquet, etc. Space can be limited however, so make arrangements prior to shipping these items. The hotel can also provide you with a print-out of who has registered, which can be very helpful in locating exhibitors.

The hotel will probably designate a ground floor room as a staging area for your merchandise, banquet favors, and other things you need to store or assemble.

**5. Room reservations.** There is no perfect way to handle this. If there is one issue guaranteed to get people riled up, it is hotel reservations. The two methods which have been generally used with varying degrees of success are: 1) as soon as the Headquarters hotel is selected people are free to make reservations, and 2) there is a date before which no reservations will be accepted. Whichever method was used has led to problems and extremely unhappy members.

In 1999 a Hotel Reservations Committee was formed which studied this issue and made the following recommendations:

1. Publish the date at which time hotel reservations will be accepted. Make sure that all members have an equal chance to book rooms without relying on the "old boy" network. Publicize this date in the *GR News*, the GRCA website, your own club's website, your ad in the previous year's National catalog--every place you can think of to get the word out. Make sure the hotels you have selected are committed to honoring this date and that they will not take advance reservations, except for those you have made with them for the Board, your judges, and other people you designate.

2. Limit the number of reservations that can be made on any one phone call to two rooms, one credit card. Do not allow individuals to book numerous rooms using numerous credit cards on one call. Two rooms, one credit card, one phone call. End of transaction. Again, you will need to make certain the hotel understands this rule and is willing to abide by it.

3. Discuss a "no refund" policy with your hotel. Some committee members strongly favored this idea, but be certain it doesn't unfairly penalize those who must cancel a room for legitimate and unavoidable reasons. Make certain you and the hotel are in agreement as to what constitutes a "no refund" policy and that you communicate these terms via the premium list and your Web site.

The above ideas are designed to increase the opportunities the average member has to book a room at the hotel of his choice. There will always be gripes about hotel reservations--it comes with the territory. What you don't want are a few individuals reserving numerous rooms, only to release them at the last moment. This will result in very unhappy exhibitors who were turned away a year before the event, as well as unhappy hotel managers who may be stuck with unsold rooms. In addition to the above, publicize all the hotels on your list as well as the "headquarters" hotel. The National has grown so large that few hotels can accommodate everyone; additional hotels have become a fact of life in putting on a National.

**6. Room Assignments.** Individuals will make their own room reservations. However, you will need to make reservations for the judges and any other special guests. Judges can be housed in either the headquarters hotel or at another location. (Always remember that the judges are not allowed to socialize with exhibitors prior to showing in the specialty.) The GRCA Board of Directors will require a block of approximately 25 rooms; the exact names will be supplied to you

about two months out. Included in this block are rooms for the Trophy Curator, the Sales Manager, speakers for the educational programs, and the Board of the Golden Retriever Foundation. The Trophy Curator, the Sales Manager and the person in charge of the Art Auction for the Gala will have large amounts of material; reserve them ground floor rooms if possible. If the majority of the host Specialty Committee, i.e. the ones doing the bulk of the work, is staying at the Headquarters Hotel, they need to be given special consideration, such as being placed next to an elevator or on the ground floor for ease in carrying things in and out every day. They may also wish to have adjacent rooms for ease in communication. If more than one hotel is being used, you may want to place a Specialty Committee member in each one for on-the-spot assistance and information.

Many exhibitors will request ground floor rooms. Obviously a hotel has many more non-ground floor rooms. You should have some input with the hotel in how these are given out. Committee members, handicapped status, or other criteria can be determining factors. Remember that ground floor guests are much more visible to the general public than those on other floors, so try to make sure that they set a good example. There have been reports of individuals claiming handicapped status just to get a ground floor room. Unfortunately, you may have to become involved in verifying the necessity of such requests.

**7. Registration/Check-in.** The day before the conformation and obedience competition begins is the day the majority of exhibitors arrive. In the past, it was traditional to pack a “welcome bag” for those arriving at the National and hand these out at a “welcome desk” near registration. The “welcome bag” usually consisted of a bag packed with information sheets, meal and function tickets, announcements, advertisements, gifts and other “treats”. In recent years, the catalog could also be included assuming that the National had already officially begun. Over the years, this formal “welcome table” and distribution of the “welcome bag” have become less formal and more spread out. In fact, a single “Headquarters hotel” may not even be designated for the National. Some clubs have asked participants where they wanted to pick-up their bag as part of their RSVP form and the “welcome table” has almost disappeared. Additionally, some vendors that supply the bags used for this purpose have specified that they would supply the bags but would also handle passing them out at their booth at the show.

Whatever approach is used by the host club, it is important to make sure that those arriving at the hotel have a source of information about the specialty. The “Hospitality Suite” may be used to distribute material or a table may be setup in the reception area of the Headquarters hotel (and

other satellite hotels). This is also a good place to distribute plastic for use under crates and old sheets for covering bedspreads. The distribution of the “welcome bags” will depend on a number of factors (event schedule, distribution points, hotels, personnel, etc.) which should be worked out prior to the beginning of the event. (Note: Don’t forget that information should be available the FIRST day of the National, not just the day of conformation.)

Many hotels, while allowing dogs in some of the rooms, will not allow dogs in the hotel lobby. Most exhibitors will leave their dogs in their cars in the parking lot while they check in. Make sure that the car is locked or that someone remains at the vehicle. It is also helpful to have extra assistance available for lugging crates and baggage to the rooms, if manpower is available. This will also prevent people from taking inappropriate items such as grooming tables and blow dryers to their rooms; these should be left in their vehicles or taken to the grooming area. The hotel can also provide additional assistance with bellmen and carts; do not forget to tip these individuals.

It can be helpful to have a big bulletin board at the registration site so messages can be left. Host club members should also be prepared to answer questions and render assistance with a multitude of problems-- anything from "I forgot my show shoes, where can I buy some?" to "Where is the nearest grocery or drug store?" to "I know there's a vet at the show site, but I need one *now*." Some of this information can be included in the catalog but members should be prepared to help or have contact with those who can help. This, of course, can be done via a “Hospitality Booklet” or handout available at check-in.

Above all, remain calm, cheerful, and helpful. And get some sleep, because the fun's just beginning.

**C. Hospitality Room.** The concept of the “hospitality room” has been with the National for many years. Originally, it was a formal location in the Headquarters hotel where food and drink was available for socializing among participants. However, over the years, this aspect of the National has also changed. Along with the “welcome” desk, these have fallen victim to a less formal approach to the National as well as a lack of volunteers to man these during the times that were set aside for their use.

The current concept for a “hospitality room” will vary depending on what the host club wants to do. Whether the “hospitality room” is a room at the Headquarters hotel or is a tent at the show site, the idea is to provide a place for the attendees to gather for some food, drink and conversation. The room does not have to be open at all hours, but should be available for the most

popular times, which seem to be late afternoon to early evening.

If possible, this “room” should also be open early in the morning to provide a quick cup of coffee, juice, rolls, etc. Food and drink should be available free of charge, but there is nothing wrong with providing a donations jar for those who wish to help offset the cost. Liquor is not expected, but beer and wine may be served. However, check into the liquor laws first: your state may require that alcohol be served only by a licensed bartender, which will cost you extra money. You should also be aware of any liability laws pertaining to serving alcohol. Soft drinks, punch, iced tea, and juices are all perfectly acceptable. The kind of food available in this “room” can vary from simply chips and dip to more elaborate dishes. Please remember that this “room” is not meant to be another meal for participants, but simply a gathering place to socialize. This room should be non-smoking.

If a hotel room is used, hotels frequently require that any food consumed on their premises be provided by them, which thus precludes members' contributions. However, this can be negotiated. Hotel prices can be high, but things like popcorn, pretzels, and fresh vegetables are relatively inexpensive. No one expects fresh shrimp and caviar in the hospitality room!

Hours for the hospitality “room” should be widely publicized. The Hospitality Committee is responsible for staffing this room. This is not an easy additional assignment for host club members who may be heavily involved in other aspects of the National. It is also nice if it can be arranged for host clubs of upcoming Nationals or nearby GRCA clubs to volunteer for a stint in the hospitality room. The same can be said for other clubs in the region. This frees the host club for other duties, while at the same time giving the new club a taste of what's in store for them. This has been done successfully for several years and is a good tradition to continue.

Often times, a separate hotel is used as the Field Trial Headquarters because the field trial cannot be close to the other sites. If possible, a separate hospitality room should be provided at the Field Trial Headquarters. This gives those exhibitors from that hotel a place to go and socialize either before or after the conformation and obedience events.

The hospitality room can become a central information point. A bulletin board should be provided for people to leave messages along with any other general information pertinent to the National. The results of completed competitions may be posted here in addition to being posted at the show site. The people staffing the hospitality room should be prepared to provide information about any aspect of the National, or at least be able to refer the questioner to the appropriate Specialty Committee or hotel person.

**D. Hospitality Bags.** Hospitality bags have become increasingly popular at National Specialties, to the point that they are now an expected item. The bags themselves are available at a reasonable price from a variety of vendors. They can also be donated by many of the major dog food companies. How many should you get? This is always a guess, but a rough estimate is 1.25 times the number of dogs entered. There are dogs with two owners, single owners with several dogs, handlers who may not want one, Golden people without an entered dog who will. Thus an exact number is hard to determine. The hospitality bags should be available primarily at the hospitality table at the Headquarters Hotel or at the donor's vending booth at the show site. They should also be available at the various outdoor events and at the show site (if the vendor chooses not to distribute them). If you can make them available at the field trial and the tracking test, you will be a big hit! If you have bags left over, offer them to the hotel staff.

The bags should be stuffed with whatever goodies you can find. This may depend in part in how good you are at soliciting free items. If your budget permits, you may purchase small items for the bags, but the majority of the items should be free. Dog food companies are usually willing to supply free samples of their lines. Be sure this does not interfere with any corporate sponsors! Used tennis balls can frequently be obtained free from local tennis clubs. Local products are also welcome. Major companies in your area are used to being asked for this sort of assistance and may provide you with pens, key rings, etc. (with their logo, of course). Local tourist information is useful for those looking for things to do in your area other than attending the National. A very helpful item is a booklet that contains the following sorts of things: event maps, schedules for judging, schedules of GRCA and social events, Headquarters Hotel(s) information (such as dog rules and exercise areas), hospitality room number, trophy display room number, addresses and phone numbers of nearby restaurants, phone numbers of all Specialty affiliated hotels, auto and RV tow and repair phone numbers, veterinarians on call for each event location and in the vicinity of the Headquarters Hotel (including an after-hours emergency phone number), human medical and dental emergency phone numbers, locations of local pet supply stores, grocery stores, pharmacies, one-hour photo service, and shopping malls. Have a brainstorming session and see what Committee members have wanted available at conferences or other dog shows. Even after this list is prepared and stuffed in hospitality bags, Committee members should have extra copies on hand to answer questions and provide assistance.

**E. Judges' Hospitality.** The judges are an integral part of the Specialty and must be shown

every consideration, not only because it is their due, but also because it makes all of the events run more smoothly. This section covers judges' hospitality during the Specialty itself. For information dealing with judges prior to the Specialty, please see Section 12.

1. A subcommittee of the Hospitality Committee should be appointed whose sole responsibility is the welfare of all judges. Tracking, Field Trial, and WC/WCX judges may fall under the care of each event's Committee, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the Judges' Hospitality Committee.

2. All judges should have their transportation information known to the Judges' Hospitality Committee-- when they are arriving, whether they need to be met at the airport, if they will be renting a car, when their departure time is, if they need a ride back to the airport, etc. From the time they arrive to the time they leave, they are your responsibility. Consider hiring a limousine service for picking up judges and transporting them from the hotel to the show site. While this could prove somewhat expensive, it can save valuable man hours that could be better utilized on other aspects of the National.

3. Rooms need to be booked for the judges. These can be at the Headquarters Hotel or at a separate facility. Judges should not stay in members' homes. Most hotels offer one free sleeping room per specified number of rooms booked (usually 1 per 50). These free rooms can be used for judges. Unless you have hired a husband- and- wife team, judges should never be expected to share rooms. Some hotels have special "non-dog" floors that can be booked for judges.

4. It is a very special and much-appreciated gesture if all judges find a hospitality basket and/or a flower arrangement waiting for them when they check into their room. These baskets can contain fruit, candies and other edibles, toiletries, and the hospitality bag booklet. Ask the judges what they would like to find in their rooms. Use your imagination to create something that conveys to the judges how glad you are to have them participate in the National.

5. The conformation and obedience judges will need transportation to the show site for the times at which they wish to arrive. They will not appreciate all being transported together if their rings do not begin close to the same time. They will also want to return to their hotel when their

ring is finished and will not want to wait around for the entire day's activities to be completed. Thus the Committee will have to set a schedule and be sure there is transportation available at the appropriate times.

6. Judges need to have their meals arranged, but be sure to allow them some flexibility. Some judges prefer room service after a long day of standing on their feet; others appreciate being entertained at a nice restaurant. Ask your judges what they prefer. Since **the judges may not mingle with the exhibitors until after their assignments are completed**, individuals who are not showing should be responsible for judges' entertainment. One idea that has worked well in the past is to ask local people in other breeds to host a judges' dinner, with the tab for all meals picked up by the host club. The General Chair, the Conformation and Obedience Chairs, or the Hospitality Chair may also assume this responsibility, but frequently they are needed elsewhere.

7. Ring hospitality. Items on the ring table should include: a cooler with the judge's choice of drink, ice water with glasses, paper towels, mints, wash 'n' dry's, extra pens, etc. If the judge would like to eat breakfast, ample time should be allotted before the assignment begins-- one doughnut at 8:00 AM just won't be sufficient. Judges should be asked in advance what their preferences are in these and similar matters, and their wishes should be honored, within reason.

8. Judges and stewards should be provided with a quality lunch, served in a pleasant spot away from the ring. You should serve stewards at the same time so that they may accompany the judges to lunch, and so that both finish at approximately the same time. Do not try to economize by not feeding the stewards. It looks, and is, very tacky and you will save little money. Unless you have a club member who has proven to be very good at catering and whose sole job this will be, it is best to have the judges' and stewards' lunches catered professionally.

9. Tracking, Field Trial, and WC/WCX judges don't have to be quite so rigid in their conduct as do the conformation and obedience judges, but they should have their needs met. Transportation to and from the airport, breakfast and dinner arrangements, as well as lunches and drinks at the event site should be provided. A bag containing all of the items provided at the conformation and obedience rings, with the additional inclusion of sun screen and bug spray, should be provided for the judges at the tracking and field events. A cooler full of the judges' choice of soft drinks, juice, iced tea, and ice water should be provided for each set of judges.

10. When the judges have finished their assignments, they should be given a catalog to take home. Judges' gifts should also be given. These should either all be the same item, or of comparable value if different. Remember that many judges have to fly in, so try to give something easy to take on the plane. If you plan to give a large item, be sure to arrange shipping for it.

11. All judges, and their spouses, if applicable, should be invited to the annual awards presentation. It is important to particularly encourage the attendance of those who judged early in the week. Judges should be introduced by the General Specialty Chair at the banquet. Judges should be invited to say a few words about their general impression of the entry of dogs they judged. Since this can tend to drag on, one judge from each area of competition can act as spokesperson for the group.

12. Conformation and obedience judges should be encouraged to attend the Field Trial or WC/WCX tests (and vice-versa) so they can see both Goldens doing the work for which they were originally developed and their performance in Conformation/Obedience. This invitation should include transportation to and from the site, along with a knowledgeable person to explain how these events function, if necessary. Introductions to the field judges (or conformation/obedience judges) should be made. The conformation and obedience judges (as well as the field trial, tracking, hunt test and WC/X judges) are guests at these events, thus they should be provided with lunches, drinks, and chairs. Some may not be completely prepared for the weather, so be sure to bring along extra rain gear, sun hats, warm coats, etc. to accommodate the judges. Be sure to tell them to wear appropriate clothes! The hosts for this visit to field events should be members of the Breed Education Committee.

13. All judges should receive a thank-you note for giving of their time and expertise. The individual chairs of each event may do this, or the General Chair may write them all.

14. Keep in mind at all times that judging at any event at the National Specialty is an honor, and that the judges should be treated accordingly.

#### **F. Helpful Hints – at Host Hotel**

1. Door signs for hotel rooms. People tend to put their business cards or kennel names up on their doors--a door sign where they can write in their names is a nice touch. These are

inexpensive to produce and can be put into the hospitality bags.

2. Welcome signs at airport. If you have these specially made, they can be expensive, but they certainly add to the welcome feeling. Better yet, your airport may also have an electronic sign listing names of incoming conferences. Contact the airport and get GRCA listed.

3. Many people fly in and rent cars. A letter to the airport manager and the car rental agencies telling them of the relevant dates before and during Specialty week, that there will be an unusual number of dogs flying in, and that car rental agencies might want to have more vans and station wagons on hand is helpful. Of course, with pre-booking of vehicles, the car rental agencies may already have a good idea of what will be needed during that timeframe.

4. In addition to the Banquet, there are usually several other meal functions. A welcoming party or dinner the night before conformation begins has become traditional. Some sort of meal or dessert function the night of the annual meeting draws people in and keeps them from straying off. If the Parade is held at night, a dinner or party (for example, wine and cheese or a dessert extravaganza) before it starts sets a nice tone for the evening.

5. Breakfast at the show site is a nice touch and has become fairly popular amongst exhibitors. This doesn't need to be complicated or extravagant – coffee, juice, donuts, etc. are fine. This is one of the items that the host club can absorb the cost on if revenue figures warrant it. Be sure making it free doesn't cut into concession sales, however. You can also have a corporate sponsor to underwrite the cost; after all, it's free publicity for them.

6. Since the Specialty is about dogs, a little dog hospitality doesn't hurt either. Have ice water and plastic dishes available on the grounds for dogs. This can also be used as a health aid in very warm weather also. Put a bowl of dog treats out so exhibitors can treat their dog. Make sure there is shade--either natural or man-made-- that will be available throughout the day. If you are using a large tent for conformation, provide numerous fans if the weather is warm. Extra crates under the tent where handlers can stash a dog for a brief period are also appreciated.

7. Provide name tags for Specialty Committee members. A name tag which goes around the neck and has pertinent phone numbers and the judging schedule on it is a great idea and provides everyone who wears one with instant information to answer questions from exhibitors and

spectators. Some clubs have also had their committee members wear the same color shirt or hat to make them readily identifiable.

## SECTION 10: THE CATALOG

**A. General Considerations.** The catalog is the one souvenir that everyone takes home from the Specialty. It is also purchased by people who do not attend the Specialty. It becomes the historical record of who was entered, who won, and what life was like among Golden and Golden fanciers during that year. It is important that care be taken to present a catalog worthy of the National Specialty. The paper used should be of good quality and the print size large enough to be easily read. This is not the place to save money by using smaller type.

The decision of using a show superintendent or show secretary will influence the production of the catalog. A superintendent will produce a catalog, but it may be to his specifications and not to yours. It is against AKC rules to include GRCA designations in AKC-sanctioned event listings; the only place these designations can and should be used in the catalog is in GRCA events such as the WC/X, the CCA, and the Honors Parade. Negotiate any club specific items in your contract, including penalties for failure to include titles where you want them. Generally, there will be a number of other events that have their own secretaries (Tracking, WC/X, Field Trial, Hunt Test, Agility) that will need to be incorporated in the main catalog. These are usually prepared by the host club and provided to the superintendent. Some superintendents will work with you to make the catalog special, but there may be an extra fee for this service. Please remember that individual catalogs at these events should still be provided at the event sites. (See Section D below for further mention of this.)

The Specialty catalog consists of four basic parts: GRCA/AKC standard information, a large advertising section, the entries for all events, and an index of exhibitors' names and addresses. Each of these sections has its own requirements.

**B. The Catalog Chair.** The Catalog Chair should be a person who is familiar with printers and printing policies, computer software, and who is good with detail work. This person must set and adhere to established deadlines, both for himself and for others. Letting advertising deadlines slide, for instance, will result in the catalog being late-- a situation to avoid at all costs. If the show secretary or superintendent does not print the catalog, the Catalog Chair will have to take bids from local printers and arrange for delivery. The Catalog Chair is also responsible for finding people to man the catalog sales table. The bulk of the Catalog Chair's work is obviously done prior to the show, so this is a good job for a qualified individual who would also like to exhibit, provided that they get somebody to man the sales table while they are showing! After the show, the Catalog Chair

is responsible for generating a compilation sheet with the results of all competitions, including absentees, and mailing it with a catalog to all those who ordered marked catalogs.

**C. GRCA/AKC Information.** This section repeats the pertinent parts of the premium list: the times of the classes, the judges, the committee members, the officers of both GRCA and the host club, and the certification page. This information (pertinent to the trial) needs to be in the tracking, WC/X, hunt test., etc. sections. A letter of welcome from the General Chair, mayor and/or state governor may be included. Also listed here are the GRCA trophies that are to be awarded at the banquet. Because many of these are traveling trophies awarded for cumulative performance during the year (not just achievements at the show), and because they are restricted to GRCA members, the winners cannot be listed in the premium list. However, the trophies can and should be listed in the catalog. A correct, current list of these trophies should be sent to the host club by the GRCA Trophy Curator in plenty of time for inclusion in the catalog.

**D. Advertising.** There is a tremendous amount of advertising in the Specialty catalog. It is generally of three types-- commercial companies and products, GRCA member clubs, and individual advertisements. It is not uncommon for nearly half the Specialty catalog to be devoted to advertising. Next year's host club's ad should be given a prominent place, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> page of the advertising section.

