

# MASTER NATIONAL RETRIEVER CLUB CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

REVISED FEBRUARY 2024

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# **MASTER NATIONAL RETRIEVER CLUB CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**REVISED FEBRUARY 2024**

## **ARTICLE I NAME AND PURPOSE**

### **SECTION 1. Name of Club**

The name of this Club shall be the Master National Retriever Club, Inc.

The objects of this club shall be:

- (a) To promote and protect the breeding, field training, hunting traditions and best interests of all recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC) to participate in Hunting Retriever tests.
- (b) To conduct each year one Master National Hunting Retriever Test, open to all breeds which qualify under the rules of the AKC, and these By-Laws. If at any time the Test is not licensed by the AKC, then it shall proceed without such licensing and be open to all breeds which qualify under these By-Laws. In such event, the Rules and Standard Procedure of the AKC shall be followed in the conduct and judging of the test so far as applicable.
- (c) To exercise all powers now and hereafter authorized by law necessary to carry on the said corporation or to promote any of the objects of said corporation, all of which shall be conducted without pecuniary profit.
- (d) To diligently protect the American hunting tradition while practicing conservation of our game resources with the use of trained hunting retrievers.

**ARTICLE II**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1. Membership Period**

The membership period of the Master National Retriever Club is consistent with the designated qualifying period for the Annual Event.

**SECTION 2. Eligibility to Join**

Any club which is an AKC member authorized to hold AKC licensed hunting tests may be eligible to join the MNRC through the application process.

**SECTION 3. Application to Join**

Any club giving an AKC member or licensed hunting test, desiring to become a member of this Club, shall submit to the Secretary of this Club a written application to be a member of this Club. Upon election by a majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors, and upon receipt of the annual dues fee, it shall forthwith become a member of this Club, and may thereupon designate in writing one of its members to become a delegate, and as such delegate, to represent it as a member of this Club.

**SECTION 4. Member Club Delegate Change**

Any club, which is a member of this Club, may from time to time change its delegate to this club by designating in writing another of its members to become a delegate, and, as such delegate, to represent it as a member of this Club. Such designation shall revoke any prior designation.

**SECTION 5. Delegate Representation Limit**

Each member club in good standing shall be entitled to one vote by its delegate or by written proxy at all meetings of this Club. No person shall represent more than two (2) clubs as a delegate or proxy. Any proxy must be so designated by a member club and must have written proxy credentials satisfactory to the credentials committee as appointed by the President.

## **SECTION 6. Distribution of Constitution and By-Laws**

Each member club and its delegate shall receive a copy of this Constitution and by-laws.

### **ARTICLE III** **MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DUES**

#### **SECTION 1. Membership Fees and Dues**

The amount of the annual dues may be changed at any annual meeting. If no action is taken at any such meeting, they shall continue in the amounts as last previously established. The dues are not prorated monthly. Notice and demand for payment of such dues shall be given by the secretary to each member club on May 1 of the year to which the dues are applicable, and payable forthwith upon receipt of such notice. Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the member clubs at the annual meeting, by majority vote (vote implies eligible electronic votes and in person) of the delegates and proxies present, from according to the Board of Directors the authority to fix the membership fee or dues within specified limits.

### **ARTICLE IV** **RESIGNATION**

**SECTION 1.** Any member club in good standing and not indebted to this club may resign in writing at any time. Such resignation shall be effective immediately upon receipt thereof by the Secretary. Any membership dues paid to MNRC by that member club for that current year will be forfeited to MNRC.

### **ARTICLE V** **NON-PAYMENT OF FEES AND DUES**

**SECTION 1.** Any member club whose dues remain unpaid on August 1 of the current year shall be notified by the secretary by written mail (mail implies by email or letter) to the club's secretary and delegate, of record at the time of notification, that their club's dues are unpaid.

**SECTION 2.** Any member club who submits their dues after August 1, but before November 1 of that year will be assessed a late fee of 50% of the Annual Dues fee.

**SECTION 3.** Non-payment of dues and late fees, if applicable, by a member club by October 31 of that current year will result in an immediate termination of that club's membership in the MNRC. Any unpaid club may then apply for reinstatement as early as November 1 of that year or anytime thereafter, with payment of Annual Dues plus reinstatement fee equal to the Annual Dues fee submitted with their membership application.

