



Alaskan Malamute Club of America Top Twenty Qualifying Rules

Board Approved and Effective: June 2, 2023

INTRODUCTION: This event offers all that attend a chance to view the “cream of the crop.” Each entrant is evaluated individually in his/her relationship to the breed standard, using a scale of points. This procedure is not available at any AKC point show and allows each person in the audience to judge the entrants, using a score sheet at the same time the judges are scoring them.

The entrants are observed from a positive approach; they are not fault judged. The event promotes discussion of the standard, where ideas and views are exchanged. This event will be held at the National Specialty.

- I. **STATISTICS AND ELIGIBILITY:** The 20 Alaskan Malamutes eligible for the Top 20 Event are based on the following:
 - A. Top 20 Points are earned at any AKC All Breed Show, Limited Breed Show, Concurrent Specialty or any Independent Specialty Show where AKC points are awarded. The term “dog” herein shall refer to either dogs or bitches with no preference given. One point is awarded for each Alaskan Malamute defeated by going Best of Breed or Best of Opposite Sex to the Best of Breed. Tabulation of points will be compiled from the results published by AKC for the period commencing May 1 and continuing thru April 30th of the following year. Corrections published by AKC after April 30th will not be considered.
 - B. Standings will be compiled bimonthly and a list of the Top 20 dogs will be announced in the AMCA Newsletter. Each primary owner of record, who has a dog in the Top 20, will receive e-mail notification of the bimonthly report, provided the Top 20 committee has an e-mail address on file for the primary owner. The primary owner may designate someone else to receive the standings by notifying the committee’s statistician. Any discrepancies in the final standings must be reported to the Top 20 Statistician before May 31st. All past winners who qualify for the current Top 20 are eligible to compete.
 - C. A dog is ineligible to compete in the Top 20 Event if ANY owner(s) of record is judging a conformation event (includes Sweepstakes and Futurity/Maturity) during the National Specialty week which is held after the Top 20 Event.
 - D. A dog is ineligible to compete in the Top 20 Event if any owner(s) of record is suspended from AMCA or AKC (1) as of April 30th, the end of the qualifying year and/or (2) as of the date of the Top 20 Event. Refunds of entry fees will not be made if ANY owner of record is suspended after the entry fee has been paid.
- II. **TROPHIES AND ROSETTES**

Each dog entered in the Top 20 Event will receive a rosette, being a minimum of two (2) feet in length. Each rosette shall have the entrant’s name, the date and place of the event and the name “AMCA Top 20 Event” imprinted. The AMCA Logo will be imprinted on the rosette button. The rosette may be any color other than that of Best of Breed, Best of Opposite Sex or Winners Dog/Bitch. Any qualifying Top 20 owner of record who enters the Top 20 Event shall have the right to order additional rosettes at a cost to be determined annually by the Top 20 committee. A separate trophy, to be determined by the Top 20 Committee, will be presented to the winner. An additional trophy will be presented to the breeder(s) of the Top 20 winner. If the Top 20 winner has multiple owners or breeders, additional trophies may be ordered at cost, paid for by the co-owners or co-breeders.
- III. **INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE AND ENTRY FEES**
 - A. A formal invitation to participate in the Top 20 event will be mailed to the primary owner, which is the first-listed owner on the official AKC registration papers of each Top 20 dog, based on the final standings. Included with the invitation will be instructions for entering and stated deadlines for acceptance of entry as well as a copy of the Procedural Rules for that year’s Top 20 Event.
 - B. In order to provide consistency of information for inclusion in the catalog a “Catalog Information Form” will be provided which must be completed in its entirety and returned by stated deadline for acceptance of entry. Submission of any dog information other than on the provided Catalog Information Form will not be accepted.
 - C. The entry fee for dogs in which at least one owner of record is an AMCA member in good standing shall not exceed \$175.00 per dog. The entry fee for dogs whose owner(s) are not AMCA members is not to exceed \$250.00 per dog. To be eligible for the member-discounted rate, at least one owner of record must be an AMCA member as of April 30, the last date of the qualifying period.
- IV. **EVENT JUDGES**
 - A. **JUDGING CATEGORIES:** A panel of five (5) Judges will represent different categories as follows:
 - Three (3) Breeder Judges
 - One (1) AKC Licensed Judge
 - One (1) Handler Judge
 - B. **JUDGING RESTRICTIONS:** To protect the integrity of the competition, a listing of Judging Restrictions has been established which apply to ALL JUDGES being considered for an assignment.
 1. Cannot judge an AMCA Top Twenty Event within a period of SEVEN YEARS; judges may become eligible in the 8th year following their previous assignment. Cannot have any connection to any dog/bitch in the Top 20 Final Standings for the year this event is being held. These connections are identified as:
 - a. Cannot own or co-own any dog/bitch eligible for entry in the competition.
 - b. Cannot own or co-own the sire or dam of any dog/bitch.