You will have to decide the price charged for advertising; keep the choices simple. Generally, a price for a full-page ad, a half-page ad, and memoriams is adequate. However, the cost of color versus black and white pages must also be considered. Color catalogs? How much do THEY cost? Since the catalog is a standardized size, typically 5.5" x 8.5" pages with a 9" x 8.5" x 3" thick binder, one photo per page makes a more attractive product. The advertisements need to follow the GRCA advertising guidelines that are printed in the *GR News*. A statement specifying where to obtain these guidelines should be included in the premium list. The advertisements should be sent to the Catalog Chair accompanied by payment. The Catalog Chair should check ads for completeness, accuracy, and conformance to advertising policy, then forward them to the person doing the layout and typesetting. The advertising deadline may be set a month ahead of the closing of entries. Make sure that the premium list is sent out prior to the advertising deadline. This assures ample time for the ads to be processed before the bulk of the entries arrive. The checks with a reconciled list should be forwarded to the National Specialty Treasurer for depositing.

One idea that has worked well is to provide a bonus for catalog advertisers who submit their

copy early. This can be in the form of a reduced rate for early submission or being proofed by knowledgeable club members for accuracy. This has the advantage of getting ads in early and in assuring a quality product. Utilizing this suggestion, of course, requires that the premium list is mailed in plenty of time.

**E. Entries.** Entries for all events are included in the Specialty catalog. If there are separate secretaries for tracking, field trial, WC/WCX, or the honors parade, these entries must be processed and a list forwarded for inclusion in the Specialty catalog. Remember that tracking, field trial, and WC/WCX will also need a separate, informal catalog available at each event. Be sure to have sufficient numbers of these for both entrants and spectators. These are inexpensive to produce, so don't skimp. Entries should be separated by event in the Specialty catalog. The numbers for conformation should be consecutive in the catalog from Puppy Dogs through Best of Breed. This makes locating an entry in the catalog easy, and also assists in handing out armbands at ringside. Spectators watching from ringside will be very grateful for consecutive numbers. Some superintendents resist this; make sure consecutive numbers are included in your contract. For the Best of Breed competition, dogs and bitches should be separated. This is the way most judges want to judge them and it will be easier for exhibitors, stewards, and spectators if that separation is reflected in the catalog.

**F. Index.** A complete, integrated list of all exhibitors in all events should be included in the Specialty catalog. This should include the exhibitor's name and address, and the entry number(s) of the dog(s) being shown by each person. In recent years, some of the index has been separated and entrant information integrated into the entry sections for events not handled by the superintendent. It may be worthwhile to consider working with the catalog printer to arrange to merge the entrant indices from the various other events with the main conformation/obedience/etc. index usually produced. The entrants outside of conformation, etc. could have added notations to indicate the events that they were entered in. Then, one editing of the consolidated list would provide a universal index for the entire National.

**G. Other considerations.** Catalogs can be sold beginning on the first day of an AKC event. You do not have to wait for the conformation portion of the National to sell the big catalog; they can be sold at the field trial, tracking, hunt test or agility – whichever is first. You will still need smaller, cheaper catalogs for many of these events, however.

1. It is a good idea to have catalog sales as an item on the comprehensive reservations page. This will give a better estimate of how many to order, will provide cash up front before the show starts, and will reduce the amount of cash to be dealt with at the show site. Prior to their release at the show, be sure to take out the number of catalogs that have been reserved but are to be mailed along with those needed for item 3 below. To encourage people to pre-order their catalogs, increase the price for those sold at the show. Be sure to have a list of pre-paid catalogs and a person designated to hand them out at the various venues. It may also help to have check-off boxes on the RSVP page to allow people to indicate where they want to pick-up their pre-paid catalogs.

2. In addition to catalogs sold through the reservations page, you will need a supply to sell at the show. Do not order an abundance of these; select a number that you feel will be sufficient. Like left-over clothing, left-over catalogs have no value and will greatly reduce your profit.

3. You also need to reserve two catalogs for the GRCA archives, two for AKC, one for the show secretary/superintendent records, and two for each conformation and obedience ring for the stewards' use. All judges should be given a catalog at the completion of their assignment. The *GR News* should also be sent a marked catalog when the Specialty report is submitted. AKC requires that one copy be sent with the results; a second copy should be sent to the AKC Historian.

4. Advertisers in previous catalogs may be contacted to solicit ads for this year's Specialty. This is particularly effective with commercial ads.

5. The catalog is a large one, well over 500 pages. Traditional methods of binding will not work as pages will become loose. Beginning in 1993, the catalog has been in a three-ring binder with the logo for that year on the cover. This provides a very durable, usable catalog which stands up to the hard usage it receives during the National week.

6. You need to have contingency plans if, in spite of all efforts or due to an unfriendly act of God, your catalogs arrive late. People will be very angry and upset at not having the catalog available when they are watching dogs in the ring. Obtain a copy of the typed entry pages before they are sent to the printer and hold them in reserve. If the unthinkable happens and the catalogs are not ready, photocopy these pages class by class and distribute them freely at the show. People will at least appreciate your efforts. Be sure to let people know the reason for the delay-- a fire, accident, storm, printers' strike, or whatever; no one will like the delay, but it will be easier to accept

if they know the reason and can at least follow the judging.

**H. Results on the Web.** In these days of instant electronic communication, people have come to expect instant results posted on the Web. Prior to the National, the host club and GRCA should confer as to who is going to do this and on whose site the results will appear. The other site can provide a link. Contact the GRCA webmaster to discuss this. Generally since the host club already has an active National website; it is easiest if the results are also posted there.

## **SECTION 11: CONFORMATION, OBEDIENCE, JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP**

**A. General Considerations.** In terms of numbers of entries and exhibitors, the conformation and obedience portions are the heart and soul of the National. A large part of the effort expended in putting on the National is devoted to these two events, particularly conformation. It should be noted that obedience and other events are very important parts of the National, but often gets second billing to conformation. For the number of exhibitors it attracts, obedience has more trophies, more rings, more equipment, needs more stewards and judges than conformation. It also attracts more of the public spectators. For these reasons do not let obedience receive only cursory attention. It is worth stating again here that all events and their participants at the National must be accorded appropriate attention and respect.

Since conformation and obedience are always held together on the same site, many of the requirements for each overlap. Conformation and obedience will be discussed together in this Section, pointing out specific differences where appropriate.

**B. Key Personnel and Workers.** Putting on a show and obedience trial of the size of the National requires work by many people. Key positions are described below.

### **1. Conformation and Obedience Chairs**

a. **Qualifications.** The Conformation and Obedience Chairs must have adequate experience. This may have been acquired through chairing matches, all-breed shows or independent specialties. It is best if the person has been involved in showing dogs for some time and the qualifying experience has been demonstrated recently. It is not necessary, but is obviously an asset, if the Chair has served in this capacity for other Specialties or all-breed shows. The Chairs should have working knowledge of AKC rules, a good feel for the physical requirements of show-grounds, ring layout, scheduling etc., as well as the emotional atmosphere that contributes to a successful National. This means understanding the importance of organization, hospitality, and all the little extras that contribute to the general ambiance. The Chairs should have good rapport with people since communication with the rest of the committee members is vital. They should also have good business sense, be able to make logical decisions, delegate authority, conduct meetings, keep records, and be able to smile when they might want to strangle someone. The Conformation Chair sometimes becomes the second in command and the General Chair's right-hand man. Choose

carefully.

b. Duties. The specific duties of the Conformation and Obedience Chairs are as follows:

1. Co-ordinate/communicate with the National Specialty General Chair and all other key personnel, particularly the grounds and hospitality chairs.

2. Select a formal AKC show committee.

3. Set up a conformation and obedience committee.

4. Arrange for selection of judges and for judges' hospitality.

5. In coordination with the General Chair and others, help prepare the premium list. In addition to the standard information outlined in the *AKC Show Manual*, be sure to include information pertinent to the Specialty itself. This is primarily hospitality information, the reservation page, etc. It is also helpful to include airport information: how far is it to the hotel? Are shuttles available? Will they allow dogs? Etc. Try to envision arriving at the Specialty from the perspective of an individual driving in, arriving at the airport with dogs, using an RV. What information does each of these groups need to know? Provide accurate, legible maps for all sites and the hotels.

6. Coordinate with grounds chair to oversee grounds set up at the conformation/obedience show site.

7. Appoint the chief ring steward or arrange for stewards.

8. In coordination with the General Chair, set up a master time schedule for the days of conformation and obedience.

## **2. Grounds Chair.**

a. Qualifications. The grounds chair must have the ability to work well with others and to coordinate details. Although not an absolute requirement, the grounds chair should have a reasonable amount of physical strength (this is not a job for a person with a bad back), since a variety of items will have to be moved or carried. This person should be flexible and good-natured enough to adjust to unforeseen circumstances on short notice, but firm enough to enforce the rules.

b. Duties. The grounds chair has the following specific duties.

1. Co-ordinates details of planning and set-up of rings, spectator areas/bleachers, and vendor space.

2. Arranges for and sets up a public address system.

3. Ensures there are adequate facilities for trash collection and disposal.

4. Designates and arranges for policing of exercise areas.

5. If necessary, designates parking areas and arranges for traffic control. If RV's are to be parked at the show site, then the Grounds Chair will work with the RV Chair. Coordination of the location of this parking and the logistics of getting the RV's in, assigning spaces and handling facilities for the RV's will be part of the job. (This is discussed in Section 11. C. 2. h. )

6. If necessary, arranges for set up and service of sanitary facilities.

7. In coordination with the conformation and obedience chairs (and perhaps with the show superintendent), arranges for all necessary ring equipment.

8. Arranges for rental and set up of any tents.

9. Arranges for rental of one or more golf carts for ease in transporting personnel and material.

10. The grounds chair is also in charge of hotel clean-up, and thus should set up and police exercise areas at the various hotels. It might also be suggested that a sub-committee be established to handle this task.

11. If necessary, arrange for electrical supply for the grounds. This can include such areas as the grooming tent, RV's if they are parked at the show site, other tents such as sales, etc. When electricity is not readily available at a site, the use of professionally supplied generators can provide a much quieter show site than one with many small generators. This, of course, needs to be balanced with the accompanying cost.

**3. On-site Hospitality Chair.** This person is concerned with the care and feeding of judges, stewards, and other workers at the show site. This person should be selected by the overall Hospitality Chair. A detailed description of hospitality for judges can be found in Section 9. The Specialty Committee needs to decide in advance if this individual shall be eligible to exhibit a dog in regular conformation and obedience classes.

**4. Stewards.** Stewards are responsible for making the activities in all rings run smoothly. A show and obedience trial the size of the National Specialty demands that the stewards have some experience.

a. Duties. The stewards assist the judge in any capacity that is requested. They also remind the judges of salient points of GRCA policy, such as: dogs are shown in catalog order and judges must provide a critique. They check in exhibitors, pass out armbands, and notify the judge of absentees. They are responsible for getting classes in and out of the ring in an organized fashion. In rare instances, they may be responsible for getting class trophies and ribbons to ringside. They also assist the judge by providing them with the ribbons and trophies to be awarded at the end of each class. It is always helpful if the stewards maintain an accurately marked catalog for reference and to answer any inquiries.

b. Qualifications. The National Specialty is not a good place to break in novice stewards for conformation or obedience. This is GRCA's premier event and it is vital that things run smoothly. It will not be that hard to find experienced people, as this gives them a ringside seat to the action. Conformation stewards should have had experience at several all-breed shows and feel comfortable managing large entries. They should also be familiar enough with AKC procedures to function well if things get hectic. If asked, most stewards have an accurate feeling for their ability. Professional stewards are also an option, providing an excellent, experienced person to help out. Often these professional stewards also know the judges, making things smoother. Obedience stewards should have had similar experience-- stewarding numerous times and with a variety of situations.

c. Number. Two stewards should be allotted for each of the conformation rings. At least two, preferably three, should be allotted for the novice and open obedience rings, and definitely three for the utility ring. Having three obedience stewards enables one steward to man the table while the other two are acting as posts or setting up jumps. Relief stewards should be available for

both conformation and obedience. If the entry is very large, it works well to have two stewards for each conformation ring seated away from the entrance to the ring where they can check people in and distribute armbands. One steward can then work at the ring with the judge. This keeps a lot of the confusion away from the ring and allows the ring steward to focus solely on getting the classes in and out and in assisting the judge in whatever is required.

d. Where to find stewards. For obedience stewards, ask at local obedience trials, training classes, the people who run training classes, and local obedience judges. For conformation stewards, ask local kennel clubs and their chief stewards who they use, along with handlers, operators of training classes, exhibitors themselves, members of local breed clubs, etc. Many cities have a stewards club or a single person who functions as a liaison between freelance stewards and clubs. Prospective judges also need stewarding experience on their judging application form, so they might be a good source. It is best if these people are not host club members as they will be needed in other capacities. A call for assistance can also be put out on email via the various Golden lists or via the host club's or GRCA's website. Many people are happy to volunteer when they know their help is needed.

e. Generally, Best of Breed has different stewards from the regular classes; it is usually considered an honor to be asked to perform this assignment. Since BOB can easily involve 150 entries, all of whom must be in the ring at the same time to be checked in, it is vital that this be an organized procedure, else chaos will reign. If you want to put some pomp and circumstance into the presentation of the Specials, it does provide a real show for the exhibitors and spectators, and honors the judge at the beginning of the assignment. You need several stewards to get the exhibitors lined up so they can enter the ring in order; once judging has begun, three are enough to keep the various groups coming in and out, keep track of the cuts, and assist the judge in whatever fashion necessary.

5. Gofers. If the conformation committee is large, people who do not have too many duties and who are also not showing can function as gofers. If the conformation committee is small and spread thin, one to two gofers are absolutely necessary. There are numerous small chores (as well as true emergencies) that occupy the Conformation and Obedience Chairs on the days of the show. It is essential that the Chairs have someone to take over the small tasks such as fetching tea for a judge, rearranging the photographer's booth, etc. This will free the Chairs for bigger tasks. Golf carts will

greatly facilitate this work.

6. Show Committee. This is the formal AKC show committee listed in the premium list. It should be an odd number of people, with five being the minimum number required by AKC. The General Chair, Conformation Chair and Obedience Chair should be members. The Conformation Chair should be the head of this committee. The remaining members should be experienced conformation or obedience people of good judgment who have a reasonable knowledge of AKC rules and regulations and who are respected by other breeders and exhibitors. Their primary function is to be visible to exhibitors and ensure that things run smoothly. Actual work involved is minimal unless there is an incident of misconduct. The chair should give all committee members a current copy of the AKC Rules for Dog Shows and review the misconduct procedures prior to beginning of the Specialty.

7. Conformation/ Obedience Committee. This is the committee that actually does all the work (selects judges and stewards, helps write the premium list, co-ordinates grounds, etc.). The number of people on this committee can vary depending on how the Conformation and Obedience Chairs wish to allocate duties. If this committee is too small, it increases the work load for the few, and the small but important things tend to be overlooked. If the committee is too large, it results in overlapping of responsibilities and confusion. Pick people who have experience with "the big picture" as well as small details. It is not necessary that everyone be extraordinarily experienced; this can be a good time to educate those waiting in the wings. Past experience has shown that size is primarily dictated by the number of those willing to work. Past experience has also shown that if these people are dedicated, even a very few can put on a very nice show.

8. Announcer. Appoint an announcer to man the public address system throughout the day. This individual should have a pleasant voice and be familiar with audio equipment. Announcing should be the only responsibility of this person. Do not ask a serving or incoming GRCA Board member or a key person on the event committee. This equipment should be separate from that of the show superintendent. An ideal location for the announcer is under the large tent of the conformation rings. In addition to the usual public announcements, the ring stewards can easily feed the information to the announcer concerning their ring. Announcing the numbers of the dogs who made the cut in the various classes is greatly appreciated by those trying to mark their catalog. The rings are so large that most people cannot read the armbands at a distance! Music played over

the PA system before the show starts really gets everyone in a festive mood; music, either live or taped, can be used at the start of each day's activities or in conjunction with the entrance of the Specials into the Best of Breed ring.

9. Host Club Info/Central and Sales People. The host club needs to have a large booth to provide information and to sell the revenue-producing items. These items include pins, clothing, and other memorabilia, catalog sales, raffle tickets, silent auction sheets, banquet tickets, and any other items that you can think of. The number of people required depends on the demand for the items, the time of day, and when during Specialty week items are being sold. At the beginning of the Specialty, it is better to have more people to help with the sales, since there will be a big rush to buy items before they are sold out. Two people for each shift will probably be sufficient after the first day's rush quiets down. For some items, such as raffle tickets, a roving salesperson can be more effective than someone stuck in a booth. It works well if the host club booth is adjacent to the GRCA booth since many exhibitors do not know who has responsibility for what and their questions can be quickly answered by just moving a few steps away. It should be noted that the sales booths are usually open for many hours. It is possible that the sales people will not see any of the show unless the National committee makes sure that schedules are used to assign workers to these booths. This is a very good way to provide these workers with a break and a chance to enjoy a little of the show.

### **C. Grounds.**

**1. General considerations.** The requirements for grounds are straightforward. The show site and grounds need to have adequate space to accommodate all of the conformation and obedience rings, a grooming area, the GRCA booth, the show secretary/superintendent, an area for the public address announcer, a meeting area for the bench show committee, the show photographer, vendors, food concessions, catalog and goodies sales, parking, an area for RV's, a judges' hospitality area, an area to post results, a veterinarian's area (if present on show grounds), an exercise area, sanitary facilities, and an area where Breed and Obedience trophies (not GRCA trophies) can be displayed. If the show grounds are unusually expansive, a golf cart or all-terrain vehicle may prove useful for a variety of tasks. Attention should be paid to accessibility for handicapped exhibitors and spectators and details should be noted in the premium list.

## 2. Size requirements.

a. Rings. The area needs to have adequate space to accommodate two conformation rings 50 x 100 feet, and two to four obedience rings that are at least 40 x 50 feet. Some clubs separate the two conformation rings, which allows spectator viewing on all sides. However, having the rings adjacent or in close proximity allows spectators to view both rings simultaneously and is easier to combine into one large ring for Best of Breed. For outdoor shows, extra room will be needed to accommodate shade awnings for outside the rings, over the stewards' tables and for a shaded holding area for the conformation rings. The size of the holding area depends on the size of the largest class (BOB) and whether both rings will share this area. Generally this area should comfortably hold 2/3 of the largest class. Exits and entrances should be obvious and aisles wide - a 10' minimum as specified by AKC. The holding area should be for staff and exhibitors only; spectators should be seated elsewhere. Grounds that are spacious will create a much nicer, cleaner atmosphere and contribute significantly to the overall pleasant aura of the Specialty.

b. Grooming. An area for grooming needs to be set apart from the rings. Electric outlets and access to water are nice amenities (if electricity can be provided, the presence of a large number of generators can be avoided, decreasing noise and exhaust from this area); their presence or absence should be specified in the premium list. Shade is necessary if the show is outdoors and this usually means a large tent for this area. This area should be at least 50' x 100', larger if ex-pens are allowed. With so many people using generators and blow-dryers, the grooming area needs to be far enough away from the rings so as to not be a disturbance, but not so far away as to cause great inconvenience to the handlers. If huge generators have to be rented to provide electricity at an outdoor site, you may want to consider renting out reserved grooming space. This is acceptable as long as there is also free, covered space available for those who bring their own generators or who do not wish to pay a rental fee. This space should be comparable in distance and amenities to the reserved space. (The decisions on the use of small personal generators or the large commercial units will depend on the atmosphere desired and the cost/benefit evaluation of the host club.)

c. Spectator areas. Adequate space must be provided for seating. Since many people will fly to the National, it is appreciated if there are chairs or bleachers available. Providing shade for the spectators at outdoor shows is also greatly appreciated. This can be accomplished either with tenting or careful placement of the rings near shading trees. Again, a spacious atmosphere adds to the

overall positive feeling of the spectators and exhibitors. Many people now bring their own shade in the form of canopies or pop-up tents, which they may want to setup next to the ring. You must designate an area for these far enough away from the rings that they do not impede the flow of traffic or obstruct the views of the spectators; clearly mark a line behind which they must stay. Be sure and do this early during set up, otherwise people will move in on you and your spacious show site will resemble a flea market. Also, this policy might be mentioned in the general information in the premium list or catalog. Some clubs have restricted the location of these private tents to areas well away from the rings; **this has worked well and is recommended.**

Charging for ringside seating may seem like a good revenue-producing idea, but most people resent this and it will leave a bad feeling about your National. It is far better to raise money in other ways. You will need to designate ringside seating, preferably in the shade, for those participating in the Judges Education Program and for any other visiting dignitaries. Judges who have finished their assignments appreciate a place in the shade to view Best of Breed.

d. Indoor vs. Outdoor. You need to decide if your rings will be indoors or outdoors. Most people prefer having rings outdoors, but weather is a major consideration in this decision. Some parts of the country are inordinately hot and humid during September and October. It is better to move indoors than risk heat stroke of both dogs and exhibitors. Some areas of the country may have a significant chance of rain or snow during these months. In this case, having a back-up indoor site may be advisable. Indoor sites can be smaller and more expensive, but generally have restrooms and food areas provided.