**SECTION 4.** The MNRC Board of Directors is required to approve/disapprove the application for reinstatement by a member club with a majority vote by the Board. The MNRC Secretary shall be responsible for informing the member club of the Board's decision.

**SECTION 5.** If disapproved, the club may submit a written appeal to the Board Secretary within thirty (30) calendar days of notice of such decision. The Board has thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of the former club's written appeal to render a decision, in writing, to the former member club.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF MEMBER CLUBS**

**SECTION 1. Suspension of Member Club**

The member clubs, by a two-thirds vote, or alternatively the officers and members of the Board of Directors of this Club by a two-thirds vote, may suspend any member club for conduct on its part or its delegate's part which, in the opinion of that particular voting group, endangers the welfare or character of this Club. However, no member club shall be suspended without the opportunity to appear and defend itself.

## **SECTION 2. Temporary Suspension**

If an emergency is deemed to exist by a majority of the officers and members of the Board of Directors, temporary suspension may be voted upon immediately upon motion made and seconded. If the member club does not request a hearing before the officers and members of the Board of Directors within thirty days, such suspension shall be permanent until the next annual meeting. If hearing is heard before the officers and Board of Directors, the officers and board members may vacate such suspension on majority vote, if the matters which led to the suspension have been rectified. If the conduct occurs during the annual meeting, the member club may request an immediate review by the delegates. Such delegates may reverse such suspension upon majority vote.

## **SECTION 3. Required Notice**

If no emergency is deemed to exist, at least thirty days' notice shall be given the member club of the pending matter, specifying in detail the nature of the conduct in question. If the member club does not appear in person or in writing at the hearing set on the matter, suspension shall be granted. Expulsion may occur at the next annual meeting, by vote of two-thirds of the delegates present if the matters which led to the suspension have not been rectified. If such matters have been rectified to the satisfaction of a majority of the delegates, the suspension shall be vacated.

# **ARTICLE VII** **GOVERNMENT**

## **SECTION 1. Control and Management of Club**

The control and general management of this club shall be vested in a Board of Directors. Such Board shall consist of the officer hereafter designated, and a director from each of the four (4) regions (Atlantic, East Central, West Central and Pacific).

## **SECTION 2. Power of the Board**

The Board of Directors shall have full power to conduct the business of this Club and shall have complete control over its property, policies, and any and all of its business dealings.

## **SECTION 3. Officers and Directors Membership Requirements**

Officers and Directors of this Club may or may not be delegates to this Club, but must be members of one or more of the clubs, which are member clubs in good standing in this Club. The officers shall consist of the following:

- (a) A President, who shall be a resident of the region where the Master National Hunting Retriever Test will be held during his/her term of office. The President shall perform the usual duties of President, including presiding at all meetings of the corporation and the Board of directors; appointing all committees except the Nomination Committee; and serving as a member of all committees (but may not serve as a member of the nomination committee). The President, as Immediate Past President, shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board for one year following expiration of his/her term of office. The term of office is one (1) year.
- (b) First Vice President, who shall be a resident of the region where the Master National Hunting Retriever Test following the one described in (a) above will be held, shall perform the duties of the President during the absence or disability of the President. The First Vice President shall become President the year following his term as First Vice President.
- (c) Second Vice President, who shall be a resident of the region where the Master National Hunting Retriever Test following the one referred to in (b) above will be held, shall perform the duties of President during the absence or disability of the President and First Vice President.



- (d) Third Vice President, who shall be a resident of the region where the Master National Hunting Retriever Test will be held following the one referred to in (c) above, shall perform the duties of the President during the absence or disability of the President, First Vice President and Second Vice President.
- (e) Fourth Vice President, who shall be a resident of the same region as the President, and shall perform the duties of President during the absence or disability of the President and remaining Vice Presidents.
- (f) The Secretary and the Treasurer, both of which offices may be held by the same individual, and who may be elected irrespective of residency. If the offices are held by the same person the term of the secretary and treasurer shall correspond to the term of the Vice President of Region 2. If the positions are held by different individuals, the term of the Secretary shall correspond to the term of the Vice President of Region 2 and the term of the Treasurer shall correspond to the term of the Vice President of Region 4.
- (g) Board of Directors, consisting of a director from each region. Each director elected shall be a resident of the region they will be representing. Terms of office shall be for two years. The Directors shall constitute the Nominating Committee.

