



Questions & Answers #3

Revision: 01/25/2011

RE: USASA Proposal

Introduction

This third Q&A session will attempt to address the following areas/questions. In some areas we will reference and/or re-print Q &A's from the first 2 sessions. We would like to thank everyone for taking the time to think about the proposal and submit their questions and concerns. We ask for your patience as we continue to work through the remaining and future questions that are sure to arise. We look forward to discussing the enclosed questions and answers in our upcoming conference calls.

UPDATE: This document has been updated based on the Q&A Session held on Friday, 1/21/2011 via NAMASCUSA telephone conference call. The call was attended by members of the NAMASCUSA AKC Committee, NAMASCUSA Board and NAMASCUSA members.

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A Clarification

NAMASCUSA has been asked if they are working together with the Royal Basque Shepherds, NASA or any other group in getting this to happen.

NAMASCUSA is not now and has never worked with any other organization in this endeavor. Our involvement began in December of 2006 when the Royal Basque Shepherd Club announced their intention to take the Mini Aussie into AKC. The NAMASCUSA Board, in response to many of the requests of our members asking us to "do something" and expressed to us that if anyone was going to take the dogs to AKC, it should be one of the Parent Clubs that had established the breed in the first place.

After being told for 2 ½ years that there was not a way that the Mini could be brought in even as a separate breed through FSS, the situation changed when the then NASA Club succeeded in getting their petition accepted through the UKC. As UKC is a registry that is recognized by the AKC, that changed the entire picture.

In Q2 of 2009, we were contacted regarding the possibility of looking at being the Parent Club for the MAS in AKC. Our first contact from USASA was on 3/31/09. Our first meeting with USASA and AKC was on 4/17/09. Our Board members at that time felt that rather than have the Board make a decision of this importance on its own, it should be brought before the membership and they should have an opportunity to vote as to whether or not the Board should investigate that possibility. The vote came back with 2/3's of those who voted asking us to look into this endeavor. The Board and the AKC committee have worked very hard to protect the best interests of our membership in working out the various points of the Proposal that was finally approved by the AKC Board.

Despite many accusations to the contrary, up to this point, there have not been any changes at all to the NAMASCUSA Bylaws or Mission Statement regarding becoming the parent Club for AKC. Now, it is the time for the membership to look at the "Proposal" that we were able to negotiate and decide whether or not they wish to vote "yes" or "no" to accepting the position of the Parent Breed Club representing the MAS in the AKC according to the premises spelled out in the "Proposal" that was submitted and agreed to by the AKC Board. The individuals on the NAMASCUSA Board and the AKC Committee believe that NAMASCUSA is a "member driven" organization and as such, this final decision is to be made by the membership. If the majority vote is yes, then we will begin the next step of setting up ourselves as a Parent Club according to AKC's requirements and adjusting our documents to fit that decision. Those members who choose to remain if that is the case will have the opportunity to craft the Parent Breed Club according to how they would like to see us in AKC. If the majority of the vote is "no" then we will continue as we have in the past and continue to be a Club for the Miniature Australian Shepherd.

Define Breed Separation & Developing a Breed through FSS

1) ***Submitted from List:***

What is meant by two separate breeds and dividing the breed?

The proposal allows for the Australian Shepherd breed to *divide* into two breeds. One breed will remain the Australian Shepherd and be exhibited (shown in conformation) as a size that is above 18". The second breed will be its own breed and it will be exhibited in conformation as a size that is below 18".

While the Australian Shepherd breed may be divided, it will not have *divisions* within the breed. There will be two separate breeds that result: the Australian Shepherd, and the "MAS".

- 2) What is the difference between splitting a breed and developing a new breed through FSS?
I would like to know the definitions the NAMASCUSA board is using that separates these two descriptions.

Partial answer posted by Rachael Maxwell on the NAMASCUSA List (Thanks Rachael!):
Division isn't equal to 'derived from'. It's superior to it. "Derived from" simply means one can trace their origins to...just as a Labradoodle is 'derived from' the poodle because it can trace part of it's origins to the Poodle.