Outdoor sites are usually larger and the grass is an added plus. They do necessitate more work as electricity, water, restrooms and concession areas are not usually right at hand. The ideal situation is a combination of the two, with an indoor grooming area, concession area, and restrooms, with an adjacent outdoor grass area for the rings. Regardless of the anticipated weather, provisions must be made for some cover. Cover from the sun or rain is mandatory for the stewards' and judges' tables and is also nice for the grooming area and holding areas.

e. Vendors. This will depend on the number of vendors you anticipate soliciting. See Section 14 for details.

f. Concessions. Facilities for food concessions will obviously depend on your site. **Make sure that the concessionaire can handle the large number of people efficiently.** Waiting in a

food line for 45 minutes is not acceptable.

g. Sanitary facilities. If the site is indoors, restrooms generally are available. If the site is outdoors, if the restrooms are a considerable walking distance from the rings, or if the facilities are relatively limited, additional arrangements will have to be made. Port-a-potties can be rented by the day or week, with the delivery/pickup charge included. The companies are listed in the yellow pages and they can give a good estimate of how many will be needed based on the expected attendance. The number of port-a-potties that will be needed can be roughly estimated as 1 per every 75 people expected at the site. **Make sure that the Port-a-potties are serviced adequately during the entire week.** Running water is very convenient for a variety of purposes. If there is no indoor facility, it is helpful if the host club has large containers of water available for hand washing and drinking. This is an added expense, make sure to factor it into your budget.

h. Electricity. Because of the many activities at the show site, electricity is often a serious need. It is used by vendors for charge card machines, RV's for general use, lighting for under and around tents, speaker systems, etc. For this reason, having a source of electricity is necessary. When the grounds are small and there is already a source of outlets that will accommodate all requirements, this is not a problem. However, when larger grounds are used, sometimes there will be areas that need but do not have electricity. The common solution to this problem is to have electrical generators. There are two approaches: 1) allow individuals to use small gasoline generators at each location (vendor booths, RV's, etc.) or 2) provide large commercial generators that usually come with power lines to distribute the power where needed. Each approach has its drawbacks. The multitude of small generators is noisy and produces a lot of exhaust. This can be a problem with the atmosphere around the show ring as well as at night. Some restrictions need to be enforced about the hours of use of these generators, so that complaints at night and early in the morning can be avoided. Also, the number of generators per site also needs to be limited. The large generators require a sizeable space and cost the host club. Additionally, there is a significant amount of planning necessary to plan out the number and location of these generators as well as the wiring necessary to get the power where it is needed. If the large generators are used to supply power to the grooming tent, RV's and vendors, some of the cost should be passed along in their fees. Carefully consider that type of event you want the participants to experience and then plan like the dickens. Remember that the large generators will generally require a separate insurance rider. GRCA will obtain the rider, but the host club is responsible for the expense. Be sure to include this

cost in the reserved grooming reservation fee.

i. RV parking. RV parking has become a significant issue at recent Nationals. Many exhibitors utilize RV's to bring all their dogs and equipment to the National. They expect to have RV parking adjacent to the conformation/obedience site. However, how adequately the RV's can be accommodated depends on the site selected. Some sites will have adequate space and hook-ups available. Other sites will have no space or hookups. The host club will need to determine if they have appropriate sites that accommodate RV's along with all the other aspect necessary. Whatever the situation, be sure to list the facilities available at the site and other local RV parks in the premium list. Designated RV parking should be clearly marked as such. Some sites will handle the charges for RV parking themselves; for other sites, you will have to handle this. Once you decide to have an area for RV's, carefully layout how the RV's will be located and be sure to stick to that plan. It is recommended that RV sites are reserved in advance and that the sites are clearly marked before the RV's arrive. Be sure to have several people available to park RV's when the site becomes open for RV entry. You will have to control the RV's which are used for overnight stays so that they are not an annoyance to any neighbors or to each other. No dogs should be left outside in exercise pens during the night; they should be crated within the vehicles. Each RV that has dogs in it should also have a person sleeping there as well in case of problems or emergencies. These policies should be clearly stated in the premium list and/or catalog so that there are no questions by the RV users.

j. Regular parking. The amount of parking required is substantial. Not only do lots of people drive to the National, but almost everyone who flies will rent a car or a large van. They may then occupy two parking spaces: one for the vehicle and an adjacent space to set up their grooming tables. If this is not okay, mention this fact in the premium list on the website. There will also be a notable number of local visitors. If the site has no overnight RV parking, then all exhibitors who are camping in their RV's will drive them to the show site. Whatever the anticipated number of entries, expect about 50% of that number of cars. This can easily mean 600 cars for some Specialties. It is also a nice consideration to have an unloading area either near the grooming area, rings or crating area. If your club will find it helpful, designate a small centralized area for committee and judges' parking.

If your site charges for parking, you will have to abide by their rules. Make sure this information is included in the premium list. If your anticipated income is high, this is an expense the host club can cover as a "gift" to the exhibitors. Parking passes can be included with the judging

schedule with the cost paid directly to the site parking provider from the host club. If the site does not charge for parking, you will have to decide if you want to charge. In general, this is a poor idea; it is a lot of work to arrange for reservations, collect money, and handle complaints. The income is small and the ill will it may generate is not worth it. Again, there are more productive ways to raise funds.

k. Exercise area. This can be several designated, roped off areas, away from the rings, or an area enclosed with chain link fencing. Scoops and trash bins are a must. Scoops, or less expensive cut down plastic bottles, along with plastic lined cartons, should be placed throughout the show site. Have many available. Some clubs have hired clean up crews to police the show site and hotel grounds. Strategically placed signs reminding people to clean up after their dogs are a good idea. Plastic baggies can also be provided in the hospitality bags and rolls of them should be attached or placed next to all poop cans. Whether the club hires a clean up crew or not, members of the host club will have to periodically inspect and be prepared to wield a scoop to keep things clean. Contract with the site owners to have trash picked up daily.

l. Other space considerations. Space must also be allocated for the needs of others listed above in General Considerations: the GRCA booth, the show secretary/superintendent, an area for the public address announcer, a meeting area for bench show committee, the show photographer, host club catalog and sales booth, a judges' hospitality area, an area where you can post results, a veterinarian's area, and an area where Breed and Obedience trophies (not GRCA trophies) can be displayed. The basic tenets in setting up these areas are that they must be appropriately sized to suit the needs of the people occupying the space and they must be situated in relatively convenient locations with respect to the conformation and obedience rings. For outdoor shows, all these various functions should be located under tents.

**3. Equipment.** If a show superintendent has been hired, he will provide much of the equipment you will need. If a show secretary is used, you will have to come up with the equipment on your own. Many member clubs already own equipment that they use to put on their independent specialties. If your club is not one of them, contact local all-breed clubs that own equipment and see if they will lend or rent it to you.

a. Ring equipment. Ring standards, rope or baby gates for two 50' x 100' conformation

rings, a conformation holding area, and two to four 40' x 50' obedience rings are needed. Additional rope and standards can be used to designate a grooming area or mark the show limits. Extra ring equipment should be available in case rings need to be enlarged. All conformation/obedience rings must have equipment of a similar type. However, conformation and obedience rings do not have to use identical equipment. If possible, obedience rings should use baby gates. Make sure all ring equipment is painted and in good condition prior to set up.

b. Tents or awnings for outdoor shows.. At the very least, there should be small shade tents for stewards' tables, but general practice is to have several large tents: over the conformation entrance and holding area, the obedience entrance and holding area, the grooming area, and the host club/GRCA sales area. At recent Nationals the following tents were used:

60'x100' – conformation

40'x80' – obedience/agility

40'x80' – sales tent

80'x160' – grooming

40'x120' – Parade of Titleholders

40'x60' – obedience crating

40'x60' – Field Trial/WC/X/Hunt Test for headquarters area.

Pop-ups also make very good shade areas for judges, stewards, etc.

c. Obedience equipment. Two complete sets of obedience jumps, two tape measures each for the Open and Utility obedience rings, and one calculator per obedience judge.

d. AKC Standard Wicket. One AKC standard wicket should be available at the conformation rings. If the ground is uneven, this may be used in conjunction with a plywood board covered by rubber matting to allow the dog to stand on a level surface. If using a superintendent, he will provide this.

e. Stewards' and judge's table equipment. Two tables and at least three to four chairs for

each ring; one table is for the judge, the other is for the stewards. The stewards' table will have the working catalogs, rubber bands, armbands, pencils and paper, and stewards' badges. The judge's table should have space for the judge's book, a copy of the AKC breed standard, rosettes, and the judge's badge. Bring trophies a class at a time to the stewards' tables. The judges and stewards will share a hospitality basket containing such items as sun screen, Kleenex, paper towels, Handi-wipes, small candies, chapstick, hand lotion, and paper and pens. Glasses and ice water should be provided. A cooler with drinks for the judge and stewards is also recommended. Table cloths and decorations, if not overwhelming in size, are also nice. A tape recorder and tapes should be provided at each conformation ring to aid the judge in formulating his critique. Make sure the recorder works!

f. Signs. In addition to directional signs on the highway, signs will be needed at all strategic locations at the site. Coordinated or thematic signs tie the Specialty together. These will designate Parking or No Parking areas, the show limits, the grooming area, exercise areas, the loading/unloading area, catalog sales, show superintendent, etc. It is also nice to position posters or dry-erase boards outside of each of the obedience rings which list entry numbers and indicate breaks for sits and downs. They can also be used to record absences and check off dogs that have completed their exercises. You should also display results of all completed events on a poster in a prominent location on the show site. This aids individuals in marking their own catalogs.

g. Banners. GRCA has purchased and maintains a banner for each member club displaying their logo. These are the responsibility of the GRCA Banner Chair who sees that each club (including new clubs) has a banner, repairs or replaces any missing banners, and coordinates their shipment to and from the National Specialty with the General Chair. The banners are to be displayed during the National Specialty week with the exact location to be determined by the individual site. Some years the banners have been displayed in the hotel lobby, other years they have been on a fence surrounding the show site. One year they were along the drive up to the show site. Since they are left up overnight, make sure that the site is secure. At the conclusion of the National, box the banners back up and ship them to the Banner Chair. She will check for repairs or missing banners and will have them washed and ready for the next National. In addition to the individual club banners, there is also a large GRCA banner which can be used separately or in conjunction with the club banners. It is also common practice to display the host club and the next year's host club banners next to the GRCA banner.

h. Exercise Pens. AKC now has a requirement of exercise pens at shows. For specialty shows, the requirement states the following: “Specialty shows must have a minimum of two exercise pens suitable to the size of the breed.” The size of the pens listed for all breed shows are 6’ x 8’ x 4’ (48 square feet for each pen and these pens should be of sturdy construction. This applies to both indoor and outdoor shows. This should be taken under consideration for the setup near the conformation rings.

**D. On-site Hospitality/Concessions.** On-site hospitality generally means having food and drink available during the day for exhibitors and spectators. This usually is the responsibility of the Hospitality Chair. There are a number of options available. The first is not to have food available. This is an easy, but tacky, solution. The second option is for the host club to run a concession stand. This responsibility is a horrendous undertaking for the host club, especially if manpower is limited.

It is easiest if this job is commissioned elsewhere. There are a variety of ways to do this. The first and easiest is if the site comes with a staff available for this purpose. Many indoor sites have kitchen facilities and staff that can be engaged as part of the contract. Indeed, some sites will require that you use their concession facilities. If this is the case, be glad of it.

The second method is to hire an independent concessionaire. These are listed in the yellow pages, or often the show site management can recommend one. Grocery stores are also a good source for catering services. If the site has a kitchen, a group can be hired to do the cooking. Many local clubs do this type of activity to raise money. Dog clubs, senior citizens, scouts, and service clubs have all done this as a fund-raiser. If there is no kitchen at the site, a mobile vendor will have to be engaged. Generally they do not charge the club; their fee is whatever they make. While the food is generally fairly acceptable from these vendors, the lines tend to be long. Having several concessionaires of various types will enable the exhibitors to avoid standing in long, hot lines.

If the site prohibits outside vendors or none can be found, a list of nearby restaurants and fast food places will have to do. The host club should then at least provide water and cups on the show grounds. Include a statement in the premium list as to the availability of food at the grounds. The bottom line is to try to have food available and make sure that it is of reasonable quality and can be served without long lines. If this requires more than one vendor or source, so be it. Lunch

breaks are only so long.

## SECTION 12: JUDGES AND JUDGING SCHEDULE

Although this section deals with conformation and obedience judges, there are two basic criteria which should be applied in the selection of ALL National Specialty judges. First, they should be knowledgeable about the area for which their opinion is requested, whether it is the breed standard or the WC rules. Second, and equally important, they should be pleasant and easy to deal with. They should treat the novice person with his six-month-old puppy with the same courtesy and respect as the old-timer with several Best in Shows under his belt. The committee also does not need to spend time and energy dealing with a *prima Dona* judge who has unreasonable requests.

**A. General considerations.** In selecting conformation judges, you should look for certain qualifications. You want judges who have been licensed for at least five years and have had experience with large entries. Although many judges may be adept at picking quality dogs, the National Specialty, with classes that may have close to 100 entries, can overwhelm a novice judge. It is preferable that the judges have had some experience with specialties. If you are considering all-breed judges, they should have experience in group judging. If you are considering breeder judges, they should have done at least two other Golden Retriever specialties. Recent attendance at a GRCA Judges' Education Seminar, particularly one which included demonstration of field work, is also desirable. While GRCA does not require that you submit the names of prospective judges to either the Board or the membership for approval, there is now a Conformation Judges Information Form (see Appendix). Use this form when you are considering individual judges.

**B. Reputation.** You should select judges known to be well- respected, impartial, and unbiased as to any extremes in handlers, Golden type, or ring procedures, and who are known to be pleasant and personable to both dogs and exhibitors. An effort should be made to select judges that your entire club membership feels are known for the ability to select what most would feel is a correct representative of the Golden Retriever, since winning dogs can strongly influence the future of the breed. Selection of a good judge will provide both a pleasant experience for all involved and also increase the entry.

**C. Expenses.** Judges' fees can vary tremendously. Some charge a flat fee that can range from as little as \$200 to as much as \$1,000. Some charge a flat fee plus expenses. Others charge expenses and a certain fee per dog judged, usually from \$1.00-3.00. Expenses usually include round

trip airfare from their home to the show location, transportation to and from the airport, transportation to the hotel and show grounds, lodging for all nights of the show plus any additional nights to accommodate air travel, all meals, and incidentals. This can add up to a substantial amount, easily \$1,000 per judge. Although expense is something to consider, do not lose sight of the fact that this is the GRCA National Specialty; if certain judges are desired, they should be secured and the club should make every effort to raise the funds required. Expenses can be saved on judges by several methods. If your local area has a good selection, local judges can be asked for some of the other events. If there is a local all-breed show either before or after the National, judges (and their expenses) can be shared with that club. Exhibitors have an uncanny way of knowing whether a club has done things in a certain way because of financial considerations. As host, the ultimate duty of your club is to put on the best possible National that you can. This should be done with no excessive consideration on how it will affect your profit margin. Remember, the GRCA National has never been intended to serve as a host club fundraiser. Also remember: As mentioned in Section 6, the cost of the National should be considered as a whole and don't skimp on the really important items. Put the money where you need it, look at everything and then adjust later by increasing entry fees or other income sources or reduce expenses in other lesser areas.

**D. Other assignments.** AKC regulations state that judges cannot accept assignments for the same breed within 30 days and 200 miles of another assignment. GRCA prefers that judges for the National Specialty not accept other Golden assignments within six-months of judging the National. This is sometimes a difficult requirement to meet, depending on a judge's popularity and the population density within your area. Try to pick a judge who has not recently judged a Golden National, Regional, or Independent Specialty. You should request that your judges not accept another Golden Retriever specialty judging assignment six months to one year prior to the National. You should also request that your judges not accept any assignments on the days immediately preceding or following their assignment at the National. It is also wise to plan on going through the judge selection process as early as feasible to allow the judges to make sure they can comply with your requests. See Appendix 5 for a list of previous GRCA National judges.

**E. Other requirements.** A written critique is required from all GRCA National conformation judges. This has varied from general comments about the entry as a whole to detailed critiques on all four placements in each class. A detailed critique is preferred over general comments, and the Conformation Chair should discuss this with judges prior to the show. A tape

recorder should be provided for each judge for them to record their thoughts while the dogs are still in the ring. Make sure the supplied recorder works before letting them make their comments. The tape is to aid the judge in the preparation of his written critique. It is not to be transcribed by the host club and printed verbatim. The judges should also be told that dogs will be judged in catalog order. The host club can request anything else they require of a judge, as long as those requests are made at the time the judge is initially contacted. A common request is that the judge say a few words at the awards banquet. Ask the judges anything that you feel is reasonable and will enhance the Specialty; it is always their prerogative to refuse. **All requirements and requests should be listed in the contract sent to the judges which is then signed by both parties.**

**F. Number of judges required.** This generally hinges on the anticipated entry over the three days of conformation judging. Conformation judges are limited by AKC to 200 dogs per day, obedience judges are limited to 8 hours of judging per day. The minimum requirement is three judges for conformation, two for obedience. Conformation classes are generally divided with one judge doing regular and non-regular dog classes, another the regular and non-regular bitch classes and the third doing Best of Breed. If a large entry is anticipated, have the names of reserve judges in mind. They are generally given the non-regular classes, and/or some of the minor classes as needed to reduce the load on the other judges. However, with some thoughtful planning, most schedules can be worked to be completed with three days of judging for large entries.

Whether obedience is held over two or three days will dictate whether two, three or four judges are needed. If obedience judging coincides with the first two days of conformation and the entry is large, then three judges will be needed. The three judges are assigned the six regular classes, and then divide the non-regular classes among them depending on the size of the entry.

**G. Methods of selection.** There are always comments on how to improve the judges' selection process, but the 1998 membership survey showed that the majority of members were satisfied with the current practice of having the host club select the judges. The Judges' Selection Study Committee of 2004 also did not make a final recommendation on a preferred method of judge selection. These results show that it is worthwhile to allow the host club to pick the judges since they are the ones doing most of the work. There are a number of ways judges can be selected that are detailed below. For the sake of club unity it is probably the best policy, in all things, to choose the method that is most democratic.

1. The Conformation Chair chooses the judges. Although this method has been used, it is not recommended. Since so many host club members will be working hard on the National, it is best and most equitable to give all those involved some input in the selection of judges.

2. Committee selection. The Conformation and/or Obedience Chairs form a committee of club members. This committee takes suggestions, screens all requests, prepares a shortened list of potential judges, and ultimately arrives at the final decision. Also, it is possible to have the “committee” approve the final list. How much input the entire club membership is allowed is up to the committee.

3. Entire host club membership decision. The Conformation and/or Obedience Chairs solicit input from all members, either by themselves or with the help of a committee. All members then vote on the entire list; for example, each member votes for their favorite five judges on the list. The list is then shortened to the most popular dozen and the membership votes again. The top five are then contacted in order of popularity. This list can be broken down into judges for Sweeps, dogs, bitches and BOB if needed. Although this method entails a lot of mailings, the process is carried out early in the planning and time constraints should not be a consideration. It can be done via email if your club members are comfortable with this process. This method works very well and has a number of advantages: it develops a sense of community and of working toward a common goal, and no one feels they were denied their chance to participate. The disadvantage of this method is that some members will have no knowledge of any of the judges and will either abstain or will vote blind. Also, those working on the National committee might deserve to provide a bit more input than those club members not involved.

**H. Initial Contact.** You need to establish exact dates for conformation and obedience prior to contacting judges. Do not procrastinate in contacting your preferred judges since many judges accept assignments over two years in advance.

1. AKC Judges Directory. Every year the AKC publishes a current book of licensed judges that gives the breeds and obedience classes they are licensed to judge and their current addresses. Contact the AKC Judging Information Department for this booklet.

2. Phone call. The first contact with a judge is often made by telephone or by email. Identify yourself by name, name of the host club, and your position with the upcoming GRCA

National Specialty. Ask if they are available to judge at the GRCA National Specialty. Have available all the pertinent information such as exact classes they would judge, dates, location, nearest airport, etc. It is quite common for judges to have to consult their calendar or secretary then call you back. Alternatively, you can offer them a few days to consider after which you will call them back. Ask them their fees and what they require in the way of expenses. At this time, also mention any special requests your club may have. Send the GRCA Conformation Judges Information Form to those you are considering. If a judge refuses to fill out the form, drop him from further consideration.

3. Letter. If you are uncertain that you want a specific judge, perhaps dependent upon fees, etc., it may be best to write first. Introduce yourself and state that your inquiry is on behalf of the GRCA National Specialty Committee. Then, being as straightforward as possible, inquire about their fees. Many judges charge less to specialty clubs and often the honor of judging a National may bring down their usual requirements. Some breeder judges will waive their fee and just charge expenses. Be honest and up front, but don't in any manner use this letter as bait. If the judge's response is favored by your club, follow it up with a phone call or another letter. See CD for a sample letter.

4. Contracts. All duties and responsibilities of both the judges and the host club must be clearly stated in this letter. This does not mean that you cannot make requests of your judges at a later date, but they are not bound to comply with requests not stated in the signed contract. A contract protects both parties. As soon as you have a verbal agreement from your judge, send them two copies of this contract which you have signed. The copies can be signed by the judge or any designated liaison. Request that the judge sign both copies and return one to you. You must also provide the GRCA Secretary with copies of all signed contracts with judges. Once a contract has been signed by both the judge and the host club, it cannot be changed or another judge substituted without permission from GRCA. See CD for a sample contract.

5. Follow-up. Keep judges informed as to the periodic progress of your show. Every six months is more than enough. This is just a nice touch. It shows you are a personable club and at the same time conveys the fact that this is indeed a special event and they are a special part of it.

6. Travel plans. Write your judges and request travel information about one year to nine

months prior to the show. Will they be making their own flight or ground arrangements, or should you arrange transportation? Most judges will make their own flight arrangements. Once on the ground, they can be met at the airport or given information as to where to secure a ride to their hotel. Be sure their names and contact information are given to the Judges' Hospitality person.

**I. Judging Schedule.** The general flavor and ambience of the National Specialty is very much determined by the schedule for the entire Specialty week. The judging schedule for the days of the conformation and obedience show is the second most important factor. Nothing can so affect an exhibitor's state of mind as much as a judging schedule. While the superintendent can make up the judging schedule do not let him do this without your review and approval. GRCA requires that conformation judging must cover a minimum three-day span. Obedience may cover two or three days; two days is preferred, if at all possible, since this frees up the third day for BOB and other special events. This will depend on the conformation schedule and the size of the entry.