#### **SECTION 4. Election of Officers and Directors**

The Directors and Officers, except President, shall be elected at a meeting to be called annually by the President, to be held in conjunction with the Master National Hunting Retriever Test. Officer terms (except President) shall be for four (4) years. Terms shall commence on October 1, or until the election and qualification of their successors. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of all clubs at such meeting, but regional Directors shall be elected by majority vote of only such clubs as are in their respective regions.

## **SECTION 5. Club Secretary Responsibilities**

The Secretary shall keep a complete record of all member clubs and of their delegates with their addresses, and of all matters of which a record shall be ordered by this Club. The Secretary shall pass upon credentials of candidates for membership, and upon acceptance of such credentials and receipt of the necessary membership fee, the secretary shall notify each candidate of their election. The Secretary shall notify the member clubs and the Board of Directors of this Club in writing of all meetings of Directors, giving the time and place thereof. The secretary shall be custodian of the seal and records of this Club and perform all other duties customary to this office.

## **SECTION 6. Treasurer Responsibilities**

The Treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due to or belonging to this Club and send all notices determining assessments. The Treasurer shall deposit all moneys in such banks as shall be designated by the Board of Directors in the name of this Club. The Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for the withdrawal of funds from such accounts. This same authority is given to the President, or to the First Vice- President, as the Board of Directors may designate. The Treasurer's books shall be open at all times for inspection by the Board of Directors or any member thereof, or the delegate of any member club. The Treasurer shall report to the member clubs and to the Board of Directors at every meeting as to the condition of the finances of this Club. The Treasurer shall prepare a report of all moneys received and expended during the year, to be completed by January 31, and shall present the same to the President, who shall direct an independent review thereof. Such report shall be presented to the membership at the succeeding annual meeting. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as may be directed by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall be bonded in such amount as may be determined by the Board and shall have a limit of \$1,000.00 on single-signature checks.

## **SECTION 7. Removal of Officer or Member of Board**

- (a) Any officer or member of the Board of Directors may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the remaining officers and directors at any time for violation of duty. Removal shall be deemed a vacancy in office.

- (b) In case of a vacancy in any office or regional director, that position shall be replaced for the balance of the unexpired term by a person chosen on majority vote of the remaining officers and directors, meeting the necessary residential requirements for the position. In the event of removal of the President or any Vice President, the next designated Vice President shall preside until the vacancy is filled.

### **SECTION 8. Amateur Status Required**

Only persons who meet the definition of "Amateur" as defined by the AKC regulations pertaining to retrievers then in force shall be eligible for election as an officer or director; provided, that if that person's amateur status, as herein defined, is lost thereafter, such shall not automatically constitute a forfeiture or vacancy of such position.

### **SECTION 9. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of this Club shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year.

## **ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of member clubs shall take place each year on the day the first day of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test, at a location which shall be as close as practicable to the location of such Test, and at such time as shall be designated by the President.

## **SECTION 2. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of this Club may be called as follows:

- (a) By the President on ten (10) days' written notice to all member clubs and their delegates, designating the time and place and stating the purpose thereof; or
- (b) Upon receipt of requests in writing from not less than five (5) member clubs, in which case the secretary of this Club shall call and duly give notice of a special meeting of this Club, stating the purpose, time and place thereof.

## **SECTION 3. Quorum**

Twenty-five percent (25%) of member clubs must be represented (for meetings, represented implies either in person or via electronic means, video, teleconference) by their delegates or written proxy to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **SECTION 4. Notice of Meetings**

Forty (40) days' written notice of each annual meeting shall be given to each member club and each delegate.

- (a) New business may only be considered at the annual meeting if it has been submitted fifty-five (55) days in advance of the annual meeting and transmitted to all member clubs along with the notice of annual meeting.
- (b) New business proposed at the annual meeting will be deferred to the following year's annual meeting to allow sufficient time for consideration by all member clubs.

## **SECTION 5. Hunt Test Committee Announcement**

At the annual meeting described in Section 1, the Hunting Test Committee will be announced, consisting of the President, the Event Chair, Hunting Test Secretary, Chief Marshall, and four (4) Vice Presidents.

