TOP 20 EVENT PROCEDURES AND RULES

Approved by the Board on September 23, 2026

STANDING RULES PERTAINING TO TOP 20

05-06B **Amended 2/29/20 to read:** Continue Top 20 competition at the National and make it part of the Show Committee instead of a Standing Committee, and make the event optional, effective with the 2011 National.

11-06B **Amended 07/30/26 to read:** The Top Twenty Chair shall be responsible for compiling the list of invitees for the Top Twenty Competition. The list of invitees will include the Top 20 Schipperkes (dogs and bitches combined) based upon the AKC all breed point system, as well as the Top 20 Schipperkes (dogs and bitches combined) based upon the AKC breed point system (January 1st through December 31st), and the Top 20 National Owner Handled Series Schipperkes (Based on AKC point system and current qualifying period). This list will not include previous Top 20 winners or non-Champions but will include all dogs/bitches tied within the 20. The Top Twenty Chair will purchase the reports directly from AKC and the expense will be credited to the Top Twenty event.

11-10B That sweepstakes, futurity, maturity and Top 20 event judges at a National Specialty shall not exhibit at any of the Regional Specialties held in conjunction with the National Specialty, nor in any classes at the National Specialty, ~~including the Top 20~~. Sweepstakes judges at Regional Specialties may show at other Regional Specialties and the National Specialty that follow the event at which they judged. **Amended 4/4/2017 to strike out "including the Top 20".**

11-11B **Amended 11/14/22 to read:** SCA Sweepstakes, Futurity/Maturity and Top 20 judges will be paid $100.00 each, no expenses. They will be given a ticket to the annual awards banquet and will be able to attend our JEC seminar at no cost.

23-07B authorize a $500 advance to Top 20 chair

24-01B that we adjust the verbiage for the guidelines in the Top 20 to an AKC licensed judge, preference given for someone licensed to judge Schipperkes, if available, or to someone who has expressed an interest in judging the breed

24-02B to change the Top 20 guidelines to remove the rules and score sheet from the catalog, as well as having only a single page in the catalog for each dog

24-03B to add the Top Fast CAT Schipperke and Top NOHS Schipperke to the Top 20 invitees

24-04B the SCA provide the ribbon for the Top Junior at the SCA Top 20

24-05B to change the Top 20 guidelines to include two Awards of Merit

26-15B **to rescind 24-11B which states** "The top 20 event judges at a national specialty shall not exhibit at any of the regional specialties or classes held in conjunction with the national specialty, nor in any classes at the national specialty held prior to the top 20 event. They may, however, exhibit in National Specialty classes held after the Top 20 event is over."

26-32B to accept the changes to the Catalog section of the Top 20 procedures due to the Top 20 catalog going digital in 2026. With this change, #4 under "The Top 20 Catalogs Should Also Include:", will be moved to "Event Guidlelines", and become #19.

PROCEDURES

This event provides special recognition to those Schipperkes with the most outstanding records in the conformation ring during the previous calendar year, together with their breeders, handlers, and owners.

The event offers all who attend a chance to view, in one location, one at a time, the very best Schipperkes in the country, based upon their competitive standings for the previous year.

Using the scale of points, as approved by the SCA Board, each dog is evaluated according to how closely it conforms to the breed standard. This procedure is not available at any AKC show and allows the spectators an opportunity to evaluate the dogs, scoring them at the same time they are being judged.

The Top 20 Chair shall turn over all files created for the event they chaired to the new Top 20 Chair within 30 days of their approval by the Board.