- c. Cannot have bred or co-bred a bitch to any dog eligible for entry in the competition.
- d. Cannot have bred or co-bred a dog to any bitch eligible for entry in the competition.
- e. Cannot own or co-own any puppies produced by a dog/bitch eligible for entry in the competition.
- f. Cannot share National week accommodations with the breeder, owner, co-owner or handler of any dog/bitch eligible for entry in the competition.
- g. Cannot co-own any dogs with any owner or co-owner of a Top 20-qualified dog/bitch.

C. JUDGING CATEGORY QUALIFICATIONS & RESTRICTIONS

BREEDER: The panel shall include three (3) Breeder judges who are AMCA members in good standing, as of the day before the electronic polling system is sent to eligible recipients, that have expressed an interest in judging this competition and meets the following stated qualification criteria.

Qualification Criteria

1. Be an established Alaskan Malamute breeder for a minimum period of five (5) years.
2. Members that reside in the United States must have produced at least five (5) Alaskan Malamute AKC conformation champions.
3. Members that reside in Canada or At Large must have produced at least five (5) Alaskan Malamute conformation champions in their country of domicile.
4. Must return a completed and signed "Breeder Judges Contract" acknowledging that he/she meets the requisite criteria stated in the Top 20 Rules.
5. Must be in good standing with AMCA and the AKC as of the date of the Top 20 Event.

Restrictions

1. Two or more AMCA members of the same household may be nominated; however, the first name selected and approved from the member household shall result in the disqualification of the other member(s) from the same household.
2. Only one Canadian or At-Large member will be allowed per judging panel.

AKC: One (1) AKC judge who is approved to judge Alaskan Malamutes that has expressed an interest in judging this competition, and meets the following stated qualification criteria.

Qualification Criteria

1. Must be approved to judge at least four (4) other breeds as set forth in the AKC Judge's Directory.
2. Preferably reside within a 200-300 mile radius of the National show venue. AKC licensed judges for Alaskan Malamutes who are AMCA members do not need to meet the suggested mileage radius to the event.
3. Must give his/her consent to judge at the event, prior to being placed in the random draw.
4. Must return a completed and signed "AKC Judge's Contract" acknowledging that he/she meets the requisite criteria stated in the Top 20 Rules.

Restrictions

1. No AKC Permitted (Provisional) judges shall be eligible to judge this event.
2. Conformation judges who are under contract for future AMCA National Specialties and associated Regional Specialties shall not be eligible to judge any Top Twenty Event prior to and including the year of their assignment. Past National and associated Regional Specialty conformation judges shall not be eligible to judge any Top Twenty Event for a period of seven (7) years after their assignment.
3. AMCA members who qualify as both a Breeder Judge and an AKC Judge may only submit one contract per year. If multiple contracts are received, the contract received first will be deemed to be the judge's preference.

HANDLER: One (1) Professional (past/retired or present) that has expressed an interest in judging this competition and meets the following stated qualification criteria:

Qualification Criteria

1. Meets the criteria for membership in the Professional Handlers Association (PHA) or AKC's Registered Handler Program though not necessarily a member.
2. Must have a minimum of five (5) years handling experience.
3. In the event a Handler Judge is not obtainable, an additional AKC non breeder licensed judge or AMCA Canadian/At-Large member that is a qualified licensed judge for Alaskan Malamutes in their country of domicile may be used as an alternate.
4. Only one Canadian or At-Large member will be allowed per judging panel.
5. Must return a completed and signed "Handler Judges Contract" acknowledging that he/she meets the requisite criteria stated in the Top 20 Rules. This also applies to any alternate judge for this category.

Restrictions

1. Must not have handled any dog eligible for entry in the competition.
2. Must not have handled in the past 5 years any dog/bitch owned or co-owned by anyone who has a dog/bitch eligible for entry in the competition.
3. Breeders of Alaskan Malamutes who qualify as both a Breeder Judge and AKC judge may only submit for Breeder Judge

V. PREPARATION FOR JUDGE SELECTION

In order to provide the participants with a listing of qualified judges in each category for the polling of judges, the Top Twenty Committee Chair will send an email inquiry to all AKC Judges and Handler Judges that meet the qualification criteria stated above for their specific category. This inquiry will provide the pertinent information concerning date; time and place of event and copy of the AMCA Top 20 Rules. Judges and Handlers that return a favorable response by the established deadline will be provided with an electronic version of their appropriate category "Judging Contract" which must be completed and returned by the established deadline. The contract will clearly state all qualifications and restrictions that apply to their judging category.