There are several decisions that have already been made that place constraints on scheduling conformation and obedience classes. The first is the list of events included in the schedule. Second is the schedule of the week's events. Another is whether two or three days are being allotted to obedience. Another is whether the club decided to have a Sweepstakes. Sweepstakes, a very large conformation entry, and two days of obedience will limit your scheduling flexibility. You will never be able to please all the exhibitors all of the time, but if the club does not have Sweepstakes or schedules it prior to the beginning of the three days of conformation and obedience judging, then a more pleasant relaxed schedule is ensured.

AKC does not specify the order in which classes must be judged. Size of entry and your innovations will dictate the best schedule. While it is not possible to always have only one class being judged at a time, there are a few rules to follow that will maximize spectator viewing pleasure and minimize exhibitor conflicts and complaints for the conformation classes.

1. Stagger the start of dogs and bitches. Start one sex one or two hours before the other.  
(This may be problematic if a very large entry occurs.)
2. Start one ring with the puppy classes; the second ring with Novice or American-Bred.  
(This is the most commonly used approach.)
3. Stagger lunch hours and breaks. This automatically happens when starts are staggered.

4. Absolutely do not schedule the two Bred-by-Exhibitor classes at the same time. It is common for breeders to have littermates or a dog and bitch in both classes. There is a special GRCA challenge trophy for the winner of these classes. It is also the most watched conformation class next to Open. The same can be said of the puppy classes, where littermates may also be entered.

5. Do not have the two Open conformation classes at the same time. An even better plan is to have no other class scheduled while either of the Open classes is in the ring. Everyone wants to watch these classes, so have each judge take a break while the other class is going on if it is possible. Judges are usually very accommodating if the situation is explained in your initial contract.

6. Try not to schedule any other activity during the Veterans classes.

7. Do not schedule any other activities during Best of Breed competition. This is the highlight of the conformation event, and all exhibitors should have the opportunity to watch. Also, have a break of at least 30 minutes prior to Best of Breed regardless of the class which precedes it. Starting Best of Breed after an early lunch break works well, since BOB usually takes about four hours. In recent years, Best of Breed has started in the morning at 9:00 a.m. and has continued all day.

8. If the Winner's competition follows Open Dog or Bitch, allow a modest break of 30 minutes or so. This gives the Open winner a chance to rest and be re-groomed. Many clubs have successfully had the Winner's competition the day following completion of the classes. However, if the entry is large, this may not be an option.

9. Schedule stud dog, brood bitch and other non-regular classes at a time when they will not be anti-climatic to BOB. This also will ensure that all the spectators will not have left for the day. Earlier the same day as BOB or even the day before Best of Breed has worked well for some clubs. If scheduled early in the day, you need to allow time for grooming of multiple dogs; thus you should not start much before 9:00 AM.

10. Non-regular classes. There are three veteran classes, a hunting retriever class, and a field trial class for both dogs and bitches. When the Triathlon Award was created in 2003, it required a placement in a regular or non-regular conformation class as well as achievement in a performance

class and a field event. Many Triathlon participants hope to achieve the conformation portion of this award through participation in the non-regular classes. Therefore, try to take the Triathlon Award into consideration when scheduling the non-regular classes. Do not make it impossible for an exhibitor to qualify for this award because both the non-regular conformation classes and the obedience or agility classes conflict. Also try to have your judges in all areas be flexible in order to allow wide participation.

11. Best in Puppy Classes (if offered) and Best in Veteran Classes. These should be judged at a time when they will not be anti-climatic to Best of Breed. While these can be judged when they fit into the schedule, it is usually best to schedule them immediately preceding Best of Breed. The judging of Best Puppy and Best Veteran involves the winners of the appropriate four classes. Even if one puppy has beaten another by virtue of receiving Winners or Reserve from the classes, all four puppies return to the ring for the judging of Best Puppy. This is a separate, non-regular class, most frequently judged by the Best of Breed judge; what happened in the regular classes has no bearing on the Best Puppy award. All six veterans return to the ring for the Best Veteran judging. It is preferable to have both these classes judged **before** BOB. It is the responsibility of the Conformation Chair to make sure the stewards understand this procedure. Be sure the winners of the puppy and veterans' classes know when they are to return to the ring. This can be easily scheduled in advance so there is no question when these classes will be judged.

12. Obedience can usually be finished in two days if there are three judges. Two judges will suffice if the entry is not too large. However, do not force a moderately large entry into two days just to get it finished. Allow a schedule that is reasonably paced. Do not schedule Open B and Utility B opposite each other. It is also nice if no one judge does both the A and B entry of any class. If possible, schedule the obedience classes during the first two (or three) days of conformation. That way there will be no conflicts with Best of Breed and the climax of the show.

**Present the High in Trial winner in the Best of Breed ring.**

13. When considering time schedules use the following rules: Two and a half minutes per dog or 25 dogs per hour for conformation. Sweepstakes judges are allocated 20 dogs per hour. Multiple entry classes such as brace, stud dog, and brood bitch take less time than the same number of dogs judged individually. For these classes, count each unit (3 entries per stud dog) as one dog. For obedience, calculate roughly 6 dogs per hour for Utility, 7 dogs per hour for Open, and 8 dogs

per hour for Novice. Absentees will reduce the time taken, but this number is obviously very hard to predict and should not be considered when setting up the schedule.

14. Junior Showmanship must be offered in accordance with AKC regulations. Usually Junior Showmanship is broken into two classes: Novice and Open and sometimes is not further divided by age. Any of the Conformation judges also licensed to judge Junior Showmanship can serve but GRCA prefers that a separate Junior Showmanship judge be engaged. This can be scheduled at any time that is convenient; a lunch hour is a popular time. If your show includes a weekend, schedule Junior Showmanship on one of those days so local children don't have to miss school. If you have the space, assign a separate ring to Junior Showmanship. It has been successful to have this event in one of the now-available obedience rings opposite the non-regular conformation classes the morning of the final day of conformation or be scheduled in the conformation ring before BOB.

15. Time for breaks can be considered, but their actual times should not be listed in the judging schedule to afford additional flexibility. **You must adhere to any actual times listed in the judging schedule.** Therefore, for example, you might state “45 minute lunch break to be taken at the judge’s discretion”.

16. The best way to set up a schedule is first to list all the classes and number of entries. Use the rule of two minutes per dog or 25 dogs per hour to determine how long each class will take to judge. For obedience, use the 6-7-8 Rule. At this point you have blocks of class judging time that can be juggled around like pieces of a puzzle until the best arrangement is reached. Remember, no judge can be scheduled for more than 200 dogs per day in conformation and 8 hours per day in obedience. Even though you know there will be absentees, if your entry is over 200 per day per judge, you must hire an additional judge or have already provided the additional time in the judge’s contract and show schedule.

The show superintendent or secretary can help in this area. Members of the Specialty Advisory Committee have done this for numerous specialties and are always ready to assist.

## SECTION 13: SHOW PHOTOGRAPHER AND VIDEO TAPING

You must hire a show photographer. This should be someone whose work is recognized as being of the highest quality, who is easy to work with and who can be depended upon to be pleasant with exhibitors. A list of potential show photographers is available in the *AKC Show Manual*. The photographer should be engaged with a signed contract which specifies the terms under which pictures are taken and sold. It should also specify penalties for non-fulfillment of the contract. A complete set of photos of all first place Conformation, Junior Showmanship and Obedience class winners (both regular and non-regular), Winners, Reserve Winners, BOB, BOS, HIT, High Combined, and JAMs must be provided to the *GR News* at no cost to the host club or to GRCA. If you are offering Agility or Sweeps, these winners should also be included in the contract. After their use in the *GR News*, these photos should be forwarded to the GRCA archivist for preservation. The Show Photographer should be provided with a quiet, appropriately decorated site for taking pictures.

Arrangements should be made for photographs to be taken at the Tracking Test, Field Trial, and Working Certificate events, as well as the Hunt Tests if offered. The photos required for the *GR News* are listed in Section 25. If at all possible, some host club members should be engaged to shoot candid photos at all of the National Specialty events. These can be used in your report to the *GR News* as well as for the host club's own archives.

Some clubs have engaged the services of video taping professionals. Some clubs are also approached by professionals that do videotaping of specialty shows. Because of the number and size of rings, along with the positioning of the cameramen, these productions have met with mixed reviews, at best. In recent years, these videotapes have not been commercially appealing because of the ability of individuals to tape their dogs or classes of interest with their own cameras. If you do chose to have the Specialty videotaped, AKC has provided the following guidelines for videotaping and televising which were adopted in July, 1998.

1. "A notice of the videotaping/televising must be printed in the premium list." This notice must be clear that individuals are not prohibited from videotaping their own or friends' dogs, but that the tapes may not be sold or played for profit.

2. "A letter will be required from the Club Secretary to AKC's Events Plans and to the judging panel notifying of their intention to participate in a media event."

3. "The Club has the responsibility to correct all situations that might interfere with the normal operation of the event."

4. "No camera person or equipment will be allowed to be in a position to block the ring entrance or aisles leading to the ring."

5. "No lights or other equipment that are distracting or would affect the performance, health or welfare of the dogs, exhibitors and/or the judge will be allowed."

6. "Any equipment placed inside, above or around the ring must not interfere with the normal judging procedures."

7. "Published judging schedules may not be delayed to accommodate the videotaping."

8. "Judges are required to exclude from the rings in which they are judging all persons except the steward or stewards and the show attendants assigned to the ring and those actually engaged in exhibiting." This means that all camera work must be done from outside the ring.

Given these restrictions and the additional work necessary to assure that the videotaping can be conducted without causing any additional problems, careful consideration should be taken before agreeing to allow this. Also, be careful in negotiating the "contract" with the videographers. Most will offer the service for no cost and also offer a free copy of their final product at no cost to the host club. Be sure to judge these facts against the additional work and concerns.

## **SECTION 14: VENDORS**

Shopping at the National rates very high on the list of preferred activities. Vendors have become an integral part of Nationals--people are always willing to buy yet another Golden-related item. Vendors sell every kind of craft and many services and are always a popular aspect of the National. They also have unique needs which must be taken into consideration.

Since many vendors work out of their vehicles, you need to determine if these can be parked within a favorable distance of the show site. Others have elaborate table set ups and need electricity--is this available? Sometimes the needs are not compatible--the area with the electricity may not be adjacent to the show site. Since many vendors want electricity, consider the means of allowing this. The use of generators in close proximity to all the show rings, dining area, etc. may be objectionable. If this is the case, be prepared to supply the electricity for them so they can't complain about the lack. (See Section 11.C.) Don't stick the vendors in an isolated area where they will get no traffic; locate them in a visible space where people can easily find them. A location which many people pass daily is ideal--on the way to the restrooms, the food concessions, or the grooming area has worked well. Once the vendor area is specified, make sure that individual spaces are well marked and adhered to when the vendors arrive. You should be firm about this aspect.

Because commercial vendors are making money from their presence at the National, they should be charged a rental fee. This fee should also include the cost of supplying them with tables and chairs, electricity and other amenities, if possible. If this is not possible, the vendors must be notified that they will have to supply their own. A standard fee of \$150 to \$200 for all three days has been satisfactory at previous events. You may also request that each vendor donate an item or a service to your club for an auction or raffle. Be sure to be clear about these requirements in the vendor contract.

Rescue groups, GRCA member clubs and other not-for-profit organizations are not considered vendors and are not charged a rental fee. They may be located in the vendor area or they can be located in the sales tent, assuming that there is space. The necessary space can be included if appropriate planning has been done. GRCA sales and information are covered in Section 2. B. 12.

Golden people who have exhibited at previous Nationals, major companies who frequently send representatives to Nationals, and local vendors who may only go to this one are all good vendor candidates. If possible, a local pet supply company should be available for the last minute purchase of collars, leads, etc. It is also nice if these people can sell cooked liver for bait.

You may have individuals who want you to limit the number of vendors selling similar items.

Sometimes they will offer you an item to raffle in exchange for this limit. In general, this has not been proven to be a good idea. The other vendors selling similar items resent it and the shoppers are denied the opportunity to see and purchase different wares. Tradition has shown that the more vendors which are present, the better for all concerned. If you do choose to accept an item from a vendor for a raffle, be sure to have a written contract with that vendor spelling out exactly what, if any, favors will be granted in return for the donation. Generally, be sure, with whatever limitations on space for vendors that may exist, that a reasonable distribution of vendor types are included. Don't have 50% of the available space used by jewelers. If there are no restrictions on space (and facilities to support that space), you can allow as many vendors as wish to exhibit to have space.

The one exception to vendor exclusivity would be if an organization such as a major dog food company sponsors the National. In return for a large donation of over \$10,000, they do have the right to request that theirs be the only dog food vendor present.

If your club has a member who is also a vendor, this might be a good person to appoint as chair of this committee, since they are familiar with the problems and needs of vendors and will be on the spot to assist.

Vendors should receive a letter of solicitation at least a year in advance of the National. They should sign a letter of intent to attend and return it to the Vendor Chair. The fees should be sent to the Vendor Chair and forwarded to the Specialty Treasurer. When the premium lists are published, each vendor should be sent one so they have all the information available. They should be supplied with a map and directions to the site, the location of the vendor area and their specific assignment in that location. Marking spaces in advance reduces the possibility of conflict when vendors arrive to set up. They should be told when they can (and cannot) set up --they may want to set up the night before, which may or may not be acceptable with the site requirements. A list of all vendors should be printed in the catalog and may be included in the hospitality bag.

Make sure you are ready in advance of the specified set-up time with all the areas marked off and all your prep work done. Like the exhibitors, the vendors will descend *en masse*; if you're not prepared for them, chaos will reign. The Vendor Chair and the Grounds Chair should be there to assist with location assignments and to referee any disagreements. While these people make at least a portion of their living from this activity and should be self-sufficient, it is always nice to have additional hammers, tape, etc. available.

GRCA member clubs may wish to bring items to sell to raise funds for upcoming Nationals or to benefit rescue groups. These sales will not cut into your profit. Generally, the more things

available for purchase, the more likely people are to buy. It is entirely appropriate for these clubs to sell their items at a National.

## **SECTION 15: VETERINARIAN**

The National Specialty attracts large numbers of dogs from other areas of the country. The chance of health problems is increased compared to that of an all-breed show. Make sure that you secure a show veterinarian of known competence. It is preferable if the vet can be on site for the three days of the show, but if this is not possible, the office should be within a short traveling distance of the show. A veterinarian would have to give up three days of private practice and may charge you to be on site. Another approach is to have a several veterinarians each provide this service for one day. Also remember to include emergency 24-hour veterinarian phone numbers, directions, and a map in the hospitality bag.

There are frequently veterinarians who are also exhibitors. These individuals can be called upon in truly life-threatening situations, but they are not present in their professional capacity and generally do not have any equipment or supplies with them. It is far preferable to contact the designated Show Veterinarian.

The Chairs of the Field Trial, Tracking test, and WC/WCX should also know where the veterinarian nearest their event is located and/or have one on site. This information should be listed in the hospitality bag and included in the individual catalog for each of these events.

Medical assistance for both dogs and people is part of the information required to be included in the disaster plan which is submitted to AKC for each event. This information should be distributed widely, possibly even included in the catalog. All committee members should have access to this information.

Additionally, if hot weather is anticipated to occur during the National, special precautions should be taken (especially at working events) to have ice water (or water and ice) available at each site in case of dogs that may overheat. This can occur more readily with dogs from areas that don't typically experience these hot weather conditions.

## **SECTION 16: HONORS PARADE**

**A. General Considerations.** The non-competitive Parade is a time for owners to show off their dogs with the highest titles, a chance to see the veterans who are no longer being campaigned, and an opportunity to pay tribute to the dogs who have brought great recognition to the breed. Care and thought needs to go into the planning for this event so that it is truly a showcase and not stuck somewhere into the National schedule as an afterthought. The Parade is one of the lasting memories that exhibitors will take home with them, thus it represents an opportunity for the host club to make a good impression. If at all possible, have a dress rehearsal with a few dogs to identify possible snags and iron out any wrinkles. This may seem like a bit of extra trouble, but will pay big dividends when the real Parade starts.

### **B. Limitations.**

1. GRCA policy limits the number of Parade entries to a maximum of 125.
2. Only dogs who have earned one (or more) of the following titles may be entered:  
**CH, OTCH, UD, UDX, FC, AFC, MH, QAA\*\*\*, AX, AXJ, MXP, MJP, MACH, TDX, VST, CT, RAE**
3. Dogs must be able to enter the ring under their own power.

**C. Scheduling.** Many different schedules have been tried: before the show starts, at a break during the show, after the completion of BOB, or on an evening of the Specialty week. The latter option seems to offer the most opportunity for participation by exhibitors and spectators and sets the Parade apart as something special. Scheduling the Parade before the show begins is hampered by the fact that people are still busy trying to get ready-- grooming dogs, buying catalogs, getting in some last-minute practice, etc.-- and are not participating. Some people may not have even arrived yet. Scheduling the Parade during a break in the show encounters some of the same problems; additionally it may interfere with the judging schedule. Many judges do not like to yield time for the Parade, and AKC wants to keep a break of this nature to no more than an hour. These restrictions can cause the Parade to be rushed and should be avoided. Scheduling the Parade after BOB means that many people will have left or be getting ready to leave, and once again will not be participating or paying attention. An evening schedule, separate from the show, allows ample time and consideration for the event, especially if it is coupled with a hospitality event such as a dinner or wine-tasting. People do want to participate and watch; they need ample time and opportunity to do

so.

**D. Entries and Order.** If you have hired a superintendent, the entries can be sent to him with the show entries, but you will lose control over the organization. It may be better to have a Chairman for this event and have that person handle entries and other details. The Parade is most effective if the dogs are not in random order, but are arranged in some selected sequence. Youngest to oldest is simple and effective, since it puts the veterans at the end. Grouping by oldest to youngest is not as effective, since you lose the buildup to the veterans. Other possibilities are grouping by number and kinds of title, still keeping the veterans separate and last. This can be effective, but may need more organization than is really necessary. When all is said and done, grouping by youngest to oldest seems to be the most preferred method.

The entries should be sent to a separately designated person so they can be arranged in the proper order and checked for correctness. A superintendent may not take the care to exclude ineligible dogs. It is the host club's decision as to whether entrants can submit a few words about their dog. Limit this to 100-200 words or less, as you see fit. People love to do this, but in reality many end up sounding the same, giving no more information than that which can be gleaned from their titles. You will also have to edit the submissions that run way over the word limitations (some people submit small books!). The comments are not read but are printed separately in a booklet distributed at the event. The person receiving the entries will have to organize and forward them to the appropriate person for inclusion in the catalog. This is really very little trouble and allows the host club to retain control over the event. Another problem with using a superintendent for organizing this event is that they simply will not print GRCA titles, which are obviously very important to the participants. Because the Parade is not an AKC event, non-AKC titles can be included. Although the limitation to 125 entries may seem restrictive, it is ample for those who wish to participate. The Honors Parade frequently does not fill to the 125 dog limit. Entries should be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Entries received in the same mail delivery should be accepted, even if they exceed the 125 dog limit.

#### **E. Organization of the Event.**

**1. Personnel.** You will need an announcer with a good voice who is used to this type of presentation. Remember that the best voice in the world will not be heard unless it is broadcast on a good quality public address system. Several people will be needed outside the ring to organize the

dogs into their groups and send them in at the proper time. One person will be needed in the ring to work with the announcer to make sure that the dog being read is the dog who is on display. In spite of all preparation there will be absentees. The organizers outside the ring need to pay close attention to this and relay the information to the person inside the ring so that these dogs will not be announced. You will need armbands for this event so the exhibitors can be easily organized into their designated order. The announcer must take the time prior to the Parade to go over the names and titles of the entries for correct pronunciation.

**2. Presenters.** These are the people who actually hand the rosette and/or memento to the owner. This is generally considered a great honor and thus the presenters should be chosen accordingly. Current or past GRCA presidents, GRCA life members, special members of the host club, or even notable non-members with a significant connection to Golden Retrievers are examples of people who might be asked to serve as presenters.

**3. Organization.** One method of organization is to bring the dogs into the ring in groups of ten. Each dog then has his name and title(s) read and the name of his owner. The dog is then moved individually around the ring. The rosette may be presented before he moves or at the conclusion of the circle. He then goes back in the line of ten. After all ten dogs have been presented, they circle the ring once more as a group, then exit. The next group of ten can be brought in during this last circle. Dogs can be assigned to stations marked with plants or some other object, but people frequently get caught up in the moment and get confused as to where they're supposed to be. It is best to keep the mechanics as simple and straightforward as possible. A second alternative is to present the dogs one at a time, with no group activities. Bring the dog in, read his name and titles, receive applause, and exit.

**4. Visibility.** The most important consideration is that the dogs can be seen. Dogs presented at the same level as the spectators enable only one or two rows good visibility. If you are not using a ring which has adjacent bleachers, consider using a stage for the dogs to be presented on. Again, make sure it is high enough for the dogs to be visible. Also make sure that the footing is sound and that the dogs can easily get on and off. If you have a large enough area and the event is not overlong, one nice option is to bring all dogs back into the ring at the conclusion of the final group of ten, perhaps even highlighting the veterans in the center of the ring.