ELIGIBILITY AND INVITATIONS – MANDATORY

1. The Top Twenty Chair shall be responsible for compiling the list of invitees for the Top Twenty Competition. The list of invitees will include the Top 20 Schipperkes (dogs and bitches combined) based upon the AKC all breed point system, as well as the Top 20 Schipperkes (dogs and bitches combined) based upon the AKC breed point system (January 1st through December 31st), and the Top 20 National Owner Handled Series Schipperkes (Based on AKC point system and current qualifying period). This list will not include previous Top 20 winners or non-Champions but will include all dogs/bitches tied within the 20. The Top Twenty Chair will purchase the reports directly from AKC and the expense will be credited to the Top Twenty event.
2. **There will be two Awards of Merit given.**
3. To compete in this event, all owners, co-owners, and handlers must be in good standing with the AKC at the time the invitations are extended, and at the time of the event. Membership in Schipperke Club of America is not required.
4. Spayed bitches or neutered dogs that have been named among the final Top 20 Schipperkes may compete in this event.
5. Previous winners of the Top 20 Event are not eligible to compete in the current year's Top 20. Each year, previous Top 20 winners will be invited to exhibit in the Showcase of Previous Winners (with their music) either just before actual judging, or just before the winner is announced.
6. In addition, the Top Obedience Dog, the Top Rally Dog, the Top Agility Dog, Top FastCAT, Top NOHS Schipperke and the Top Junior Handler will be invited for Exhibition Only. Invitations for Top Obedience Dog, the Top Rally Dog, Top Agility Dog, Top Fast CAT, Top NOHS Schipperke and the Top Junior Handler shall be determined by the AKC rankings. No entry fee will be charged.
7. A ribbon will be provided for the Top Junior Handler.
8. The dogs currently eligible to compete, and the previous winners of the Top 20 Event must all be invited to participate in the event by formal written invitation.

9. In order to eliminate any possible conflict of interest, no dog that is owned, co-owned, or shown by an active, voting member of the Top 20 committee, or a member of their family as defined by AKC rules may compete at the Top 20 event. The dog, if qualified may be listed in the event catalog and shown for exhibition only. No entry fee will be charged and they may run a small photo in the catalog at no charge.
10. All handlers will attend a brief meeting held prior to the event for the purposes of assigning armband numbers and reviewing the staging of the event.
11. All participants agree to abide by any and all rules as may become effective through authorization of the Top 20 Committee and/or the SCA Officers and Board of Directors as concerns the conduct of finalists participating in the event. Failure to do so may revoke the privileges of invitation in the future, regardless of eligibility.
12. All qualifiers will be listed on the SCA National website before invitations are sent out.
13. The Score Sheet on page 8 *must* be used by judges.
14. The winners will be announced at the Top 20 Event.

JUDGES/SELECTION OF JUDGES – MANDATORY

1. There will be three (3) judges of the Top 20 Event. There will be one judge from each of the following three categories.
    a. Breeder Judge
    An established Schipperke breeder who has been breeding for at least ten years, having produced at least five (5) Champions of Record as published in the AKC Awards; or is approved by the AKC to judge Schipperkes. The breeder judge must not own, co-own or be the breeder of record of any dog in the Top 20 competition nor its sire or dam. The breeder judge may exhibit Schipperkes in all classes (including intersex) at the SCA National Specialty Show, and any associated all breed shows, or Schipperke Specialty shows held before or after judging the Top 20.
    b. AKC Judge
    An AKC judge, preference given for someone approved to judge Schipperkes, if available, or to someone who has expressed an interest in judging the breed if an AKC judge approved for Schipperkes cannot be hired.
    c. Handler Judge
    A professional handler, either active or retired, who meets the requirements for membership in a Professional Handlers' Association (though not necessarily a member). The Handler Judge must have at least five (5) years' experience. The Handler Judge must not have shown a Schipperke for an owner of a dog in the Top 20 competition for two (2) years preceding the event. In addition, the Handler Judge may not handle any dog owned or co-owned by an owner of a Top 20 entrant, at the SCA National Specialty Show or at any associated Schipperke Specialty Shows
2. Excluded from judging the event will be the following:
    a. Any person actively serving on the Top 20 Committee
    b. Any person that has judged an SCA Top 20 event in any of the three judging categories for the previous 5 years.

c. Any person who owns, co-owns, is the breeder of record of any dog entered in the Top 20 competition or its sire or dam.

3. The Top 20 committee will select the judges in each of the three judging categories. Excluded from the process of selecting the judges will be any committee member who has any interest in a dog eligible to compete. Committee members will disqualify themselves if this circumstance exists or may be disqualified by the Chairman. A committee member who has an interest in a dog eligible to compete may participate in the selection process if the dog in question is excluded from competition.

4. It shall be a condition of acceptance by all selected judges that they maintain strict secrecy regarding their invitation/assignment and participation in the event until after the event has occurred. The Top 20 Committee shall have the right in its sole discretion to replace a judge who it determines has failed to adhere to the agreement.