An announcement will be made to AMCA members soliciting names of AMCA Breeders who meet the qualification criteria for the BREEDER category. In addition, solicitation of possible AMCA Canadian or At-Large members that qualify as an ALTERNATE HANDLER JUDGE will also be made. Members that return a favorable response by the established deadline will be provided with an electronic version of the "Breeder's Contract" which must be completed and returned by the established deadline. The contract will clearly state all qualifications and restrictions that apply to the judging category.

VI. JUDGE SELECTION

Following the close of entries the selection of judges for this event will be in the form of an electronic polling system. Each paid entrant may designate the name of one (1) owner they wish to receive the poll invitation. Only the designated owner will be sent an invitation to participate in the poll by email.

The electronic poll will present a listing of eligible judging candidates for each category that have confirmed their interest in judging the event and met the Qualification Criteria and comply with the Restrictions as stated in Section IV of the rules.

The electronic poll will ask each designated owner to provide the names of one (1) AKC judge, three (3) Breeder judges, and one (1) Handler judge. An owner's nomination is NOT restricted to the lists provided; write-in are allowed and MUST conform to the criteria stated for the appropriate judge category and abide by the Restrictions as stated in Section IV of the rules.

Following the closing of the electronic poll, each judging candidate will be contacted by the Event Chair to verify their qualifications and confirm they are available and willing to judge if chosen. All qualified judges names will then be given to a disinterested person, designated by the Event Chairperson, who has absolutely no connection to the event. Random draws for each category will then take place for each of the three judging categories. Each category will have the names drawn in order until all names have been drawn. This order will determine the priority the judges are given for acceptance of the assignment.

Upon conclusion of the random draw, the event chairperson or designated committee member will then contact each of the five (5) judges chosen to verify their availability. If any judge selected is not available, or does not meet the criteria in Section IV or are disqualified by the restrictions in Section IV above, ~~another selection will be made~~ the next drawn name will be offered the assignment and another statement will be signed that this is the second (or subsequent) selection. After all the judging assignments have been filled, the Event Chairperson or designated committee member will notify those not chosen that their names were not selected in the random draw.

Each judge on the final judging panel shall be asked not to disclose it to anyone; the judges will be introduced at the Top 20 Event. Ring stewards will be instructed not to disclose the names of any of the judges prior to the start of the event.

VII. CATALOGS

A catalog will be printed for this event. No advertising will be allowed in the event catalog. At the discretion of the Top 20 Committee, sponsors for the event may be allowed a one-page ad in consideration of their sponsorship. The catalog must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A. The cover shall consist of the Top 20 EVENT logo, the words TOP TWENTY EVENT, the event date and city where the event is held.
- B. A list of the final Top 20 dogs in descending order and a listing of the Top 20 dogs that are participating for the current year.
- C. A two-facing page spread of each entrant in the final Top 20 standings who has paid the required fee. The catalog pages for each participant will be published in a first received, first presented order and be a consistent format. There will be no further charge to entrants for these pages.
 1. The left-hand page shall have the name of the entrant, names of owner(s) and breeder(s) and a write-up about that dog, furnished by the primary owner (even-numbered page).
 2. The right-hand page shall have a full body photo of the entrant and a four (4) generation pedigree, including the dog's date of birth (odd-numbered page).
 3. Each dog will be issued an armband number that will correspond with the odd-numbered page of the entrant in the event catalog.
- D. A copy of the scale of points used for the competition is printed in the catalog to encourage this discussion among the audience during the event.

VIII. MANDATORY MEETING FOR OWNERS/EXHIBITORS/HANDLERS & ORDER OF COMPETITION

A mandatory meeting will be held prior to the event at a time and location determined and announced by the committee. Sufficient notification of any change to the time or location of this meeting will be announced. The purpose of this mandatory meeting is to establish the competition order in which each entrant will be presented in the ring and provide specific instructions regarding the event.

Only one (1) representative, per dog, shall be allowed at the mandatory meeting. This representative may be an owner or the person exhibiting/handling the entrant.

Competitive Order will be determined as follows:

- A. Attendance will be taken to determine if ALL entrants are represented.
- B. If one or more entrant is NOT represented the following procedure will be followed:
 - 1. One (1) absentee: This exhibit will automatically be given the #1 spot in the competition order and will be the first dog to be presented in the ring.
 - 2. Two (2) or more absentees: The armband/catalog page number for each absentee will be placed in a box and will be drawn to determine their competition order. The first absentee's number drawn will compete first; the second absentee's number drawn will complete second, and so forth until all absentee numbers are assigned to a competition order.
- C. After absentees have been assigned their competition order, completion of the drawing will be conducted to determine the competition order in which the remaining dogs enter the ring.
- D. Numbers will be prepared for the actual number of dogs represented at the meeting.
- E. If there were NO absentees the numbers for the draw will start with #1 through the # needed to accommodate the total number of entrants (i.e.; 15 entrants will require placement of #1 through #15 in draw). If there were absentees those competition order #'s will be eliminated from the draw (i.e.; two (2) absentees will eliminate #1 and #2 from the draw).
- F. Drawing of those present will be conducted based on the Top Twenty Final Ranked Standings as follows:
 - 1. The highest ranked dog entered will draw first; followed by the next ranked dog in descending order (i.e.; #1, #2 and so on.
 - 2. In the event of a tie in the final standings, each dog that is ranked equally will be placed in a separate box and the event chairperson will draw to determine who draws first.
- G. Each owner/exhibitor/handler representative will be provided with a document that describes the RING PROCEDURE that will be followed for the event.