- (a) The Hunting Test Committee shall have full charge over the conduct of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test to be held in that calendar year, subject to the requirements of Article IX of these By-Laws. The Hunting Test Committee shall have power to form and make appointments to advisory or operating committees, and such appointees shall not be directors or officers of this Club.
- (b) The Hunting Test Committee shall follow, as closely as practicable, the policies and procedures for internal operations adopted by the Board of Directors of this Club.
- (c) In the event of a tie vote occurring at any meeting of the Hunting Test Committee, the vote of the President shall break such tie.

## **SECTION 6. Judges**

Judges for the Master National Hunting Retriever Test shall be amateurs, thoroughly experienced in handling and training of retrievers and in the requirements of retriever work. It is strongly recommended that each judge have judged at least eight Master tests in AKC licensed events. However, the Board of Directors, in any year, may adopt a minimum number of events judged less than eight. No member of the Board of Directors of the Master National Retriever Club may be nominated, elected to, or serve as a judge for the annual event, even if they resign, during their respective term of office.

The judges, as many as may be necessary for conduct of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test, will be selected by the Board of Directors, on advisement from the Judges' Selection Committee made up of the First Vice President and four regional directors upon their own research and by receiving names from the member clubs. The slate of judges nominated for the next year's Master National Hunting Retriever Test shall be presented to the delegates at the current year's annual meeting.

In the event that the event is run in a single flight and 4 judges have been elected, the judge from the region hosting the event will be excused and may serve as that region Judge the following year.

In the event that any of the persons selected as judges is not able to serve, or resigns, the Board of Directors shall have power to make further appointments from persons meeting the aforementioned qualifications.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **THE MASTER NATIONAL HUNTING RETRIEVER TEST**

#### **SECTION 1. Regions**

For the purposes of conducting the Master National Hunting Retriever Test, the country shall be divided into four regions as follows:

- (a) Region One-Atlantic: Comprises the states of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.
- (b) Region Two-East Central: Comprises the states of Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Wisconsin, Illinois, Mississippi, Minnesota, Iowa, Arkansas, Louisiana and Missouri.
- (c) Region Three-West Central: Comprises the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.

- (d) Region Four-Pacific: Comprises the states of Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona and Alaska.

## **SECTION 2. Hunt Test Site**

The site of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test shall be rotated annually between the various regions of the country to be determined by the Board of Directors.

- (a) In 1995, the Master National Hunting Retriever Test will be held at a site in Region 1.
- (b) In each succeeding year, the site of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test will be selected according to the following schedule of rotation:
  - (1) Region 1-Atlantic
  - (2) Region 2-East Central
  - (3) Region 3-West Central
  - (4) Region 4-Pacific

Notwithstanding the above, in the event the Board of Directors, after reasonable effort is unable to obtain a site in the prescribed region which it considers suitable for the Master National Hunting Retriever Test, the Board may select a site in another region. In selecting such a site, care should be exercised that: (1) no site will be used in two consecutive years; and (2) return to the prescribed system of rotation can be most promptly and easily accomplished.

### **SECTION 3. Contestants, Eligibility, Fees**

#### Number of Contestants, Eligibility and Entry Fees

- (a) Contestants shall be limited to the following:
- (1) Qualifying dogs of the previous year's Master National Hunting Retriever Test shall receive credit for two qualifying scores.
  - (2) All contestants shall be required to obtain qualifying scores in a minimum of six (6) Master Hunting tests conducted by member clubs. Contestants who enter exclusively in Alaska must obtain qualifying scores in a minimum of four Master tests by member clubs and have an MH title.
  - (3) Dogs, domiciled in Canada, running exclusively in CKC Master Hunt Test events, that passed the most recent CKC Canadian Master National Hunt Test prior to the July 31<sup>st</sup> MNRC qualifying end date.
  - (4) Dogs having passed three prior MNRC annual events are exempt from the requirements of Paragraphs (2) and (3) of this section and are qualified for all future MNRC annual events.
  - (5) Qualifying dogs of the current year's Master Amateur Retriever Club (MARC) Hunting Retriever Test shall receive credit for two qualifying scores towards the current year's Master National Retriever Club (MNRC) Hunting Retriever Test, provided that eligibility to enter the current year's MARC event came from MNRC member Clubs during the MNRC qualifying period for the MNRC current year.
- (b) In order to be counted towards the qualifying requirements, hunting tests at which qualifying scores are awarded must have a beginning date falling between August 1 of the year preceding the current National Master Hunting Retriever Test and July 31 of the year of the National Master Hunting Retriever Test.