5. **Rosettes.** Each dog should receive a 14-inch three-streamer rosette with his name and all titles imprinted on it. These should clip on the dog's collar. Olympic-style medallions which slip over the dog's head are too large for some dogs and cause them to trip or to play with the object. Some clubs opt to also give a memento of the event. Ordering these items is usually handled by the person who orders all other ribbons. After the entries close and the order is finalized, a list of the entrants should be supplied to the Trophy Chair so that individual names and titles can be printed on the rosettes. After they are printed and received they need to be put in the order in which they will be presented. Fumbling through a box of 125 ribbons for the correct one takes time and does not look impressive. Placing each group of ten in its own separate, flat box works well, as does hanging the rosettes on a rack. It is important that the presenters can both see and hear the announcer so the correct rosette is presented. Since the light may be dim if the event is held at the end of the day or under outdoor lights, make sure there is an extra person who can read and react quickly to assist the presenters if necessary.

6. **Decorations.** Since this is a celebration, the ring should be decorated accordingly. Flowers have been commonly used and always work well; some clubs have used balloons to good effect. The table from which rosettes/mementos will be presented should be covered and decorated.

7. **Music.** Some clubs have opted to play background music during the reading of the dogs' names. This is quite effective in providing continuity to the event, as opposed to a simple roll call. Some have been very selective in their choice of music, in some cases to the point that it meshed nicely with the ages of the dogs being presented. Music is certainly not a requirement, but can add a touch of class to the Parade as a whole. Make certain, however, that it does not overpower the announcer's voice.

## **F. Parade of Rescue Dogs**

Although this is not a required event, some clubs have chosen to present a Parade of Rescue Dogs. This honors both the dog and his new owners and the rescue group that helped to place him. The Rescue Parade can take place during the day, usually during a lunch break. There is usually no charge or a small fee for participation; the dog receives a ribbon or other memento. The extent to which decorations, etc. are used is up to the host club. Check past National catalogs to get an idea

of the limitations in the number of dogs to be included and the number of words to be included for each dog.

## **SECTION 17: FIELD TRIAL**

**A. General Considerations.** For many clubs, the prospect of putting on an AKC licensed field trial is perhaps the most daunting aspect of hosting the National Specialty. Many GRCA member clubs have few, if any, hard-core field trialers who are familiar with the planning and execution of a licensed trial. If this sounds like your situation, take heart, for there is a solution. Establish a working relationship with a licensed all-breed retriever club in your area. These people are familiar with local grounds, bird suppliers, gunners, and perhaps qualified judges. What incentive do these persons have to help you? There are several possibilities. One is purely financial; that is, you can pay them for their services. The second is reciprocity: many all-breed trials also suffer from a lack of workers, thus you may be able to trade working at their all-breed trial for their assistance in putting on the National Specialty Field Trial. Another aspect is that if it is possible, you can schedule your field trial to immediately precede or follow their field trial, thus adding potential entries/profit to both trials. This approach has been very successful. Some have done it simply for the honor, with no thought of payback. Another possibility is to enlist the assistance of a neighboring GRCA member club with field trial experience and ask them to host that portion of the National for you.

Current copies of the AKC publications, "Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedures for Retrievers," "Standing Recommendations of the Retriever Advisory Committee," and "Guide for Field Trial and Hunting Test Committees in Dealing with Misconduct at Field Trials and Hunting Tests" should be obtained.

Detailing for the novice the process of putting on a field trial would fill a small book all by itself. Since the National Specialty is definitely not the place for on-the-job training, it is assumed that the host club will have, or will have contracted with, someone familiar with staging a field trial to oversee the Specialty Field Trial. This section will be devoted to pointing out the differences between a local trial and the Specialty Field Trial.

Also, be aware that any special classes to be offered as part of the Field Trial may be held subject to the approval of AKC and provided the premium list sets forth any special conditions regarding eligibility for entry and special conditions regarding the method of conducting or judging the stake. This could apply to a puppy stake, etc. Note that these stakes will not carry championship points or be considered as qualifying for any other stake. If you are considering offering a special stake at the trial, approach GRCA first for approval before proceeding.

**B. Scheduling.** The Field Trial is usually scheduled on weekdays at one end or the other of Specialty week. Many host clubs like to sandwich the Specialty Field Trial between two local weekend all-breed trials, which can really boost entries. Plan to hold the Field Trial over three days. In some years, the size of entries may not seem to warrant a three-day trial, but the extra time then gives a cushion should any unforeseen snags arise and has the added benefit of producing a more relaxed atmosphere.

**C. Grounds.** Grounds should have land and water extensive enough to accommodate two concurrent stakes. The grounds should also have sufficient "character" for the Open and Amateur All-age stakes; the responsibility of assessing this should be given to a person with field trial experience. It is preferable if the Field Trial grounds are not an excessive distance from the general headquarters hotel so that non-participating persons and judges interested in watching can do so without an inordinate amount of trouble. Given the decreasing availability of property for field events, however, this is not always possible. If there's a choice between good grounds at a distance or poorer grounds closer to the show site, always opt for the best grounds possible. If your Field Trial grounds end up being a substantial distance from the general headquarters hotel, you will need to establish a separate Field Trial headquarters.

**D. Equipment.** The following is a list of equipment commonly needed for the Field Trial Chairs, judges and workers: popper guns, popper shells, live ammunition, bird sacks/buckets, holding blinds, hand sledge hammer, a boat, decoys, two-way radios, surveyors tape, trash sacks/bins, coolers, bug spray, sun screen, clipboards for marshals' sheets, white shirts for gunners and throwers, and porta-potties.

**E. Judges.** The judges must have the requisite number of "points" as dictated by AKC. Beyond that, the decision of whom to ask is left up to the host club. GRCA has no policy regarding the number of judges. Two sets are an obvious minimum, but several host clubs have used three or four sets successfully. If you choose to have more than two sets of judges, be sure that adequate grounds and workers are available to run more than two stakes simultaneously. Pleasant, friendly judges are obviously desirable. These can be local people, which will save the host club on expenses, but it is also nice to bring in a judge from outside the area, particularly if that person has a history in field trialing Golden Retrievers. Such people often want to run a dog in the Field Trial, so it's best to check on this in advance. Judges should be made aware that they more than likely will not be under time

constraints, and thus can set fair tests that allow the dogs to demonstrate their abilities. The judges can be encouraged to be generous in their call backs and in the awarding of JAM's. While it obviously cannot be mandated, it is always nice if you can secure the attendance of the Field Trial judges at the annual awards presentation. Certainly, the judges will be invited to the Field Trial Banquet.

**F. Workers.** The Field Trial requires a substantial number of workers. Key positions such as Head Marshal and Gun Captain demand a person with experience. Some jobs can be filled by the same person, but bear in mind that any one person overburdened with responsibility becomes inefficient in all tasks. Since the Field Trial often occurs during the week, getting sufficient workers can be a problem. Some good possibilities for workers include work agencies, job banks, and church relief groups, which will hire out individuals on a daily basis. Another possibility that has been used is to approach a local vocational school with an opportunity for paid work experience. These sorts of workers are ideal for throwing and sacking birds, etc. All individuals who are to handle firearms including popper guns must be properly instructed by a competent individual prior to the event. Any worker assigned to a gunning station must have viewed the AKC video on Gun Safety.

**1. Field Trial Chair.** The Field Trial Chair has overall responsibility for the entire event. A major task is recruiting other key personnel and coordinating among them all aspects of the event. Another responsibility of the Field Trial Chair is securing trial grounds. The Chair, acting in coordination with the National Specialty Committee, will also set the entry fee for the event. The Field Trial chair will recruit members to serve on the Field Trial Committee. It is imperative that the Chair have some experience in putting on a field trial, as an event of this size is no place for on-the-job training. After the event, the Field Trial chair will submit a report on the trial to the National Specialty General Chair, which will then be included in the National Specialty report submitted to the GRCA Board of Directors and in the summary submitted to the *GR News*. It is always appreciated if the report includes diagrams of the tests.

**2. Field Trial Secretary.** You will need to appoint a Field Trial secretary. You can also contract with an online service such as Entry Express which will handle much of the secretarial duties. The trial secretary should be involved in the production of the premium list and any information relevant to the Field Trial that will be included in the *GR News* prior to the National.

The trial secretary will receive entries, collect fees, and conduct the drawing for the order of starters in accordance with AKC policies. After the drawing, the entry list must be sent electronically to the person doing the catalog layout. It is the responsibility of the trial secretary to ensure that complete and correct entries are sent to the show superintendent/secretary for inclusion in the general catalog. The trial secretary will produce the catalog that will be handed out at the event, as well as marshals' sheets for each stake. Make sure that there are sufficient catalogs for both handlers and spectators. Since there will be many first-time spectators, it is helpful to have some additional information like definition of terms and rules of etiquette, etc. printed in the event catalog. Emergency phone numbers and directions to the nearest hospital and veterinarian's office should be included. This information is also needed for the application for these events. A list of the winners of the various stakes at previous Nationals is also a nice touch. After completion of the event, the trial secretary will send the results to the National Specialty General Chair for inclusion in the report to the *GR News*. A copy of the results along with a marked catalog must be sent to both the AKC and to *Retriever News*.

The trial secretary is also responsible for providing all necessary information to the GRCA Secretary for filing required paperwork with the AKC.

**3. Head Marshal.** The head marshal is the person who makes the event run smoothly. Prior to the event, he recruits the stake marshals, ensuring they have the necessary experience to run their stake efficiently. On the day of the event, he makes sure that the needs of each test (equipment, workers, judges' care and needs) are met. The head marshal also recruits test and bye dogs for each stake or makes sure that the stake marshals will assume this responsibility. This is a position that absolutely requires prior experience.

**4. Stake Marshals.** The stake marshals' duties are straightforward. First, and most importantly, keep a steady flow of dogs going to the line to run. This should be done in the order of the draw, if at all possible, particularly in the all-age stakes. However, conflicts are sometimes unavoidable (such as when an owner has multiple dogs entered in more than one stake), and the marshal needs to exhibit flexibility so as not to impede the progress of the trial as a whole. The marshal also needs to work dogs in for reruns when necessary. The marshal can also be of great assistance in coordinating relief of gunners, re-birding the working stations, and providing refreshments and lunches to workers. The marshal should also be attentive to the judges' needs.

Using two marshals per stake is helpful in sharing the burden of work, especially if one or both have a dog competing in that stake. Only one marshal, however, should be responsible for establishing the running order and "working the book." While the second marshal can be inexperienced, the primary marshal should have done this before. Both judges and exhibitors deserve the services of an experienced, competent marshal.

**5. Gun Captain.** The gun captain is responsible for recruiting a sufficient number of gunners and throwers to staff the trial from beginning to end. This must be done in advance of the event, so that the workers know when and for how long they are expected to man their stations. It is unwise to expect recruits to volunteer from the gallery on the day of the event. The gun captain should have some knowledge of the experience level of his workers, and provide additional instruction on technique and safety where necessary. The gun captain is also responsible for recruiting the live gunners. Nothing can kill test mechanics surer and faster than a profusion of "no bird" flyers. The live gunners absolutely must have some prior experience in this kind of event. Inviting an inexperienced hunting buddy to live gun is courting disaster. The gun captain is also responsible for securing enough ammunition, both live shells and poppers, for the entire trial. This is simple arithmetic based on the number of entries in each stake; remember to include test dogs, bye dogs, and possible reruns in your calculations, then buy a bit extra. As always, it is far better to have birds and shells left over than to run out of either. The gun captain should also check local regulations to determine if the use of steel shot is required.

**6. Bird Steward.** The bird steward is responsible for the procurement and humane care of game birds to be used during the event, and for the disposal of carcasses after the event. The number of birds purchased will depend on the number of dogs entered. A good rule of thumb is to order two live birds for each entrant in the major stakes and 1.5 live birds for those in the minor stakes. While GRCA does not specify the type of bird to be used, consideration should be given to using both upland game birds such as pheasants and waterfowl like ducks. These different types of birds test different retrieving abilities.

**7. Hospitality Chair.** The hospitality chair makes the days of the trial a more pleasant experience for the judges, marshals, and other workers. The hospitality chair provides snacks, drinks (hot or cold) and other necessities throughout the day, and arranges for the distribution of lunches to judges and workers. If the host club wishes to sell snacks and drinks (or to provide them gratis)

to participants on the test grounds, it is the hospitality chair who estimates the amount needed, arranges to have them at the grounds, and recruits individuals to handle sales or distribution. Providing free coffee and donuts in the morning and cold drinks in the afternoon is a nice touch. Be sure to ask the judges if they have any specific requests for food and drink. And supply it!

**8. Traffic director.** If the layout of the grounds is such that either parking or routing of traffic might become a problem, a traffic director should be appointed. The traffic director is also responsible for providing ample directional signs to the trial and stake sites.

**9. Grounds Committee.** A number of people should be recruited to assist in the clean up of the grounds at the end of the event. The condition in which you leave the grounds reflects on both the host club and GRCA and may have an influence on the availability of these grounds for future use. It is the Grounds Committee which is usually responsible for the ordering and placement of the port-a-potties.

**G. Field Trial Committee.** The trial committee should be comprised of at least five individuals. The Chair should be the Field Trial Chair. If more than five individuals are appointed to serve on the trial committee, the total membership should be an odd number. Members of the Field Trial Committee should be familiar with AKC regulations regarding field trials. Most importantly, members of the Committee must be willing to be on the trial grounds for the entire event.

**H. Trophies.** See Section 8 for the number of trophies needed. Remember that trophies and rosettes for the Field Trial should be equivalent to those given at all other competitive events. The trophies for the winners of the Open and Amateur stakes should be equivalent to that given for BOB and HIT. You should plan for approximately six Judges' Award of Merit ribbons (JAMs) for each stake. These should be dated, and may, at the option of the host club, have the name of the stake on them. You can also order a few extras without the name of the stake in case numerous dogs receive JAMs.

**I. Field Trial Banquet.** It has become accepted practice for a separate Field Trial Banquet to be offered, usually on the middle evening of the trial. At this time, the awards for those stakes which have been completed can be presented. The big GRCA National Trophies, which pertain to performance in the field, are also presented at this time. You will need to coordinate this event with

the GRCA Trophy Curator. Reservations for this dinner should be included on the RSVP page and should be sent to the Specialty Treasurer. The dinner should be held at a good restaurant or other nice facility reasonably close to the trial grounds.

**J. Photographs.** Be sure to have a photographer available to take pictures of the placements in all four stakes. It is sometimes difficult to round up people for a group shot, but try your best. It is often best to plan these photographs when the ribbons and trophies are being awarded by the judges at the end of the stake. These will be included in the report to the *GR News*, and will subsequently be forwarded to the GRCA archivist. You should also have someone on hand to take candid shots of dogs, handlers, and spectators at the Field Trial. A person with good drawing skills whose sole responsibility is to diagram the tests will save you from trying to reconstruct them after the fact.

**K. Other considerations.**

1. If the Field Trial is held at the beginning of Specialty week, arrange to have the results posted at the show site and at the headquarters hotel in the hospitality room.
2. Make sure that the scratch policy is well-delineated and printed in the premium list.
3. In preparing Field Trial entries for the catalog, include the breeder of the dog, since there are GRCA breeder-owner-handler trophies that may be awarded.
4. The Field Trial participants should be included in plans for hospitality bags, sales of pins, clothing, and other items unique to the National Specialty. Also, consider having a couple of vendors (even specialist in field training equipment) near the headquarters of the event.
5. If the schedule permits it, the Judges' Education Subcommittee of the Breed Education Committee may attend the Field Trial to demonstrate Goldens working in the field to prospective conformation judges. This is not the responsibility of the host club or the Field Trial Committee, but it is a nice touch if the conformation judges can be introduced to the field trial judges.

## SECTION 18: WC/WCX

A. **General Considerations.** Most host clubs have previously held a WC/WCX test. The major difference between an independent test and the WC/WCX at the National is the significant increase in the number of entries that have to be run in one day. WC entries of 90 + and WCX entries of 65 + are not uncommon. Adequate preparation and good mechanics become of prime importance. When should the WC/WCX fall in the National timetable? This is the option of the host club. Two schedules which have worked well are 1) between the field trial and the conformation/obedience portion, or 2) as the last event. This gives conformation/obedience exhibitors the chance to bathe their dogs if the WC/WCX is before the show, or the chance to let their dogs get good and dirty before they go home, if the WC/WCX is after conformation/obedience. Specific guidelines are detailed in the GRCA WC/WCX Rules and Regulations (Appendix 8).

B. **Judges.** How many judges will you need? This will be dictated by the number of entries anticipated and the suitability of grounds available. Host clubs have employed four, six, or eight judges in recent Nationals. Four judges, one set for each test, are the absolute minimum; this can work well if your grounds are extensive enough to allow both the WC and WCX to be run simultaneously if the entry is small and your mechanics run smoothly. Recently some host clubs have employed more judges (six or eight) and a "voucher system" to expedite mechanics. In this system, the handler is given a 3 x 5 card with the dog's name and number on it before going to the line for the first test. This card is given to the judge; if the dog passes the test, the judges sign the card and return it to the handler, who then uses it as a "voucher" to gain entry to the second series. The attractive feature of this system is that it allows the water tests to begin either simultaneously or shortly after the land tests, thus significantly decreasing the time crunch that can occur with a large entry.

Specific qualifications for judges can be found in the WC/WCX regulations (Appendix 8).

**It is important to hire judges who understand the scope and purpose of the GRCA WC/WCX program; specifically, this means recognizing that the non-competitive nature of the WC/WCX requires the setting of tests of no greater complexity and difficulty than those detailed in the regulations and guidelines.**

C. **Grounds.** Begin your search for grounds as early as possible. The same grounds that are used for the field trial can always be considered first, depending upon their availability and distance from the headquarters hotel. It is advisable to get a commitment in writing or a contract from the landowner or state agency. In inspecting different sites, be sure that the cover and water will be adequate and appropriate at the time of year that the test will be run. Since you will be dealing with a large number of people and vehicles, consideration must be given for adequate parking and access. After the event, a letter of thanks or a small gift to the landowner should be sent, if appropriate. If restrooms are not available, an adequate number of port-a-potties should be rented.

D. **Personnel.** The following lists the key workers in putting on the WC/WCX. Please bear in mind that some workers can serve in more than one position. However, beware of placing too much responsibility on too few workers, lest they suffer terminal burn-out by the time of the event.

1. **WC/WCX Chair.** The WC/WCX Chair has overall responsibility for the entire event. The two major responsibilities are recruiting other key personnel and coordinating among them all aspects of the event and securing grounds on which to hold the tests. The WC/WCX Chair, in coordination with the National Specialty Committee, will also set the entry fee for the event and will recruit members of the test committee. It is imperative that the Chair have some experience in putting on a WC/WCX (or similar field event), as an event of this size is no place for on-the-job training. After the event, the Chair will submit a report on the event to the National Specialty General Chair, which will then be included in the National Specialty report submitted to the GRCA Board of Directors and in the summary submitted to the *GR News*. It is always appreciated if the report includes diagrams of the tests.

2. **Trial Secretary.** The trial secretary should be involved in the production of the premium list and any information relevant to the WC/WCX that will be included in the *GR News* prior to the National. The same online entry service which handles the Field Trial can also handle the WC/WCX entries which will save the secretary an enormous amount of work. The trial secretary will receive entries, collect fees, and conduct the drawing for the order of starters. It is the responsibility of the trial secretary to ensure that complete and correct entries are sent to the show superintendent/secretary for inclusion in the general catalog. The trial secretary will produce the catalog that will be handed out at the event, as well as marshals' sheets for each stake. Make sure

that there are adequate catalogs for both handlers and spectators; usually one and one-half times the number of entries is sufficient. After completion of the event, the trial secretary will send the results to the GRCA WC/WCX Recorder, and the results plus photographs of qualifying dogs will be submitted with the report published in the *GR News*.

**3. Head Marshal.** The head marshal is the person who makes the event run smoothly. Prior to the event, he recruits the stake marshals, ensuring they have the necessary experience to run their stake efficiently. On the day of the event he makes sure that the needs of each test (equipment, workers, judges' care and requests) are met. The head marshal also recruits test and bye dogs for each stake or assigns that duty to the appropriate stake marshals. This is a position that absolutely requires prior experience.

**4. Stake Marshals.** The stake marshals' duties are straightforward. First, and most importantly, keep a steady flow of dogs going to the line to run. Ideally, this should be done in the order of the draw. However, conflicts are sometimes unavoidable (such as when an owner has multiple dogs entered in both stakes), and the marshal needs to exhibit flexibility so as not to impede the progress of the event as a whole. The marshal also needs to work dogs in for reruns if necessary. The marshal can also be of great assistance in coordinating relief of gunners, re-birding the working stations, and providing refreshments and lunches to workers. The marshal should also be attentive to the judges' needs.

**5. Gun Captain.** The gun captain is responsible for recruiting a sufficient number of gunners and throwers to staff the event from beginning to end. This must be done in advance of the event, so that the workers know when and for how long they are expected to man their stations. It is unwise to expect volunteers from the gallery on the day of the event. The gun captain should have some knowledge of the experience level of his workers, and provide additional instruction on technique and safety where necessary. The gun captain is also responsible for recruiting the live gunners. Nothing can kill test mechanics surer and faster than a profusion of "no bird" flyers. The live gunners absolutely must have some prior experience in this kind of event. Inviting an inexperienced hunting buddy to gun is courting disaster. The gun captain is also responsible for securing enough ammunition, both live shells and poppers, for the entire event. This is simple arithmetic based on the number of entries in each stake; remember to include test dogs, bye dogs, and possible reruns in your calculations, then buy a bit extra. The gun captain should also check

local regulations to determine if the use of steel shot is required.