IX. SCORE SHEETS AND DETERMINATION OF WINNER(S)

The panel of five (5) judges selected will conduct the judging of the event. Prior to the start of the event each judge and ring steward will be provided with the RING PROCEDURE DOCUMENT along with a SAMPLE SCORESHEET. The Event Chairperson will address any questions presented by the judges or ring stewards.

Each entrant shall be evaluated individually in his/her relationship to the breed standard, using a scale of points as stated in the event catalog. Points must be scored in whole points only. The dogs are observed from a positive approach, they are NOT fault-judged.

Prior to any hands-on examination a Judge's "First Impression" score will be recorded. The judge must look at the entrant as a whole and place the dog on a scale of up to 100 points. The higher the score means that the exhibit is in perfect harmony with the Judge's picture of the ideal Alaskan Malamute. The "First Impression" score will only be used in the event of a tie.

When Judges have completed their scoring of an entrant, they will be required to sign the score sheet and turn the score sheet into the ring steward who will check for accuracy and immediately place it in the envelope provided. No score sheets shall be tabulated by the judges or stewards.

A tabulation committee will be formed consisting of three (3) individuals appointed by the Event Chairperson. The tabulation committee will include at least two (2) members of the Top 20 Committee.

Scores will be tabulated immediately following the conclusion of the event. The high and low scores for each dog will be discarded and the remaining 3 scores will be averaged to determine the winner.

The dog with the highest score will be declared the TOP TWENTY WINNER.

The dog with the second highest score will be declared TOP TWENTY RESERVE.

(TOP TWENTY RESERVE WINNER WILL ONLY BE AWARDED IF THERE ARE AT LEAST 15 ENTRIES RECEIVED)

In the event of a tie, the "Judge's First Impression" score will be used to break the tie, with highest average placement being declared the winner. If the tie cannot be broken with the Judge's First Impression, the discarded high scores for the dogs will next be considered. The dog with the highest discarded high score will be declared the winner. If the tie cannot be broken with the discarded high scores, the discarded low scores for the dogs will next be considered. The dog with the highest discarded low score will be declared the winner. If the tie cannot be broken in the fore mentioned manner both dogs will be declared winners. Additional award(s) will be provided at the committee's earliest convenience.

The TOP TWENTY WINNER . TOP TWENTY RESERVE WINNER AND PEOPLES CHOICE WINNER will be announced the evening of the event.

When announcing the winners their winning score will be announced like this:

And the Top Twenty Winner for 20 is ____ with a winning score of ____ is and so on and so on for the Top Twenty Reserve as well as the People Choice award.

In the event a judge is determined to be disqualified after the competition has been completed, but before the score sheets are tallied, that judge's score sheet will be discarded for each entrant and the remaining scores will be totaled to determine the winner. Because all judges have signed a contract or agreement before being eligible to judge, after the score sheets have been tallied there will be no recourse from any entrant regarding the winner.

Completed score sheets will be provided to the exhibitor of each entrant in the Top 20. The scores will not be made public by anyone involved with this event. If the owner wishes to publish the dog's scores, it will be at his or her own discretion.

X. PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

An annual "People's Choice" award will be presented. To determine the winner of this award, ballot tickets will be sold or distributed as determined by the committee. All ballot tickets must be turned in by the conclusion of judging and prior to the dogs being called back into the ring for the reading of their biographies. Any ballot tickets turned in after the deadline will not be included

in the tabulation of the People's Choice Award. Ballot tickets will be tabulated and the winner announced immediately prior to the announcement of the Top Twenty Winner.

FUNDRAISERS

The Top 20 Committee retains the right to establish additional fundraiser events in any given year. The primary purpose of any fundraiser is to provide financial support for the event to cover expenses and help reduce entry fees for the participants.

The event committee may charge a nominal spectator admission fee person for those spectators who do not attend the Top 20 hospitality function. In any year when admission may be charged, entrants in the Top 20 event shall receive 4 complimentary tickets for admission only.

- XI. CANCELLATION OF EVENT:** At any time the entry drops below 12 entrants, the event may be cancelled for that year.