- (c) Each entrant must pay an entry fee, to be determined by the Board of Directors.

#### **SECTION 4. Duration**

##### Duration of the Master National Hunting Retriever Test

- (a) Dogs shall be tested in a minimum number of situations as may be adopted in the Master Hunter requirements of the AKC Regulations and Guidelines for Hunting Tests for Retrievers. Judges should incorporate other hunting situations in which a dog's abilities can be evaluated beyond the minimum requirements for number of series.
- (b) Any extenuating circumstances may be addressed and resolved by the Hunting Test committee.
- (c) The mechanics of conducting the Master National Hunting Retriever Test shall be determined by policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors, and notice of such shall be given to member clubs and contestants. However, the following shall apply:
  - (1) If the test is run as a single flight, it shall be judged by three judges. In the event of excessive entries, the Board of Directors may choose to split the event. If this occurs there will be two judges per flight.
  - (2) Judges should apportion their time to allow contestants to run at least one test per day, if possible, based upon the number of entries. During the course of the event, judges should attempt to run more than one test per day.
  - (3) Every attempt will be made to ensure that the Master National be run over the number of days deemed necessary by the Board.

## **SECTION 5. Elimination of Contestants**

- (a) The AKC Standard Procedure for Hunting Tests for Retrievers shall govern the elimination of contestants. Contestants not eliminated in accordance with said procedure shall compete in all series, both on land and water, provided that the judges may eliminate any contestant(s) proving, in the unanimous judgment of the judges, to be unworthy of further testing. The judges' decision will be final.
- (b) This being a National event, the judges are encouraged to set a sufficient number of tests of such a level as to fully evaluate the abilities of trained retrievers.

## **SECTION 6. Places and Prizes**

- (a) No cash prizes shall be awarded, but the dogs and handlers who qualify may be awarded such trophies as this Club may determine.

## **SECTION 7. Hired Workers**

The Hunting Test Committee may procure such hired helpers as are reasonably deemed necessary for the proper conduct of the event, considering the number of entries and the number of prospective workers from the contestants themselves.

## **ARTICLE X** **SEAL**

**SECTION 1.** The corporate seal of this Club shall be four concentric stars between which shall appear the name of this Club, and in the center shall be inscribed "Delaware, 1992," and such seal as impressed on the margin hereof is hereby adopted as the corporate seal of this Club.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**AMENDMENTS**

**SECTION 1. Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended at any meeting of member clubs, but notice of any proposed amendments shall be filed in writing with the Secretary by any committee appointed by the President for that purpose, or by at least two member clubs in good standing. Such filing must occur at least fifty-five (55) days prior to any such meeting. A copy thereof shall be sent by the Secretary by mail to each member club and to each delegate, at least forty (40) days before such meeting. The delegates from at least two member clubs in good standing may propose substitute amendments to the proposed amendments by mail to the MNRC Secretary 20 days prior to such meeting.

**SECTION 2. Required Vote**

An affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the member clubs represented (for voting, 'represented' implies total casted ballots from the member clubs participating in any meeting [virtual or otherwise]) at any meeting shall be necessary for the adoption of any amendment, notice of which has been given in accordance with Section 1.

**SECTION 3. Votes and Ballots**

Amendments to the Bylaws may be decided either by mail/email vote, at the Annual Meeting, or a special called meeting. Ballots may be returned to the Secretary by regular U.S. Postal Service First Class mail or electronic transmission. They must be received no later than 60 days after the mailing of the ballot with that date stated in the cover letter. All results with votes by clubs shall be posted.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**DISSOLUTION CLAUSE**

**SECTION 1.** The Club may be dissolved by written consent of no less than two-thirds of the members in good standing. In the event of the dissolution of the club, other than for purposes of reorganization, whether voluntarily, involuntarily, or by operation of law, after payment of the debts of the club, its property and assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes for the benefit of hunting retrievers as shall be selected by the Board of Directors.