**6. Bird Steward.** The bird steward is responsible for the procurement and humane care of game birds to be used during the event, and for the disposal of carcasses after the event. The number of birds purchased will depend on the number of dogs entered. Since an upland flyer is a requirement in the WCX and an option in the WC, one upland bird per entry is advised (along with extras for test dogs and reruns). The number of ducks required depends upon the organization of the event. If half of each stake is running water first, more ducks will be needed. If all land tests are run first, a fair estimate is that 50% of the entrants will pass the land series. The WC/WCX regulations stipulate that the ducks will be freshly killed. It is completely unfair to the dogs to reuse ducks until they are soggy, wet, and disgusting. Ducks should be retrieved no more than three times maximum before they are replaced.

**7. Hospitality Chair.** The hospitality chair makes the day of the WC/WCX a more pleasant experience for the judges, marshals, and other workers. This person provides snacks, drinks (hot or cold) and other necessities throughout the day, and arranges for the distribution of lunches to judges and workers. If the host club wishes to sell snacks and drinks (or to provide them gratis) to participants on the test grounds, it is the hospitality chair who estimates the amount needed, arranges to have them at the grounds, and recruits individuals to handle sales. If the host club decides to have any other social event in conjunction with the WC/WCX (a post-test barbecue, for instance), it is the hospitality chair that arranges and coordinates it.

**8. Traffic director.** If the layout of the grounds is such that either parking or routing of traffic might become a problem, a traffic director should be appointed. The traffic director is also responsible for putting up ample directional signs to the test site.

**9. Grounds Committee.** A number of people should be recruited to assist in the clean up of the grounds at the end of the event. The condition in which you leave the grounds reflects on both the host club and GRCA and may have an influence on the availability of these grounds for future use.

**E. Test Committee.** As stated in the WC/WCX Rules and Regulations, the Test Committee should comprise at least three individuals, one of whom should be the WC/WCX chair. If possible, the National Specialty General Chair should be present and a member of this committee.

If more than three individuals are appointed to serve on the Test Committee, the total membership should be an odd number. Members of the Test Committee should be familiar with the WC/WCX format and regulations and must be willing to be at the test grounds for the entire event.

**F. Equipment.** The following is a list of equipment commonly needed for the WC/WCX: Chairs for judges and workers, popper guns, popper shells, live ammunition, bird sacks/buckets, holding blinds, hand sledge hammer, a boat (possibly), decoys, two-way radios, surveyors tape, trash sacks/bins, coolers, bug spray, sun screen, clipboards for marshals' sheets, judges' books and pencils (bring extra), white coats for gunners and throwers, and porta-potties.

**G. Photographs.** A group photo of dogs and handlers who successfully complete the tests should be taken and included with the report to the *GR News*. (It is often best to plan these photographs when the ribbons and trophies are being awarded by the judges at the end of the stake.) These should be grouped with some kneeling and some standing behind, rather than one long row, otherwise the dogs and handlers appear unrecognizable in the photos. Be sure to include the judges in the photos, and carefully list the identity of both the dogs and their handlers.

**H. Other considerations.** Some clubs have opted to give a prize/memento for successful completion or to every dog entered. These should be relatively inexpensive and somewhat generic such as bird bands or bumpers. The judges' gifts should be the same as those given to judges in all other events.

The scratch policy should be clearly delineated and printed in the premium list.

## SECTION 19: TRACKING

**A. General Considerations.** Tracking is an event that has a small but devoted following. Perhaps the biggest favor a host club can do for itself in organizing this portion of the National is to make contact with a local all-breed tracking club. This connection will help enormously in locating grounds, selecting judges, and gathering equipment. Many areas of the country have their tracking tests fill quickly with long lists of hopeful alternates. Providing a tracking test at the National just for Golden Retrievers helps alleviate this problem to a certain extent.

Tracking is the one area of the entire National in which the host club should expect to take a financial loss. The reason for this is simple: the number of entries that can be accepted is limited, yet the amount of money expended to put on the TD and TDX tests is substantial. Charging an entry fee that would cover expenses would almost certainly guarantee few or no entries. The best philosophy for the host club to take is that the deficit incurred by tracking will be made up by the remaining portions of the National. The host club should make judicious decisions on how to reduce expenses, but not to the point that the tracking segment of the National is neglected.

Since tracking is a non-competitive event, placement ribbons are not required. Some memento for successful participants is, however, a nice touch that will reflect favorably on the host club. This should be something relatively inexpensive and generic. A particularly nice item is a picture/diagram of the successful dog's track, which can be suitably decorated. Such pictures can be fun to make and will certainly be cherished by the awardees. Use your imagination.

One very important item to consider in planning the tracking event is to make some provision for cooling the dogs. September and October can still be quite hot in certain areas of the country. If your club is in one of these areas, make sure to have some means to cool off dogs close at hand to avoid any potential tragedies. This applies to all the field and performance events at the National.

Tracking should be scheduled at or near the beginning of the National, so that the set-up day does not conflict with other Specialty events (depending on the manpower available for this).

**B. Grounds.** Grounds suitable for the laying of a maximum of 12 TD and 6 TDX tracks must be located. You should allow approximately 5 acres per TD track and 12 acres per TDX track. Clearly an obvious choice would be grounds that have been used successfully for past tracking events. Check with your local tracking aficionados to locate these. If you are considering grounds not previously used for tracking, try to have local tracking judges inspect them for suitability prior to

final approval. One important item to check is whether any special permits or licenses are required to use the grounds, if so, obtain them as necessary. It is also very important to ascertain what the condition of these grounds will be during the National, particularly in terms of types of vegetation and depth of cover. Potential headaches on the day of the event can be avoided if you plan in advance for routing of traffic and parking. If you are using individual farms, remember that each one will require an individual insurance rider.

**C. Judges.** Two judges for both the TD and TDX will be required so that the tests can be run concurrently. These judges must be on the AKC judges list, and only one in each test can be provisional. Hiring local judges is an attractive option. They will be familiar with local grounds and scenting conditions, which will eliminate potential problems, and they won't be as expensive as judges from out of state. Local tracking participants can provide you with a list of qualified local judges.

**D. Personnel.** For such a relatively small event, the number of workers required for tracking is quite substantial. Some of these workers should have past experience in running a tracking event, others can be willing volunteers. Bear in mind that tracking requires a two day commitment: one day to plot the tracks, followed by laying and running the tracks on the day of the event. As with the WC/WCX, not all of these positions necessarily require a separate individual; however, be careful in assigning responsibilities so that no one person becomes overloaded.

**1. Tracking Chair.** The Chair oversees the entire event, coordinating and communicating as necessary with other key personnel. Important duties include contacting and securing judges, arranging for appropriate grounds, recruiting for other key positions as well as general support workers, and maintaining regular contact with the National Specialty General Chair. The Chair should arrange for a photograph of successful participants for the *GR News*, and will prepare a report on the event to be included in the National Specialty Report. The Chair, in concert with National Specialty Trophy Chair, should decide what sort of memento, if any, is to be awarded to successful dogs. This position clearly requires someone with significant experience.

**2. Tracking Test Secretary.** The Secretary handles all of the paperwork associated with the event that is required both by AKC and GRCA. If there are options available, the decision the host club has made on these options should be clearly defined in the premium list. The Secretary will

receive entries and fees, then conduct a draw for running order, including at least two or more alternates. The Secretary should then notify the participants as soon as possible. The judges should also be sent copies of the running order. It is the Secretary's responsibility to ensure that entries are sent to the National Specialty Superintendent/ Secretary for inclusion in the National Specialty catalog. The Secretary should also prepare a sufficient number of separate catalogs (2-3 times the number of entries) to be passed out to participants and spectators on the day of the event. The Secretary arranges for any necessary refunds. Reasons for refunding entries should be clearly defined in the premium list. While it is not necessary that the Secretary be an avid tracking participant, some familiarity with the event is helpful. More importantly, the Secretary must be a conscientious individual who is sufficiently organized to meet the necessary deadlines.

**3. Chief Track Layer.** The chief track layer functions like the head marshal in a field trial-- on the day of the test; this is the person who makes it all run. Experience is an absolute necessity.

The primary duties consist of getting and assigning track layers for each track and crosstrack. The same track layer may lay more than one track. All should be present the day before the test for set-ups. The track layers should follow the judges as they plot the tracks and should prepare their own maps which will aid them in laying the track and removing the flags. The chief track layer should have a schedule of which track layers are laying which tracks, should send them out on a scheduled time table and should keep track of when the track was started and finished being laid. This is so the judges will know if a track can still be run if there is an unforeseen delay. **This time schedule will need to be included with the report turned into AKC.**

Unless designated to someone else, the chief track layer is responsible for seeing that the flags for each track are available and in good condition to be used. Borrowing or renting flags from a local tracking club is a good idea and saves constructing your own. If flags are borrowed, they must be reassembled in their appropriate storage containers and returned in good condition to the owners. One nice touch has been to have the numbered flags carry the National Specialty theme or logo and be presented to the dogs running those tracks.

**4. Hospitality Chair.** Since tracking is not a large event, the duties of the Hospitality Chair are small, but significant. It is the responsibility of the Hospitality Chair to see to the care and requirements of the judges and workers. Hospitality for the participants is optional. Since tracking generally has an early morning start, some clubs have provided hot drinks and rolls in the morning.

A brunch or lunch can also be provided gratis by the host club, or funded by a donation jar left on the refreshment table.

**E. Variable Surface Tracking.** This relatively new AKC event is optional at National Specialties. If your club has a devoted tracking contingent and wants to offer VST, GRCA has been approved to hold it as of 1997. See Section 23 for further details.

## SECTION 20: EDUCATION AND THE ANNUAL MEETING

**A. Education.** In 1999, GRCA changed the format for the evening that had traditionally held the Educational Program and the Annual Meeting. Education efforts are now entirely under the auspices of the GRCA Board of Directors and the Breed Education Committee. They have frequently offered a half or full day or evening of educational activities including lectures, panel discussions and presentations involving actual dogs. This program is generally held during the early part of the National Week but should be scheduled to provide the greatest opportunity for participation from all the different event participants. The Chair of the BEC should contact the host club to obtain the name of the hotel contact, so room and luncheon arrangements can be made, but other than that, the host club is not responsible for this event. Advance publicity in the *GR News* and on the web site is helpful in alerting members to this opportunity. Complete information will need to be supplied to those formulating the premium list as well. Expenses for and income from educational events are the responsibility of GRCA, not the host club.

**B. Annual meeting.** The Annual Meeting is also the responsibility of the GRCA Board of Directors. In consultation with the President and/or Secretary, an appropriate night and time must be determined and published in the schedule. This is an important event and is required by the By-Laws of GRCA. It should not be scheduled opposite any other event, although events may precede or follow it. Finding the right time is tricky; too early in the evening and members are still caring for their dogs or have gone to dinner. Too late in the evening, and members are at the bar or in bed. Without sufficient attendance, a quorum will not be present and business will not be able to be conducted. About two hours should be allocated for the meeting; some will be shorter, others may run over, depending upon the issues addressed by the membership.

It is the responsibility of the GRCA Secretary to tell the host club what is needed for the Annual Meeting. This includes things like the arrangement of the room, microphones, tables, refreshments, audio-visual equipment, etc. This information should come in one mailing, not in dribs and drabs throughout the months leading up to the National. The host club will then convey this information to the appropriate hotel personnel.

The room should be able to hold at least 350 people. Usually, the room the hotel waives the fee in lieu of the sleeping rooms and meal functions they have booked is used. Should there be a charge for the room, GRCA will contribute up to \$250, but the host club should make every effort

to negotiate a contract specifying no charge for the room. Audio-visual equipment and refreshments are additional charges; these should be paid for by GRCA.

## SECTION 21. ANNUAL TROPHY PRESENTATION

**A. General Considerations.** The nature of the Annual Banquet has changed considerably over recent years. It appears that the large, formal dinner with a long, complicated awards presentation is not of general interest anymore. Because this is always held after the conformation competition is completed, many people are close to leaving the National site. There is also the need to clean-up and change after the competition for this event. With waning interest in this type of event, the “annual banquet” is being reformulated.

Of the changes that have already been instituted, the GRCA has split off the trophies for year-end accomplishments and these are now being presented at the Annual Meeting. (This serves two purposes: it decreases the number of awards that need to be presented at the end of the conformation competition and it provides an added incentive for people to attend the Annual Meeting.) With this change, the number of awards to be presented in the time slot usually held for the Annual Banquet is reduced and now allows for the possibility of a less formal event. This also means that this event can be less costly for both participants and hosts.

This doesn't mean that the host club cannot have a formal dinner at the end of the competition. However, it does mean that it may be possible to consider a wider range of events. The “banquet” can now range from a formal affair at a hotel to a cocktail party or pizza party at the conformation site immediately after the competition is completed.

Because of the GRCA trophies that are awarded based on performance at the National Specialty, the “banquet” must be held on the evening of the final day of conformation and obedience competition. The “banquet” is an event through which the host club can send everyone home with a good memory of the National, so take advantage of this opportunity. Even if an informal event is selected, try to make it reasonably classy and enjoyable. In 1988 the GRCA Board of Directors passed a resolution offering to do the banquet at the request of the host club. No host club has taken advantage of this offer, but it still exists.

**1. Formal Banquet.** If a formal banquet is selected, it should be a classy event. No hot dog feeds in the local 4-H barn, please. It should be held in a room which will seat approximately 400, appropriately decorated for the occasion with tables dressed with linen and centerpieces. Unless the show site has a formal dining area, it is preferable to have the banquet at a hotel. You could also make arrangements at a restaurant or country club. Just remember that the more facilities you deal with, the more complex the planning becomes. Trophies are another consideration and an

important reason not to locate the banquet away from the host hotel. The trophies will all have to be packed up again, transported to the banquet site, unpacked, displayed, and repacked. This is an awesome undertaking; please check with the Trophy Curator prior to making the decision to hold the banquet away from the host hotel.

In order for all attendees to easily hear the speeches and presentations that will be made at the banquet, you must arrange for a microphone and podium.

Some clubs have prepared a floor plan and sign-up sheet so that those who have pre-purchased banquet tickets can reserve seats at specific tables with their friends. This system eliminates the mad stampede as people rush for unassigned tables. The sheet is usually available at the show site at the host club sales booth. If you choose to use such a sheet, make sure to arrange and reserve the judges', officers', etc. seats prior to making this list available to the general public. Also make sure that such a list is well-publicized-- this will circumvent a lot of confusion and the potential for ill will the night of the banquet. All reserved seats must have individual names assigned to them. No block reservations (e.g. one table reserved under one name) should be allowed.

When should the banquet begin? You should allow ample time between the end of breed classes and the beginning of the banquet. Time must be allowed for taking of photographs at the show site, transportation back to the hotel(s), feeding and airing of dogs, and changing clothes. A good suggestion is at least two and maybe three hours after the projected end of Conformation.

**2. Informal Banquet.** Generally, the considerations for an informal event are less constrictive. In spite of the informality of this approach, it still should be a classy event. The event should be setup to accommodate up to 400 people, depending on the number of people attending. This event could occur at the show site or someplace relatively nearby. Just remember that the more facilities you deal with, the more complex the planning becomes. Trophies are another consideration and the trophies will have to come to this site. The trophies will all have to be packed up, transported to the banquet site, unpacked, displayed, and repacked. This is an awesome undertaking; please check with the Trophy Curator prior to making the decision to determine just how many trophies will need to be transported and how big a task this will be.

In order for all attendees to easily hear the speeches and presentations that will be made at the banquet, you must arrange for a microphone and podium.

Since this is a less formal event, seating charts are probably not necessary. However, make sure that seating for all that want to attend is available. Since this is much less costly to organize,

you might consider offering this event without charge. However, if the budget does not allow this, you can charge whatever is necessary to cover this event.

When should the “banquet” begin? You should allow ample time between the end of breed classes and the beginning of the banquet. Time again must be allowed for taking of photographs at the show site, feeding and airing of dogs, changing clothes and traveling to the location of the event (if it is not at the show site). A good suggestion is at least two hours after the projected end of Conformation.

## **B. Food.**

**1. Formal Banquet.** A served, sit-down meal is always preferable to buffet type services, which have the risk of running out of food. If you choose to have a buffet or catered service, make absolutely certain that the caterer is known to be competent in serving a large number of people quickly and efficiently. A buffet will run much smoother if there are several serving lines with staff assisting the diners. How many different entrees should you offer? It's best to keep this as simple as possible. Since reservations are taken far in advance of the National, some people truly don't remember what they ordered. Others see what a person at the next table is having and want to switch. It's best to limit choices to one or two meat entrees and a vegetarian offering. Make the price of all choices identical and in whole dollar amounts. This will simplify bookkeeping tremendously. You also need to make allowance to accommodate those on special medical diets. This needn't be advertised, as those with legitimate requests will almost certainly contact you beforehand. Remember to price the banquet high enough to cover items such as flowers, decorations and judges' dinners.

**2. Informal Banquet.** With this type of event, the food choices are wider. Cocktail parties, barbecues or pizza parties are just several options. It might also be nice to select a food that is well known for that locale, adding a special touch to the hospitality. Make sure that there is plenty of food and that how the food is served or offered is convenient. Again, consider those who may have special dietary needs. Pricing of this event follows the same philosophy.

**C. Complimentary Invitations.** Who will attend free of charge? This is entirely up to the host club's discretion. However, bear in mind that each banquet ticket given away free ultimately weighs against the host club's profit. Certainly all judges and their spouses should be invited as

guests of the host club. Individuals after that should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

**D. What to do with the GRCA Board of Directors.** The custom of placing the GRCA Board of Directors at a head table or on a dais is no longer fashionable. Placing the Board separate from, or worse, above the general membership creates a bad impression of elitism. Since the banquet is late in the Specialty week, since GRCA Board members are always clearly identified with name tags throughout the week, and since Board members are always introduced at the GRCA annual meeting, most members already know who they are. Some clubs have opted to let Board members sit with their spouses and friends, other clubs have assigned Board members at tables with judges, host club officers, distinguished guests, etc. You may have specially designated tables for specific individuals, but don't set up one long table where everyone can watch the Board eat. Check with the GRCA Secretary to see if there is a preference on seating arrangements. Of course, this is less of an issue with an informal affair on the show site grounds.

**E. Speakers.** The trophy presentation consumes less time than in the past, so restrictions of speakers are not as important as in the past. However, if an informal event is held, there may be even less need for a speaker at the event. There are some individuals who will require some time at the microphone. The National Specialty General Chair should welcome everyone and will want to thank special individuals who have contributed to the success of the National. The host club President may wish to make a short speech, particularly if a token of appreciation is being given to the General Chair. Any or all of the judges may wish to briefly address the audience. While this cannot be made mandatory, judges should be made aware that the audience appreciates hearing their impressions of the entries they judged. One judge for each area can be assigned as spokesperson if desired. After the individuals representing the host club have spoken, the President of GRCA, assisted by the Trophy Curator, presents the trophies and conducts whatever other business is applicable.

**F. Trophies and Trophy Presentation.** GRCA owns many old, historic, and valuable trophies that are seen only at the National Specialty each year. The care and disposition of these trophies are under the supervision of the GRCA Trophy Curator. The host club needs to communicate with the Trophy Curator so that he/she may arrange getting these trophies to the “banquet” site for their unpacking and display. There should be sturdy tables for trophy display that are positioned near the podium. Check with the Trophy Curator to determine how many tables for

each presentation session. The tables should be skirted. Since each trophy has its own wooden shipping crate, room must be available to store these (under the trophy tables works well). It is also helpful if the Trophy Curator has access to a place in which trophies in need of polishing can be attended to before the “banquet”. Many of these requirements are easily met when the “banquet” is held at the headquarters hotel. The GRCA President or Trophy Chair will conduct the trophy and awards presentation that concludes the evening. A competent photographer should be secured to photograph trophy recipients for submission to the *GR News*. This should be coordinated with the editor of the *News*.

**G. Other Considerations.** Some clubs have put on a short program at the banquet. This is entirely optional, and it should be remembered that trophy presentation will take up a large portion of the evening. Silent auction and raffle winners should not be announced at the banquet due to time restraints.

**H. Art Auction.** This is entirely the responsibility of the Golden Retriever Foundation. It is part of the GRF Gala and is no longer part of the trophy presentation.

## **SECTION 22: PUBLICITY**

Publicity is really a very minor function for the National--you don't have to advertise to get people to come! You may, however, want to publicize this event to non-Golden or non-dog people in your area. Press releases can be prepared for local newspapers and TV stations. They will only use these as time and space permit, so don't expect too much. TV stations may like to film the event to use as fill; however, be prepared that they will photograph different things like grooming and not performances or judging. If a TV station will be filming the National, make sure they interview a knowledgeable person--either the General Chair or the Chair of an event.

GRCA allows twelve free black and white advertising pages in the *GR News* after the completion of the previous year's Specialty. An additional cost will be incurred if you want to upgrade color pages. These pages can be used to sell Specialty-related items, to get people thinking about the next National, or to acquaint them with the dates and events planned. The pages may be used in several issues or all at once. GRCA advertising and submission guidelines as published in the *GR News* must be followed.

## SECTION 23: NON-REQUIRED EVENTS

**A. Agility.** While agility is not a required event at the National Specialty, it has been offered every year since 1996 and is very popular. It does, however, require a great deal of space and personnel, so be sure you have both available before you offer it.

**1. Classes.** The classes offered are Standard Novice A and B, Open, and Excellent A and B and Jumpers with Weaves Novice A and B, Open and Excellent A and B. There are only two jump heights: 20 and 24 inches. This makes a total of twenty classes which require ribbons or rosettes. With the addition of the Preferred classes, you now have Novice, Open, and Excellent Preferred with different height classes (possibly including A and B designations) and FAST classes if offered, which also require ribbons or rosettes. Just be aware that this whole area is in a state of flux with AKC.