EVENT GUIDELINES

A ballroom in which to hold the event is required. The recommended minimum room's size is 65 feet by 75 feet. Ideally, the ballroom should be large enough to comfortably accommodate the show ring and seating for up to 100 spectators, including a clear aisle for safety.

1. A show ring is required. The recommended minimum ring size is 40 feet by 50 feet.
2. Reserved seating for spectators, either chairs or tables with chairs. If possible, there should be seating reserved for the Top 20 Event participants.
3. A total of three judges (one breeder judge, one AKC Approved judge, and one handler judge).
4. Each judge will be paid $100.00 and be invited to attend the annual awards banquet (if one is held) at club expense and will be able to attend our JEC seminar at no cost.
5. A total of three ring stewards, one to be designated chief ring steward.
6. Three judges' tables with chairs at each table.
7. Three exhibit examination tables.
8. One table and chair for the announcer.
9. A microphone and sound system. A DJ to orchestrate the music for each exhibit.
10. An area to display the Top 20 Event Trophy and rosette ribbons.
11. Rosettes (or suitable awards) for each participant and any former winners of the Top 20 Event who are in attendance, and rosettes for the winner of the current year's Top 20, as well as the (2) AOM's.
12. Formal invitations to be sent to each of the current year's finalists and the winners of the previous Top 20 Events.
13. Times of all Top 20 Events shall be posted in the Judging Program and on the SCA National website.
14. A videographer, if possible. The Top 20 Event Committee should work with the SCA National Specialty Show Chairperson to arrange for the videotaping.
15. A photographer.
16. Top 20 Event Digital Catalogs

17. Top 20 Event exhibitor armbands.
18. A high-quality item to serve as a trophy for the winner of the Top 20 Event.
19. The Top 20 catalog should NOT include the rules and the score sheet.

TOP 20 EVENT FUNDING

The Top 20 Event Committee is responsible for fund raising to help financially support the Top 20 Event. Fund raising may be done at any time during the year prior to the SCA National Specialty show, as well as during the Top 20 Event. The SCA board will advance funds (up to $500.00) annually.

AUCTIONS/RAFFLES

1. Fund raising can include the auctioning or raffling of high-quality items only.
2. A 50/50 raffle to benefit from the Top 20 Event may be held during the SCA National Specialty Show on the day the Top 20 is held.
3. The Top 20 Committee is responsible for the selection of auction and/or auction items. The SCA Officers and Board of Directors have final approval of all fund-raising activities conducted.

ENTRY FEES

1. The amount of the Top 20 Event entry fee shall be reviewed each year for adequacy by the Top 20 Event Committee. The SCA Officers and Board of Directors members must approve any change in entry fee recommended by the Top 20 Event Committee.
2. Top 20 entry fees must be paid by the Top 20 entrants when responding to the formal invitation sent to them by the Top 20 Committee.
3. Payment of entry fees entitles the Top 20 entrant to receive one rosette, a two-page spread in the Top 20 Catalog, and one ticket for the event.

CATALOG ADVERTISING

1. Catalog advertising is limited to invitees to the Top 20 Event and to businesses.
2. The cost of advertising in the Top 20 Catalog shall be reviewed by the Top 20 committee annually. The SCA Officers and Board of Directors members must approve any change in catalog advertising fees recommended by the Top 20 Event Committee.
3. The cost of an advertisement for a business in the Top 20 catalog should be no less than $30.00 per page and adjusted to ensure covering expenses and showing some profit.
4. Invited dogs that do not enter may also advertise in the catalog and receive their rosette, for a fee to be determined.

CATALOGS

1. Each Top 20 entrant will be provided with a one-page advertisement. The advertisement shall include a photograph of the dog and a four-generation pedigree of the dog. *Invited dogs that do not enter may also advertise in the catalog for a fee to be determined by the chair.*
2. All Top 20 previous winners will be featured in a brief section in the front of the catalog.
3. Every effort should be made to ensure that the armband number for each Top 20 entrant corresponds to the page number for the entrant's listing in the Top 20 catalog.

THE TOP 20 CATALOGS SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE:

1. A photograph and brief bio of each of the three judges.
2. A list of the Top 20 finalists, whether entered or not.
3. Advertisements placed by businesses for inclusion in the Top 20 Catalog.

