



TOP TWENTY INVITATIONAL RULES, INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

I. General

The Top 20 Invitational is a charitable fund-raising event, sponsored by the Irish Setter Club of America Foundation, Inc. The mission of the Foundation is to provide a continuing source of funds to develop and enrich the understanding and fostering of the well-being of Irish Setters through education and scientific research.

The Top 20 Committee shall be made up of the Foundation Officers and Board of Directors who shall appoint a Top 20 Chairperson from said board. The chairperson shall appoint a statistician with approval of the Foundation Chair.

II. Information and Guidelines

- A. Purpose: To encourage the showing of Irish Setters in conformation classes, and to provide an educational experience for judges, exhibitors, breeders, and fanciers. This event will provide a special recognition to those Irish Setters with the most outstanding records, as well as their breeders, handlers, and owners. It will also provide incentive to strive for Irish Setters excelling in structure, intelligence, type, soundness and good health.
- B. Statistics and Eligibility: There are no eligibility requirements other than being named among the final Top 20 Irish Setters for conformation (Breed Standings). (Beginning 2023, Irish Setters named among the Top 20 conformation All-Breed Standings will be invited) Previous Top 20 Winners are NOT eligible to compete but will be recognized at the event. (Beginning 2023, Previous Top 20 Winners ranked in the current Top Twenty will be eligible to compete)
- C. The Top 20 standings are based on show results provided by the AKC and obtained from the AKC Online Store. The tabulations are collected for shows beginning with the first show in January and ending with the last show in December in each year. The Top 20 Chairperson will be responsible for collecting the final standings from the AKC. The standings and scores are based on Breed Points only with changes in standings to be made when there is a notification from the AKC of an error.
 1. All Irish Setters, including any and all ties through the 20th position will be invited. Death of a Top 20 candidate will not change the standings. Previous Top 20 Winners are NOT eligible to compete. In the instance that two Irish Setters are tied for one Top 20 position both will receive the ranking even if the total count goes to 21 or higher.

2. Based on AKC's Reports, the Top 5 National Owner-Handled Series Irish Setters (Breed Standings) will be invited to compete in the ISCAF Top 20 Competition. Current Rules and Guidelines will apply. Duplication of Breed Standing and NOHS Standings DO NOT AFFECT THOSE INVITED TO COMPETE. Only the Top 5 NOHS are eligible.
- D. The uniqueness of the event: The event offers all who attend a chance to view "The Cream of the Crop." Using a scale of points, each dog is evaluated according to how closely it conforms to the Breed Standard. This procedure is not available at any AKC point show, and allows the spectator the opportunity to evaluate the Irish Setters, scoring them at the same time they are being judged. The Irish Setters are observed from a positive approach; they are not fault judged. The event is educational, promoting discussion of the Standard, and encouraging the exchange of ideas.
- E. The judges: Selection of the three judges will be made by a nomination/vote of the owners of the Top 20 Irish Setters. Letters will be mailed to the first owner of record, as of December 31st, and owners and co-owners may decide together which judges to nominate. All judge nominees will reside in the ISCA Region that is hosting the event. Owners will vote for one person from each of the following categories. The statistician will count the top 20 judges ballots. Ties for Top 20 judges will be resolved by the statistician drawing between the tied names.
1. Handler. A Professional Handler, past or present, having at least ten years' experience.
 2. Breeder. An established Irish Setter Breeder or an established Irish Setter Breeder that is also an AKC-Approved judge, who has been breeding for at least ten years.
 3. Multi-Breed AKC-Approved Judge. An AKC-Licensed Judge approved to judge Irish Setters and at least ten other breeds in any group.
- F. Judges may include anyone eligible to judge but a member of a judge's household may not show in the Top 20.
- G. The statistician will forward the name of the person with the highest number of votes (in each category) to the Top 20 Chairperson so they can determine eligibility of that person. If the person with the highest number of votes is ineligible or unavailable, the statistician will forward the name of the person with the second highest number of votes. This will continue until one judge is secured in each category.
- H. Scoring and evaluation: Each participating Irish Setter is individually evaluated by each judge, using a point scale on a score sheet. Half points may be given at the judges' discretion. Score sheets will be tabulated by the Top 20 Chairperson and two other ISCAF Board Members, appointed by the Chair of the Foundation Board. The scores for each Irish Setter are tabulated in the following manner:
1. The scores for each dog from each of the three judges are tabulated, added together, then divided by three, to determine the "Total Average Final Score."
 2. In the event of a tie, the tabulators will determine a winner by consulting the "Average Placement Score" given by the judges. The Average Placement Score is the judge's first impression of a dog prior to examination, and is based on a 1-10 scale, with 10 being the highest score. This score is ONLY USED TO BREAK A TIE, and is tabulated by adding the three Average Placement Scores together, and dividing by three, to determine the "Total Average Placement Score."
 3. The Irish Setter with the highest "Total Average Final Score," or in the event of a tie, the highest "Total Average Placement Score," is the winner. If two dogs have the same "Total Average Final Score" and the same "Total Average Placement Score," there will be two Top 20 Winners. The

winner of this event will not be announced until the evening of the Awards Dinner. The winner will be announced by the Top 20 Chairperson.