**2. Grounds.** An agility ring requires a minimum of 8000 square feet which is approximately 80' by 100'. Agility entries at the National will best be accommodated by two rings with two or three judges on one day. If you have an outside show site, this can be readily managed. If your site is totally indoors, agility will need special mats or carpet. Dogs cannot run on regular ring mats. Usually agility runs on a different day from obedience and the same space can be utilized. A tent for the score table is needed and electricity for computerized scoring and results is necessary.

If you have an inside show site, such as a fairgrounds, you will need to hold agility in a building with a dirt floor like a horse arena. Matting a concrete floor is not acceptable unless you use something like horse stall matting and jump mats. You could also hold agility outside on grass even though the conformation/obedience portion is inside.

**3. Equipment.** Agility requires an enormous amount of varying equipment. If your club does not own this equipment, you will have to rent or borrow it from another club. Some superintendents or trial secretaries have agility equipment, others do not. Some agility equipment manufacturers will bring an entire set to be used for the event and then sell it at the conclusion. Check with the local agility people in your area for sources of equipment.

**4. Personnel.** Like many of the other performance events, agility has a large following of people who are willing to work at the National. You need lots of people, so don't hesitate to ask for assistance. You'll get offers.

The key people your club needs to provide are the Chair, the Secretary, the Chief Course Builder, and the Chief Ring Steward. Even the Head Scorekeeper can be a non-club volunteer since

their work takes place the day of the event only.

5. There is only one GRCA agility trial at each national. Some clubs have also offered a second trial under their own name. While this is allowed by AKC, it is not recommended by GRCA as it puts the schedule and resources out of balance.

The AKC Manuals on Agility Trials should be obtained and studied. Since this is not a required GRCA event, it is assumed a club will only offer it if they have the necessary experience and personnel available.

**B. Hunt Test.** This is always a popular event with exhibitors, but requires more manpower, grounds, and time than many clubs have available. If you have a strong field contingent that wants to hold a Hunt Test, that's great, but don't feel you must offer one. The field trial and the WC/WCX already consume lots of time and energy and are required events.

If your club does decide to offer a hunt test, it is assumed you have the experience, grounds and time to do so. There are no special GRCA requirements involved. Based on the number of past entries, it is best to plan on splitting the Junior Test into A and B. Also, be prepared to split Senior and Master Tests if the entry exceeds that easily handled with one test.

**C. Sweepstakes.** GRCA leaves the decision of whether to hold a sweepstakes up to the host club. In past years, some clubs have opted not to hold sweepstakes as it requires nearly a full day by itself. It also involves added expenses as another two judges are needed, grounds may need to be rented for an additional day and ribbons and trophies must be purchased. Extra manpower in the form of stewards, cleanup crew, and a chair are needed. At the same time, many breeders enjoy the opportunity to show off their puppies. As the size and complexity of the National has increased, some clubs have foregone the extra burden of a Sweepstakes. Having the "Best In Puppy Classes" trophy that is judged after all regular class judging can offset the elimination of a Sweepstakes. However, in recent years, Sweepstakes has become very popular and most people expect this to be included. The best approach is to gauge the current popularity and your resources and decide if Sweepstakes is something you wish to offer.

Current GRCA policy states that all sweepstakes entrants shall be shown only by their owner, co-owner, breeder or members of their immediate family. This means no professional handlers unless they meet these requirements. This applies also to Best in Sweepstakes Class. By GRCA rule, it is required that the same person that showed the dog to first place in the Sweepstakes class will show the dog in the Best in Sweepstakes class. However, if that person should have more

than one dog in Best in Sweepstakes class, someone else is permitted to show the additional winner. That person should meet the handler definitions above. Only in cases where there is not another owner, co-owner, breeder, co-breeder or immediate family member available, should another person take the dog into the Best in Sweepstakes class. It is understood that there would be no financial benefit to this individual.

Entries and handlers must be screened to ensure that this policy is enforced. A great deal of ill will can be generated by refusing entry to a legitimate owner-handler whose paperwork is not yet completed, or by accepting a handler into the ring who is not an owner of the dog being shown. Trophies, prize money, and ribbons will all have to be reclaimed and re-awarded or forfeited if errors are made. Prize money for each class should be allocated prior to the beginning of Sweepstakes. This can be done by either the Sweepstakes Chair or the Show Superintendent/Secretary. If you decide to hold sweepstakes it is your responsibility to be certain that these policies are published and enforced. All pertinent information regarding GRCA sweepstakes policies should be included in the premium list. Current sweepstakes regulations can be found on the CD or on the GRCA website.

**D. Variable Surface Tracking.** Like the other non-required events, Variable Surface Tracking can be offered if your club has a devoted tracking contingent that wishes to do so. GRCA is approved to hold this event. Since tracking events are frequently difficult to get in to, offering VST at the National does provide an opportunity for Golden owners to participate which they might not otherwise receive.

**E. Rally obedience.** Rally became an AKC titling event in 2005. It is not a required event at a National Specialty, but it is popular and will bring in revenue. If your club wishes to offer Rally, it requires space equal to two obedience rings combined. Rally also requires the signs and sign holders for each exercise.

**F. Certificate of Conformation Assessment (CCA).** First held in 2004, this event is an opportunity to have a dog examined by three different judges and to be awarded a certificate if they pass. While this event is not required at National Specialties, GRCA favors its inclusion. It is not a spectator event as any information is shared only between the judges and the handler of the dog. It could be scheduled like a health clinic, with handlers submitting their entry fee and receiving a designated time to appear for evaluation. For a complete description of the CCA program, see CD or the GRCA website. If you want to allow the maximum number of entries, consider having two

sets of evaluators. It is a physically demanding event for them. A CCA will not make money because of the limited number of entries. Consider asking evaluators who will already be attending the National.

**G. Triathlon Certificate.** Started in 2003, the program recognizes dogs that compete in conformation, field, and a performance event (agility, obedience, or tracking) at one National or Regional Specialty. To be awarded this certificate, a dog must place or JAM in a regular or non-regular conformation or Sweepstakes class, must pass a WC or WCX test or place or JAM in the field trial or receive a qualifying score in a hunt test, must receive a qualifying score in a regular or non-regular agility, obedience, or rally class, or must pass a TD, TDX, or VST test. For dogs that complete these requirements, a Triathlon Certificate is awarded upon submission of the appropriate records to the Triathlon Coordinator. The responsibility of the host club to the Triathlon Program lies in the scheduling of events. While it is not possible to avoid all conflicts, please make sure that the judges in various venues allow some flexibility in their timing. Pay particular attention to the scheduling of the non-regular conformation classes (Veterans, Hunting, and Field Trial) as many of those trying for a Triathlon Certificate will enter those classes. If at all possible, do not schedule them against obedience or agility classes which would preclude a dog from being able to compete in the areas for which he is entered.

## SECTION 24: PREMIUM LIST

The following is the general procedure to be used for preparing and mailing out the premium list.

1. Premium lists are prepared by the host club in cooperation with the Show Superintendent and **proofread by GRCA** prior to being released.
2. A certain number will be printed and made available in hard copy. Printed premium lists will be sent to AKC in accordance with their requirements. Printed premium lists will also be mailed to any GRCA member or entrant who requests one from the show secretary or superintendent. There is no set number of those that need to be printed. Experience will dictate this in the future.
3. The majority of premium lists will be sent electronically. This will be available on the superintendent's/secretary's website. A link will be provided by the GRCA website and on the host club's website.
4. Notices of availability of the premium list will be made by the host club utilizing several of the following:
  - a. An ad in the GR News giving the website address
  - b. A postcard mailed to members
  - c. Announcements on the GRCA Info List
  - d. Announcements on other Golden Retriever e-mail lists.
5. GRCA will continue to underwrite the cost of printing and mailing hard copies of the premium lists. Currently, these amounts are up to \$1500 for the National. Receipts will be required.

The *AKC Show Manual* has valuable information as to what must be included in a premium list. Use that, the assistance of your superintendent/show secretary, and this *Handbook* in preparing the premium list. Events other than conformation and obedience need to have their own premium list prepared and available electronically so superintendents can incorporate them into one main premium list. These will be included with the main premium list and will be mailed together. Electronic examples of past Premium Lists are available as part of a CD which is included with the National Specialty Handbook.

Once the premium list is available on the superintendent's website, notify the GRCA

Secretary so that a link can be placed on the GRCA website and posted on the GRCA Information List.

**A. Mailing.** The premium list is now to be distributed electronically to all GRCA members regardless of the region in which they live. Hard copies will be available from the superintendent upon request. (Determining the number of hard copies to be printed and made available for mailing will be difficult initially. Consult with GRCA and the superintendent to help determine the number of copies to be printed.) Obtain mailing labels or a disc from the Membership Coordinator if post cards are to be sent to all members. This approach will simplify mailings to other countries and reduce the cost of premium list distribution. In addition to members, the premium list is to be sent to all vendors and all judges. **The bottom line for this whole section is “make sure everyone gets a copy of the premium list that should have or need one”, whether it is an electronic copy or hard copy.** If you delay in preparing the premium list, this will make distribution more difficult and will have an affect on advertising, entries and other aspects of the show. **This is one of the most important tasks to handle in a timely fashion.**

**B. GRCA contribution.** Previously, GRCA contributed \$1500 towards the printing and mailing of the premium list. This number may be reduced because of the smaller number of copies of the premium list that will be printed and mailed. Check with the GRCA Specialty Advisory Committee, GRCA Secretary and/or GRCA Treasurer to confirm what level of support will be offered. Contact the GRCA Treasurer to obtain these funds.

**C. Classes.** In addition to the regular classes offered at any dog show (see the *AKC Show Manual*), the following non-regular classes must be offered:

1. Conformation

- a. Veterans I: for dogs and bitches 8-10 years old
- b. Veterans II: for dogs and bitches 10-12 years old
- c. Veterans III: for dogs and bitches 12 years and older
- d. Field Trial: for dogs and bitches who have received a placement or a JAM at a licensed field trial.
- e. Hunting Retriever: for dogs and bitches who have earned an AKC Master or Senior Hunter title.
- f. Stud Dog

g. Brood Bitch

h. Brace

2. Obedience. Some of these are scheduled to become titling classes in 2009. But they may still remain as optional classes for the National.

a. Graduate Novice: For dogs with a CD that have not received any CDX legs prior to closing of entries. Need not be handled by owner. May also enter Open class.

b. Veterans Novice: For dogs that have an obedience title and are eight years or older May not be entered in regular obedience class.

c. Veterans Open: For dogs that have a CD or CDX title and are eight years or older. The exercises shall be performed and judged as in the Open Class except that the high jump shall be one-half the dog's height at the shoulder and the broad jump shall be once the height of the dog at the shoulder. May also be entered in Veteran Utility Class, but may not be entered in any regular obedience class or Veteran Novice Class.

d. Veterans Utility: For dogs that have a CDX or UD title and are eight years or older. The exercises shall be performed and judged as in Utility Class, except that the height of the jumps shall be one-half the dog's height at the shoulder. Dogs entered in Veteran Utility may be entered in Veteran Open, but may not be entered in any regular obedience class or in Veteran Novice.

e. Brace Obedience: For two Golden Retrievers capable of performing Novice exercises. Dogs need not be owned by the same person, but must be handled by one handler. A separate entry form must be completed for each dog comprising the Brace with a single entry fee. Indicate this class as "Brace--Obedience."

f. Team: For any four Golden Retrievers. A fifth may be entered as an alternate requiring no additional fee. Dogs need not be owner-handled, need not be entered in another class, and need not have an obedience title. A separate entry form is required for each dog with a single unit entry fee for this class. Indicate this class as "Team--Obedience." If you wish to have a team name listed in the catalog, it must be clearly indicated on the entry form.

g. Versatility: For dogs capable of performing Utility exercises. Need not be handled by owner. May be entered in regular obedience class.

h. wild card. This is similar to versatility.

#### **D. Miscellaneous information to be included in the premium list**

1. Which committee members will not be showing
2. Reservations page
3. Trophies and ribbons offered. These are NOT the GRCA trophies.
4. The hotel is considered part of the show grounds and the Show Committee has jurisdiction over any abuse.
5. GRCA advertising guidelines are to be followed and can be found in the *GR News*.
- 6 Hospitality information: Transportation, hotels, RV's, maps
7. List of GRCA officers and directors
8. List of host club officers and directors
9. List of show committee
10. Grooming facilities available: water, power, cover
11. Parking availability. Is there a charge?
12. Availability of food at show site
13. Videotaping/television notice if applicable
14. Scratch policy for field, obedience, agility, tracking, hunt, WC/X
15. Tracking options, if any, and refund policy
16. Education program held by GRCA
17. Notification of Annual Meeting, Delegates, Rescue and other meetings
18. Information on site accessibility and accommodations for handicapped exhibitors and spectators.
19. Obedience trophies are awarded from the regular classes only unless otherwise specified.
20. Prominent notice about pre-ordering catalogs and the limited number that will available for sale at the show.

**E. Closing Date.** The National Specialty usually has an early closing date of four to five weeks before the date of the show. **Have everything close on the same date. It is very confusing if there are different dates for different events.** The only exception would be an even earlier closing date for catalog advertising which may be necessary for layout and catalog production.

**F. Proofreading.** A draft of the premium list (as prepared by the host club) **must** be sent to the GRCA Secretary and the Chair of the Specialty Advisory Committee for proofreading prior to its being printed. **This is vital and mandatory!!**

## **SECTION 25: REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTING ADVERTISING, REPORTS AND PHOTOS TO THE *GOLDEN RETRIEVER NEWS***

**A. Pre-National Advertising.** In preparation for the National Specialty, the GRCA provides free of charge twelve black and white pages in the *GR News* to advertise the event. These pages may also be upgraded to color at the expense of the host club. Check with the Editor of the News for prices on color. These pages may be used in one issue or in a combination of issues. **All material must be submitted in typed format, double-spaced, and packaged in one envelope.** It may not arrive from several different sources. Logo, artwork, maps, etc. must all arrive in the same envelope-no exceptions. Since the National is held in September and October, you may want the promotional material to appear in the May/June issue. You may also want to place a full-page ad in the March/April issue with the basic facts (where, when, headquarters, judges, etc.) for members who just can't wait for the information.

Put one person in charge of collating and mailing all of your information to the *GR News* in one package. Call the editor if you need help or suggestions. Look at some of the more successful uses of the twelve *GR News* pages from past Nationals to get an idea of how to best use yours. Remember also, that your club's column in the *GR News* is a good place to generate interest and excitement in your National. Printing the entire premium list in the *GR News* is not feasible. The lead-time is too great and the cost would be prohibitive.

**B. Submission of National Report.** The *GR News* prints a complete account of the National with black and white photos free of charge to the host club. This is always the January/February issue. Color photos are substantially more expensive. Host clubs may choose to upgrade the free pages of black and white coverage to color by paying for the actual costs involved to upgrade the pages to color. Consult with the Editor of the News to determine the actual costs in advance of submitting the materials. See Section 13 for information about the Show Photographer. The pictures supplied by the contract with the show photographer are to go to the *GR News* and then to the GRCA Archivist. They will not be returned to the host club. Should the host club desire a set of these photographs for their own use, they will have to negotiate an additional set in the contract or pay for them directly.

This report should include the following:

1. Small individual photos of all first-place class winners in Conformation, Obedience, and Junior Showmanship. If offered, Sweepstakes and Agility winners should also be included.
2. Large individual photos of Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex, Best of Winners, Winners Dog and Winners Bitch, Reserve Winners Dog and Bitch, Highest Scoring Dog, High Combined Open and Utility, Best Junior Handler, Best in Veteran Classes, and Best in Puppy Classes.
3. Group photos of the Conformation Judge's Award of Merit winners, Tracking Dog, Tracking Dog Excellent, Working Certificate, and Working Certificate Excellent qualifiers. If offered, VST qualifiers should be included.
4. Large group photos of first through fourth place and JAM's in all four stakes at the Field Trial. If offered, large group photos of Hunt Test qualifiers should be included.
5. Small individual photos of all GRCA Challenge and Memorial Trophy winners, taken either at the Awards Presentation or Annual Meeting or on site at the field events.
6. Diagrams of each series run in all four stakes at the Field Trial and the WC/WCX tests.
7. If offered, diagrams of the Hunt Test stakes and the Agility courses should be included.
8. Conformation judges' critiques for dogs, bitches, and intersex. Critiques and comments from Obedience and Field Trial judges will also be printed if provided.
9. Reports from each of the Chairpersons of the various events.
10. Candid photos of all of the events. Special emphasis should be given to the Honors Parade, host club's workers and committee members, the educational program, the field and tracking events, and other special social functions.

All photos should be marked on the back with the event, placement, and a return address.

The same return address should be given for all photos. For example:

1992 National Specialty

Winners Dog (Open Dog)

Jackson's Marker Guy

Return: S. Simpson, 22 Main St., Chicago, IL 33333

In addition to the photographs, reports, and critiques, you will also need to provide one fully marked catalog (including absentees) and a typed listing of placement results. This is the only catalog that is actually marked; all others have the results list included.

Please keep in mind all the required material needed for the GR News report after the National. It is the host club responsibility to make sure these items are created (photos, critiques, maps, etc.) and make sure they are sent to GRCA as part of the National Specialty report.

A checklist for National Specialty submissions is included on the CD.

**C. Distribution of *GR News* to Judges.** Some host clubs want to send copies of the Jan/Feb *GR News* to those who judged the National. This is fine and will gladly be done. However, the host club must notify the *GR News* editor and GRCA Membership Administrator of this request before this issue goes to press. There are usually a larger number of copies of this issue ordered when produced but this will accommodate the request from the host club. Be sure to make this desire known early so that it can be handled.

**D. Archives.** When the pictures received from the official photographer are no longer needed by the *GR News*, they are sent directly to the GRCA archivist. It is the archivist's responsibility to keep or discard the appropriate pictures. The candid photographs are returned to the host club. It is also the GRCA Archivist's responsibility to order a marked catalog directly from catalog sales and to submit a bill to the GRCA treasurer. It is NOT the responsibility of the *GR News* editor to supply the Archivist with the catalog she receives from the host club with the submitted report.

## **SECTION 26: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

**A. Internet Web Site.** It will be of great benefit if your club has its own Web site. On this should be provided all information available concerning hotels, judges, schedules, sales items, transportation, weather, etc. You can also link to other sites giving additional information. Link to the superintendent's web site, so exhibitors can enter electronically. Link to GRCA's web site, so members can click back and forth. This will save you hours of time in answering all the myriad questions people have, such as "What should I wear to the banquet?" and "Can I buy bottled water in St. Louis?"

This web site should go live as soon as you know you will be hosting the National and should be added to as information becomes available. There's nothing worse than an out-of-date web site. Make sure the person assigned to this task keeps it current on a regular basis.

**B. Electronic transmission of results.** It is great if the results of the various competitions can be made available on the GRCA web site almost as soon as the event is complete. Again, this takes dedicated people willing to supply the results. Check with the Specialty Advisory Committee and/or GRCA's Web Master--technology is ever advancing and what's impossible to do now may be readily acceptable as the norm when your turn rolls around. Photographs taken with a digital camera are also great to post to the web site as the week progresses.

**C. E-mail and the lists.** Most people have e-mail and this is a quick and inexpensive way for the National Committee people to keep in touch with each other. It is also a handy means of communication between the chairs of past, current and future events, and between the host club and the GRCA officers and directors. If you're communicating regularly by e-mail, make certain that your committee members check their mail frequently!

There are several Golden lists on the Internet which can also be great means of communication. Unfortunately, they can also be great means of misinformation which can quickly escalate to panic, hard feelings and resentment. It is preferable if one host club member who is a member of these lists can monitor them and be ready to respond immediately when a question concerning the National comes up. Even if this person doesn't know the answer, a post that says "I hear you, we're looking into this, we'll get back to you" will help allay concerns. And then, of course, do get back to the list with the correct response!

**D. Fax.** The General Chair, at least, should have a Fax machine readily available. Many people chose this way to communicate electronically and it is invaluable for sending and receiving documents. If the Chair does not have a personal Fax, perhaps one could be rented for the duration of the event or make sure that a Fax machine at work can be used without repercussions.

## SECTION 27: THIRD PARTY ARRANGEMENTS

**A. Definition.** A third party is any company, group or individual which is not a part or under the direct supervision of GRCA or the host club. For purposes of defining this relationship, the Golden Retriever Foundation should be accorded the same working relationship as a GRCA committee. Examples for third parties include but are not limited to:

A dog food company which is providing support in exchange for presenting a nutrition seminar or advertising space.

A Boy Scout troop which is providing pooper scooper service.

A specialty club or magazine which is hosting its own competition for Golden Retrievers.

Vendors, including other Golden Retriever clubs, rescues, refreshment stands, craftspeople and other businesses.

A local kennel club which is hosting an all breed show in the vicinity.

A veterinarian holding a health screening clinic at the Specialty.

**B. Contracts.** All arrangements between the host club and any third parties be they vendors, companion events, clubs who are assisting in working at an event, or sponsors, should be put in writing via a signed contract so that all know what is expected of them and what they can expect. Price, facilities, equipment or services to be furnished, time constraints, and responsibilities for cleanup and supervision should be spelled out. A letter or simple contract should suffice to provide all parties with a written blueprint of the working relationship.

**C. Expenses.** A host club will incur no expenses on behalf of any third party, except as noted in the contract. A third party holding a special event at or near a Regional or National must make its own arrangements for things like sites, equipment, flowers, etc. and must arrange direct billing to itself, not through the host club. Any services provided by the host club, such as set-up, advertising, or staffing, must be covered by the contract. Due allowance for a reasonable profit by the host club will be considered in establishing fees for services, space or equipment provided to a third party. **All payment must be received in advance**

**D. Insurance.** GRCA carries liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 which covers GRCA events. Property managers will usually request a copy of the insurance policy, which may be obtained from the GRCA Treasurer. If property managers require that they and their facilities be named under GRCA's insurance, that must be arranged through GRCA well in

advance of the event. Any additional premium will be paid by the host club. **Events which are not specifically part of the GRCA specialty are not covered and must provide their own insurance.** This exclusion includes independent specialties held by the host club and any third party events run in conjunction with the GRCA specialty.