TROPHIES, ROSETTES AND CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY

1. Entrants in attendance will receive a rosette.
2. Invitees are afforded the privilege of responding "no" to the invitation if they are unable or do not plan to attend and still obtain their rosette by ordering it in advance from a designated Top 20 committee member. Fee for this, plus mailing cost, will be determined annually.
3. Co-owners and breeders of finalists may purchase additional rosettes by ordering from a designated committee member. Advance order is required. The total number of additional rosettes ordered may not exceed the number of listed breeders and co-owners of the dog. Fees for this will be determined annually.

PRE-EVENT

All finalists and/or designated agents are required to attend a pre-event meeting to be held on the day of the Top 20 Competition in order to receive the evening's procedural instruction, draw for a Group order number and issued an individual armband number. Numbers for preliminary judging will be drawn at random from a "hat" by ranking of dog. This is the way the dogs will then be judged with accommodations to handlers exhibiting more than one entrant. In the evening for the main event, dogs will be exhibited by ranking matching the catalog.

Groups will begin with one (1) and comprised of a maximum of three (3) dogs in each Group. The number of Groups will be dependent on the total number of participants.

EVENT SCHEDULING

The Top 20 will be held prior to intersex competition of the SCA national Specialty Show.

MUSIC CHOICE - OPTIONAL

1. Each entrant will have the opportunity to exhibit their dog, accompanied by their choice of music.
2. Music selection will be first come, first served, based on date entry is received by the event chair.

JUDGING PROCEDURE SUGGESTIONS

(Judging procedure may vary according to the procedure used, but in any case, each dog will be judged individually by each judge)

1. Each dog will be judged individually. The first dog will enter the ring and go around, then pose for "First Impression." The dog will then be moved down and back, and in a circle while all three judges watch, and the judges will score the dog for movement. The dog will then be examined and scored individually by the three judges, each judge examining the dog on the table as he/she sees fit. The dog will then circle the ring and exit. This process will be repeated until all dogs have been scored.
2. All dogs will be scored by each judge using the scale of points as provided by the Top 20 committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

3. Immediately following the judging of each dog, each judge will fold the score sheet and hand it to his steward, who will then turn it over to the 2 independent and impartial tellers to be tabulated. The scores for each dog, from each of the three judges, are added together by the tellers. The total is the dog's score.
4. The winner will be determined on the basis of the total score of each dog
5. In the event of a tie, the winner is determined by consulting the First Impression total. The dog with the highest First Impression total is declared the winner. If there is still a tied score, there will be two winners who shall share the title of Top 20 winner.
6. If the committee chooses to award a "People's Choice" Award, the ballots will be collected in a box prior to announcement of the judge's choice winner. These ballots will be tabulated by the same tellers tabulating the judges' sheets.

This committee chair receives a $500.00 advance as part of their doing business. The advance must be requested of the Treasurer; it is not automatically sent.

EXPENSES - MANDATORY

The Chairperson may request reimbursement for postage, copies, and other related expenses by submitting **ORIGINAL RECEIPTS** to the Treasurer within forty-five (45) days of incurring the cost, using the official SCA Expense Form (available on the Members Only section of the SCA website). Failure to do so may result in denial of reimbursement.

All expenses of **$100.00 or more** related to this position must be approved by the SCA Treasurer **before** being incurred. If expenses are incurred without prior Board approval, reimbursement cannot be guaranteed.

This Show Chairperson receives an advance as part of their doing business. The advance shall be returned to the Treasurer along with any unreported receipts within 30 days after the National.

***** These rules may not be changed without the approval of the Schipperke Club of America Board. *****

SCHIPPERKE CLUB OF AMERICA

TOP TWENTY
SCORE SHEET

DOG NO. _____ _____ FIRST IMPRESSION (1–10) _____

SCALE OF POINTS

For Evaluation of Individual Specimen On The Basis of the Standard

CATEGORY	MAXIMUM POINTS	POINTS AWARDED
1. Silhouette	15	_____
2. Balance, Proportion, Substance	10	_____
3. Head & Expression	10	_____
4. Neck, Topline, Body (Square)	10	_____
5. Forequarters	5	_____
6. Hindquarters	5	_____
7. Feet	5	_____
8. Coat Pattern	10	_____
9. Coat Condition	5	_____
10. Side Gait	10	_____
11. Down & Back Gait	10	_____
12. Temperament	5	_____
TOTAL	**100**	_____

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