4. Upon the compilation of the ballots and the winner announced, all judges' score sheets will be destroyed.
5. A People's Choice Award will be selected from one of the Top 20 contenders. It will be selected by ballot at the conclusion of the Top 20 judging. Ballots will be distributed to all people who have purchased a ticket and have attended the event. Ballots will be collected at the conclusion of judging. Attendees will mark their ballot with the arm band number of their selection. The People's Choice ballots will be counted by the event committee (minimum 3 people). The winner of the People Choice Award will be announced on the evening of the Top 20 dinner. In case of ties, each will be awarded "The People's Choice" Top 20.

III. Procedures

- A. Notification. Upon obtaining the Top 20 standings from AKC records, the Top 20 Chairperson will mail a letter to the owners of the Top 20 Finalist, advising them of their qualification for this event. There is an Entry Fee of \$200.00 that must be returned within thirty (30) days of notification, with the Entry Profile Sheet and Judge Ballot Form that accompany the letter. Should the Chairperson receive less than 50% of the possible entries at the conclusion of the 30 day notification period, the event will be cancelled for that year and the entry fees refunded. The entry fee entitles each participant to four (4) reserved seats, 1 Top 20 Rosette and 1 Top 20 Pin, and a two-page catalog spread and one Top 20 Catalog. Letters will be mailed to the first owner of record, as of December 31st, and owners and co-owners may decide together which judges to nominate. All original entry documents will be destroyed 60 days after the Event. Top 20 Entry Forms will be placed on the ISCA and ISCAF websites in case the physical packet is lost in the mail. After the packets are mailed a follow up e-mail will be sent to the first owners to ensure the packet has been received. All Top 20 Photos submitted will be returned to the Owner within 30 days of the event.
- B. Catalog – A catalog, prepared exclusively for the Top 20 Event, will be available for purchase just prior to the scheduled starting time of the event. Contents of the catalog include a two-page spread highlighting each dog in the Top 20, score sheets, judging material, and a profile of each judge. (Beginning 2019) All dogs participating in the Celebration for Success will receive a bio space in the catalog (limited to 50 words).
- C. Armband numbers will be generated at random and will be published in the Top 20 Catalog. At the conclusion of the competition, the stewards will place all score sheets in an envelope marked "Score Sheets." Tabulation of ballots will be completed on the night of the event with the results placed in an envelope marked "Winner Top 20." All Score Sheets, both individual and composite, will be placed in one envelope and locked in the hotel safe or deposit box. Only the Chairperson of the Top 20 or the Foundation Chairperson will have access to this envelope and will be gathered by them prior to the start of the ISCA Awards Banquet. Any and all documents will be returned to the Top 20 Chairperson to be destroyed along with entry documents.
- D. Prizes – The winner of the Top 20 Invitational will receive a Special Recognition Award. In addition the first owner of record of the Top 20 Winner receives a Top 20 Winners Pin. The Winner of the People's Choice will receive a special Rosette printed with "Winner People's Choice". Each entered dog will receive a Top 20 Pin and a Rosette. The Rosette will be inscribed with the dog's name, the date of the event, and the names of owners and breeders. The Top 20 participants and winner will be allowed to purchase additional Pins and Rosettes but orders are limited to the breeders and owners of record at the time of the event. Replacement Pins or Rosettes must be requested in writing and sent to the Foundation Board.

IV. Celebration of Success (Beginning 2019)

- A. The Top 5 for each of the venues or classes listed below will be recognized at the Top 20 Event
- B. Venues or Classes
 - Amateur Field CH
 - Open Field CH
 - Agility MACH
 - Agility PACH
 - Obedience OTCH
 - Rally RACH
- C. The Top Five dogs will be invited based on AKC Reports and Club Records from the previous year.
- D. A letter of invitation will be sent to the first owner of record of each dog.
- E. The ISCAF Board of Directors will set the criteria for this Celebration for Success
- F. **Dogs and Handlers participating in the Celebration of Success will be announced during the event only if they are present.**

V. General

- A. Every attempt should be made to have the event at the National Specialty but in a different location than the regular show.
- B. There will be an admission charge for those spectators not attending the Top Twenty Dinner.
- C. All Top Twenties should be Semi-Formal; Men in business suit or Tuxedo and women appropriately attired in Cocktail/Evening dress.
- D. Conversations should be kept at a normal level. No flash photography is permitted until after judging is completed. Music may be played at a comfortable level.
- E. No photographs shall be taken of the entrants with the Judges until after the Official Photographer has taken his/hers. **Beginning 2022, every effort will be made to take photographs of Top 20 Participants prior to the evening event.**
- F. Complete information on the event will be placed on the ISCA and ISCAF websites.
- G. The judges should sit at their stations so the table is on their right. This is to make it easier for the judge to approach the dog from the front.
- H. A description of the procedure shall be placed in the Top 20 catalog in order to educate the public. **Beginning 2022, all hands-on judging and judging of gaiting will be conducted prior to event.**
- I. These Rules, Information and Guidelines may be changed no more than annually by the Foundation Board.