**E. Advertising.** Listing of companion events with an address or phone contact in publicity material is a courtesy to exhibitors and is done at the discretion of the host club. However, elaboration about events held in conjunction with a GRCA Specialty is considered advertising and will not be done without compensation. No advertising may be accepted which implies GRCA endorsement of any product, service, event or procedure, except as covered in the advertising guidelines printed in the *Golden Retriever News*, or which detracts from the prominence of the Specialty events.

**F. Scheduling.** It is the responsibility of the host club to set the schedule for the entire Specialty event, in accordance with the guidelines established by the Board of Directors. The host club is not required to leave periods free in the schedule to accommodate any third party. **No preference is to be given to any third party to the detriment of the Specialty and its activities.**

**G. Exclusivity.** Use of the GRCA name, GRCA logo and the title of the Specialty are exclusively the property of GRCA and may not be used by any third party without GRCA Board approval. Sponsorship of the Specialty or some aspect of it by a commercial enterprise may be permitted for a substantial financial contribution, with appropriate acknowledgment given and exclusive representation allowed. Otherwise, exclusive or preferential commercial participation in the Specialty is discouraged as not being in the best interests of the club and its exhibitors.

**H. Arrangements with GRCA.** There will necessarily be interaction between the host club and various GRCA officials and committees, such as the Sales Manager, Education Committees, and GRCA Secretary. GRCA committees are not authorized to contract for rooms, speakers, etc. without prior notification and approval by the GRCA Treasurer. Disputes concerning financial responsibility should immediately be referred to the GRCA and Specialty Treasurers for resolution.

## **SECTION 28: THREE-YEAR TIMETABLE FOR PLANNING AND EXECUTING THE NATIONAL SPECIALTY**

### **A. Three years in advance**

1. Club decides to host GRCA National, submits a bid to GRCA, and is accepted.
2. Key personnel are selected: General Chair, Treasurer, Conformation and Obedience Chairs, Field Trial Chair, WC/WCX Chair, Tracking Chair, Grounds Chair, Trophy Chair, Parade Chair, and Hospitality Chair. All committees can be set up at this time if desired: hospitality, catalog and advertising, publicity, vendors, judges' transportation and hospitality, grounds, cleanup, trophies, etc.
3. Select dates
  - a. GRCA gives host clubs a window from Sept 1 to Oct 31. Selection of a date will depend on weather in your area, availability of sites, companion events, and workers' schedules.
  - b. Begin working on a tentative schedule for the week of the National. Other local field trials and all-breed shows plus availability of field, tracking and WC/WCX grounds will determine this schedule.
  - c. Begin thinking about whether to offer any of the non-required events: Sweepstakes, Agility, Rally Obedience, Hunt Test, Certificate of Conformation Assessment, Variable Surface Tracking.
4. Set up a Ways and Means Committee to decide on ways to finance the National. If seminars or other pre-event fund raisers are to be offered, plan for these.
5. Select judges and obtain contracts.
6. Select Show site, Field Trial site, Headquarters and ancillary hotels, WC/WCX grounds, Tracking area.
- 7 Hire superintendent or show secretary. Obtain written contract with the superintendent/show secretary which defines exact duties of each party.
8. Request all or portion of loan from GRCA Treasurer.

### **B. Two years**

1. Start the process of determining what kind of trophy will be offered.
2. Begin regular National Specialty meetings. These should take place every two months or so, with all committee members present to discuss progress, form plans and just make

sure everything is progressing well.

3. Ways and Means committee decides on what actual items will be sold at the show.
4. Make final trophy decisions, sign contract, send deposit if necessary.

### **C. One year**

1. Request AKC approval of your site and judges panel. At the conclusion of the previous year's National, the AKC will send the GRCA Secretary the applications for the following year's National. The Secretary will forward a series of forms to the host club. The host club fills out all the forms for all events, and then sends them to the GRCA Secretary for translation to the applications and for signature. The GRCA secretary will mail the paperwork and any accompanying fees to AKC via overnight delivery. The tracking number for this shipment will be given to the host club.
2. Begin putting together premium list.
3. Define and secure the exact equipment needed for the grounds. Visit the show site and plan the exact layout of rings, concessions, vendor space, spectator space, parking, spaces for the photographer and veterinarian, etc. Determine the number of signs you will need and begin ordering or making them. Define the show limits. Draw a scale model of your show grounds, both for your committees and for AKC approval.
4. Secure the show veterinarian and photographer.
5. Continue committee meetings.
6. Begin filling positions for stewards, parking attendants, clean-up crew, and helpers that will only be needed for the days of the show.
7. Run first free ad in the *GR News*.
8. Contact and solicit vendors. Sign vendor contracts.
9. Arrange for hospitality at the show site. Most hospitality plans for the entire week should be in their final stages, as all this information must go in the premium list.
10. Keep in touch with superintendent/secretary.
11. Order rosettes for all events.
12. If applicable, select printer for the catalog.

### **D. 6-9 months**

1. Continue ads in *GR News*. Request trophy donations.

2. Continue grounds planning. Order tables, chairs, tents, Porta-potties, P.A. systems, etc. if this has not been done already.
3. Request list of current GRCA trophies from Trophy Curator for inclusion in the catalog.
4. Submit draft of the premium list to GRCA Specialty Advisory Committee Chair and GRCA Secretary for proofreading. Upon receipt of GRCA approval, forward to the show superintendent/secretary for printing and distribution.
5. Contact all outside personnel-veterinarian, photographer, stewards and send contracts or reminders as needed.
6. Request insurance policy from GRCA Treasurer

#### **E. 3-6 months**

1. Request mailing labels and/or a disc from the Membership Coordinator to be sent to the show secretary/superintendent.
2. Mail or e-mail the Premium list to all GRCA members. Be sure to check with your Show Secretary/Superintendent for special handling of Canadian mailings.
3. Pay attention to little details. All the big things should be under control by now. Decide what little things can be done to enhance that "Special" feeling.
4. Coordinate receipt of the GRCA perpetual trophies with GRCA Trophy Curator and with hotel.
5. Have all class/stake trophies and rosettes on hand.
6. Begin work on catalog if appropriate. All non-entry information can be organized. Ad deadline should be early enough to give time for layouts, etc.
7. Contact all judges about their arrival times and schedules.

#### **F. One month-three weeks**

1. Entries close. You can't stop it now--this thing is really going to happen! Plan Judging Schedule. The show secretary/superintendent can do this, but exhibitors will be best served by having a member of the Conformation and Obedience Committee do it in consultation with the Specialty Advisory Committee.
2. Entries close for the Parade, Field Trial, WC/WCX and Tracking at their respective secretaries. Entries must be forwarded to Show Secretary/Superintendent for inclusion in the catalog.

3. Continue committee meetings. Make sure everyone knows what they should be doing and where they should be during the Specialty week.
4. Plan for emergencies. Have "disaster" meetings. Try to anticipate all possible emergencies such as replacement of judges, non-delivery of catalogs, unexpected absence of key personnel, accidents and/or injuries to dogs or people during events. Have back-up plans. Know where emergency phones are at the show site or arrange for cell phones.

### **G. One -Two days**

1. Set up all rings, tents, audio-visual equipment, exercise pens, tables, etc. Set up host club sales/information booth. Define show limits and designate where private shade tents may be erected. GRCA Board members will set up their booth space. Have all decorations, signs, etc. ready to go up the day before the show.
2. Mark off and number vendor booth spaces. Assist vendors with set-up.
3. Pick up judges.
4. Hang GRCA banners.

**H. Specialty Week:** Do everything you can to make all events run smoothly. Enjoy yourself and bask in the kudos for a job well done. Stay loose, be flexible, and get some sleep

### **I. One week after**

1. Submission of all relevant results to AKC. The show secretary/superintendent will do this for the conformation and obedience events. A club representative needs to sign if a show secretary is used. The Field Trial and Tracking chairs should do this for their events. The WC/WCX Chair should send results to the WC/WCX Recorder and to the Triathlon Coordinator.
2. All equipment should be inventoried, repaired and returned.
3. Write thank you notes to judges and workers.

### **J. Two months after**

1. Results, photos and critiques should be sent to *GR News*.
2. Final budget report should be prepared by the National Specialty Treasurer and General

Chair. All bills should be paid and 20% of the remaining profit sent to the GRCA Treasurer. Close the National Specialty account and deposit the balance in the host club's treasury. This may take longer due to late submission of bills. Notify the GRCA Treasurer if the final report will be delayed.

3. Report on the Specialty should be prepared by the General Chair and sent to GRCA for distribution to the Board of Directors and upcoming National Specialty Chairs.

**K. Three months after**

Congratulations! You did it. Attempt to resume a normal life. Reintroduce self to family and dogs. Return to work. Take much needed vacation. Consider bidding on hosting a future National.

# **Materials on CD's Supporting Running a National Specialty (on CD)**

## **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SPECIALTIES HOST CLUB HISTORY**

### **Administration**

- 03 - Agenda 7-14-03 meeting (typical committee meeting agenda)
- 03 - Book of details - national schedule (spreadsheet of detailed daily plans for event)
- 03 - Comm Reports for March 10, 2003 (committee reports from national meeting – 6 mos prior)
- 03 - Comm\_JudgesRoomAssignments (room assignments for judges and committee – hotels)
- 03 - Committee Mailing List 4-03 (sample mailing list of committee chairs, etc.)
- 03 - CommitteePhoneList(1.24.01) (sample phone and e-mail list fro committee chairs)
- 03 – CommitteeWorkerClothing (listing of shirts for committee and workers)
- 03 - Comp Meals by Worker listing 6-03 (listing of free meals for workers, committee thru event)
- 03 - Entry Summary (Natls 93 thru 00) (spreadsheet of entries – all classes – 1993 – 2000)
- GRCA National Event Application Questionnaires (New form to fill out for event applications)
- List of Host Clubs (National & Regional) (list of host clubs 1975 to 2008)
- National Schedule examples (spreadsheet with example timelines for national)
- Two-year Timeline for committees (two year timeline for planning events – all committees)

### **Agility**

- 03 - ESTIMATEDAGILITYSCHEDULE2003 (two year timeline for running agility event)
- 03 - GRCA ConfirmationLetter (letter sent to competitors about agility trial)
- 03 – HIGHINTRIALPROCEDURES (procedures used for determining high in trial)
- 03 - Minutes-NATLAGILITYMEETING9-3-02 (example meeting minutes for agility committee)

### **Catalog**

- 03 - AGILITYTRIALCatalogfirst2 (change from premium list to catalog for agility)
- 03 - Catalog Cover (example of catalog cover artwork)
- 03 - Catalog spine (example of catalog spine artwork)
- 03 - Chair's welcome note (example Chair's welcome note)
- 03 - FIELD TRIAL catalog cover page (field trial first three pages for catalog)
- 03 - GRCA Agility entries for catalog (typical agility entry format)
- 03 - GRCA Agility schedule for catalog (typical agility judging schedule)
- 03 - INDEX TO WC & WCX EXHIBITORS (WC/X exhibitor index for catalog)
- 03 – IndextoFieldTrial (field trial exhibitor index)
- 03 - JUDGING PROGRAM SW-B-OB-JrH (judging schedule for breed – obedience-sweeps-junior handler)
- 03 – ListofTDEntries (entry format for TD)
- 03 – ListofTDXEntries (entry format for TDX)
- 03 - NATIONALFIELD entries (entry format for field trial)
- 03 - NationalResults2 - for marked catalog (results for breed-sweepstakes for marked catalogs)
- 03 - OWNERLIST agility (catalog list of agility exhibitors)
- 03 - Special Thanks to Sponsors (catalog section thanking sponsors)
- 03 - TD & TDX catalog cover page(TD-TDX cover pages before entrants)
- 03 - Trophy Donation List (catalog list of donors for trophies)

03 - Updated.Hunt.Test.Catalog.For.Onofrio final A (entire hunt test section of catalog)  
03 - WC & WCX catalog cover page (WC/WCX cover pages for catalog)  
03 - WC catalog (entrant listing for WC/WCX)  
2003 GRCA National Parade of Rescue Participants (Listing of rescue parade participants)  
2003 parade of titleholders\_9pt (catalog section for parade of titleholders)  
Letter to gov-mayors for catalog (letter to governor for catalog letter of welcome)  
WCX catalog (entrant listing for WCX)

### **Confo-Sweeps**

03 - BUTLER RELEASE LETTER (letter from all-breed club releasing goldens for national)  
03 – ConformationJudgesTravelLetters (letter confirming judging and setting up travel/accommodations)  
CCAProgramOutline  
GRCA Sweepstakes Guidelines

### **Education Seminars**

2003 Nat Events prem list real final version (catalog pages on education seminars)

### **Field Trial**

03 – FieldTrialJudgesTravelLetters (letter to judges confirming role and travel/accommodations)

### **GR News**

NSChecklist for GR News submission (checklist for submitting materials to GR News - post specialty)

### **GRCA Reports**

03 - 2000 Annual Report to GRCA (annual report to GRCA on progress on national – 3 yr prior)  
03 - 2001 Annual Report to GRCA (annual report to GRCA on progress on national – 2 yr prior)  
03 - 2002 Annual Report to GRCA (annual report to GRCA on progress on national – 1 yr prior)

### **Grounds**

03 - grounds visit 4-23-03 (committee report – visit hotels and show site)  
03 – RVPARKINGRESERVATIONFORM (RV parking application form)  
03 - Signs needed spreadsheet in word (spreadsheet with matrix of signs and locations needed)  
07 - EGRC Contract (example contract for grounds with other aspects)  
07 - Event Space Rental Agreement[1].GoldenClub (contract for use of facilities)  
07 - Golden Retriever Club of America 9-17-07 (hotel contract – host hotel)  
07 - Golden Retriever National (lease guidelines for facilities)  
07 - Golden Retriever Space Rental Bid[3] (proposal from site for show)

### **Handout Catalogs**

- 03 – NatFieldHandout (handout catalog for distribution at field trial)
- 03 - WC-WCX Handout (handout catalog for distribution at WC-WCX trial)

### **Hospitality**

- 03 - Cover page for Honors parade handout (cover page for parade of titleholder handout)
- 03 - HospitalitySpreadsheet(4.9.01) (spreadsheet of hospitality activities during national)
- 03 - Tickets for banquets (example tickets for awards banquet)
- 2003 GRCA NS Hospitality Booklet (handout hospitality booklet for participants)

### **Judges**

- 03 - Judges information form (form used to collect info on judges and needs)
- 03 - letter to request bio's (letter to request bio information for catalog)
- 03 - Letters - contracts and correspondence to judges (letter to ask judge, confirm acceptance and contract)
- 03 - National Judges Confirmed List (spreadsheet with judges list and confirmations)
- National Judges Questionnaire and selection criterion (GRCA format for selecting judges)
- Past National Judges (judges for all events for 1983 to 2007)

### **Merchandising**

- 03 - SALES TOTALS BY DAY (spreadsheet with sales by item –color-size-style for each day of national)
- 03 – WAYSANDMEANSFINALREPORT (report of merchandise chair)

### **Parade of Titleholders**

- 03 - HONOR'S PARADE FORM (form sent to parade of titleholders entrants – info for event)

### **Post-Show Report to GRCA**

- 03 - Report of the 2003 GRCA National Chairman (final report to GRCA with committee reports)
- 04 - GRCA National 2004 report (final report with finance report)
- 04 - GRCA National 2004 report finances (final report finances)
- 04 - GRCANationalSpecialty2004 (final report of chair with committee reports)
- 05 - agility report (final report of agility chair)
- 05 - Field reports (final report of field chair)
- 05 - Fundraising and Raffles Final Report 12-31-05 (final report of fundraising and raffles chair)
- 05 - General Chair1 (final report of general chair)
- 05 - LIAISON REPORT FOR THE 2005 GRCA NATIONAL (final report of GRCA liaison)
- 05 - Merchandise report 2005 (final report of merchandise chair)
- 05 - Merchandise, pg 1[1]. (final report on merchandising)
- 05 - National Ad Report (final report of advertising chair)
- 05 - obedience report (final report obedience chair)
- 05 - Super liaison report (final report of superintendent liaison)
- 05 - sweeps report (final report of sweepstakes chair)
- 05 - Trackingfinalreport2005 (final report of tracking chair)

05 – WCWCXLessonsLearned (final report of WC/X chair)  
2005 GRCA National Report-Sue (final report of chair with committee comments)  
2005 NATIONAL TROPHY REPORT (final report of trophy chair)  
2005 National Master Plan (master plan for running national)

### **Premium List**

03 - AGILITY TRIAL PREMIUM LIST for national (agility section premium list)  
03 - FIELD TRIAL PREMIUM LIST for national (field trial section premium list)  
03 - Hunt Test Premium List for national (hunt test section premium list)  
03 - INFO NEEDED FOR PREMIUM LISTS (general questions to help organize premium lists)  
03 - Main Premium List (main show – confo-obedience-sweeps-jr handler premium list)  
03 - RSVP page (RSVP for premium list)  
03 - TD-TDX PREMIUM LIST for national (Tracking section premium list)  
03 - WC-WCX PREMIUM LIST for national (WC/WCX section premium list)  
05 - CCAprem1 (premium list section for CCA)  
05 - Entry[1].Form.FT (field trial entry form)  
05 - Entry[1].Form.HT (hunt test entry form)  
05 - NatlAgilityPrem1 (agility section premium list)  
05 - NatlFTPrem1 (field trial section premium list)  
05 - NatlHTPrem1 (hunt test section premium list)  
05 - NatlMasterPrem1 (main section – confo-obed-sweeps-jr handler – premium list)  
05 - NatlRSVP1 (RSVP section premium list)  
05 - NatlTDPrem1 (tracking section premium list)  
05 - NatlWCWCXPrem1 (WC/WCX section premium list)  
07 - GoldenNatl2007Premium list 1 (premium list example)  
CHIC DNA Bank App & Survey Natl Spec Clinics-1 (DNA testing application and info)  
CHIC DNA Repository Clinic Guidelines (DNA repository guidelines)

### **Publicity**

03 - CVGRCJan2002Publicity report (committee report on publicity)  
03 - flyer for at 2002 national (flyer for prior year catalog)  
03 - Golden leaves ad (ad for national)  
03 - GRCAREGIONALSANDNATIONALS2002 (list of regionals and nationals for advertising)  
03 - local flyer final copy (flyer for local publicity)  
03 - national\_ad (ad for national)  
03 - Publicity Committee Deadlines - as of 10-01 (outline of deadlines for publicity)

### **Raffles**

03 - website RAFFLE TICKET ORDER FORM (raffle ticket order form)

### **Site Decoration**

03 - Banners list (banners to be used at national sites)  
03 - GRCA Flags list (list of flags from GRCA)  
03 - Site Decoration Committee Outline (planning for site decoration – all sites)

2003GRCANational (committee report – planning stage)

### **Sites**

- 03 - AGREEMENT for Stanton Park (contract) (site contract for national)
- 03 - General Letter to Site managers (letter to managers at each site during national)
- 03 - Site Comparison Form (form used to evaluate potential national sites)

### **Tracking**

- 03 - CVGRC-2003-Lorainmetropark (letter to request site reservation for tracking)
- 03 - exhibitor-GRCA03 (letter to tracking entrants)
- 03 - Jan-Feb2004 edited (letter on chairing national tracking test)
- 03 – Landownerletter (letter of thanks to landowners of tracking test sites)
- 03 - Q&Atrackingtests (Q & A for tracking tests)
- 03 - Tracking Janoch sample (tracking catalog section) (sample tracking catalog)
- 03 - Worker'sletter (letter to volunteers for tracking test)

### **Treasurer**

- 03 - CheckRequest Form revised 3-03 (check request form used for reimbursement)
- 03 - Loan letter to GRCA 1-'00 (letter requesting GRCA loan for national)
- 2003NtlBudgetsII- near final (2003 final accounting for all categories)
- 2003NtlSpecialtyFinancialReport (2003 financial report spreadsheet)
- 2006 GRCA National Specialty Treasurers Report (treasurer's report)
- 2006 National Stmt of Ops 2-5-07 (financial statement)
- National Financial Summaries-Plusk (comparison of finances – 2003 to 2006)

### **Trophy**

- 03 - List of possible trophy winners (list of all possible ribbons and trophies at national)
- 03 – NATIONALRIBBONS (spreadsheet on ribbons for all events)
- 03 - Rosette Descriptions (spreadsheet on order of ribbons)
- 03 - Rosette Order (Parade) (rosette order for parade of titleholders)
- 03 – TrophyOrderList (trophy order list for national)
- 03 - Wendell August Awards Revised (listing of awards being ordered)
- TROPHY Regulations Page (GRCA trophy regulations)

### **Vendors**

- 03 - ATTENTION VENDORS (ad distributed to vendors for national booth space)
- 03 - PAGE 1 NATIONAL VENDOR APPLICATION 2003 (vendor application page 1)
- 03 - PAGE 2 2003 VENDOR APPICATION (vendor application page 2)

### **Veterinarians**

- 03 - Final Note before Events (final letter to vets volunteering for national)

## **Website**

- 03 - HEART AND EYE CLINIC FORM (application form for heart and eye clinic)
- 03 - PARADE OF RESCUE GOLDENS FORM (parade of rescue application form)
- 03 - PARADE OF TITLEHOLDER'S FORM (parade of titleholders application form)
- 03 - RESERVED GROOMING SPACE FORM (grooming space reservation form)
- 03 - Website Layout description (notes on website layout for national website)