Division is simply when you separate something out from the whole according to certain characteristics, and do so to create a separation.

The Australian Shepherd breed is said to be derived from other breeds such as the German Tiger Shepherd, Carea Leones, Welsh Sheepdogs, and even some early Border Collie. I think everyone would agree that the Aussie wasn't divided out from these early breeds, but was rather a mixture of breeding all these different breeds together and coming up with the phenotype we have in our

Aussies today.

Early proposals had the history of the mini Aussie as being 'derived from' the Aussie, and that distinctly implies that there was other things thrown in the mix. Stating that the new breed is a 'division' of the Australian Shepherd can only imply one thing, that they were separated out based on one particular characteristic. Another way to look at it is rather than looking at size, think if the Aussie separated out to where the red dogs became one breed and the blue/black another. Or it was separated by merle vs. solid. It's really no different than what AKC did when they recognized the Belgian Shepherd and created 4 different breeds from what was always one breed. Also another example to look at would be the Norfolk and Norwich Terriers.

The Tervuren isn't different from the Malinois, which isn't different from the Groenendael (registered as the Belgian Sheepdog in AKC). They are all dogs from the same breed in Belgium but simply divided out here in the states by AKC. In fact, in early recognition the Groenendael and Tervuren were all simply registered with AKC as 'Belgian Shepherds' until the parent club petitioned AKC to separate out the Tervuren's into their own breed. If you've ever seen a Tervuren and a Belgian, the only real difference is coat color.

If the proposal was as originally thought, I would be screaming to vote no as well...because that proposal did scream that our dogs were a mixed breed. I do not believe this proposal fosters that belief in any way, unless the person makes the choice to view it as such (i.e. there's no wording in what I have seen that says that one would have to be told that and believe it and read the proposal with that thought in mind).

What about the Breed Standard?

- 3) When will the breed standard be decided upon and is USASA part of that decision?

Discussion with the AKC on the breed standard for the new breed would only occur between the AKC Parent Club and the AKC. USASA would not be involved in that process as they are not the parent breed club for the new breed. Until we are the AKC Parent Club, the AKC may or may not be willing to invest a lot of time into negotiations and discussions with us.

Additional Comments from meeting: The only pre-determined requirements for our Breed Standard would be that we cannot use the word "Australian" in the new breed name and the upper size for females is 17" and males is 18". These are part of the stipulations spelled out in the USASA/AKC proposal.

What about the Size DQ

- 4) Can the height requirement be phased in over a period of time giving us a little time to work the size down to the required height DQ rather than as soon as the MAS enters AKC ?

Not to our knowledge, probably not due to the upper end DQ

Additional Comments from meeting: Reminder the DQ is ONLY for the conformation ring. These dogs are still eligible for the performance venues and can be used in your breeding program.

- 5) I would like to see the club set a bottom DQ for the show ring, and I personally would like that to be 14". All dogs not within the size for the show ring would still have benefits of all other venues. I

honestly would like to know what my vote will bring as far as our breed standard before or when I make my decision to vote yes or no.

Whoever is chosen to be the AKC parent club for the new breed will set the breed standard, so trying to set that now could be fruitless as we do not know if our membership will vote yes to being the parent breed club.

If the membership votes for us to be the parent club, then a breed standard committee would be formed from interested members who would then come up with ideas to poll the membership. Following polls from the membership, an official vote would be taken (this process would be refined further going forward). If NAMASCUSA does become the AKC Parent Club, the membership will have input as to this question. If NAMASCUSA does not become the Parent Club, we do not have any guarantee that another Club will give the members the same voice.

6) ***Submitted from List***

Do we need to be concerned with the breed standard before asking for a vote to become the parent club for AKC?

Until we know if NAMASCUSA is the parent breed club there is not any point to defining a breed standard for AKC. See the previous answer.

Note: Currently NAMASCUSA does not have a DQ on the lower end.

Questions Regarding the Toys

7) My question is regarding registrations...will dogs that are currently designated as a Toy Aussie on their registration papers (NSDR or ASDR) be allowed to register as the new breed?

The acceptable registries will be determined by whoever becomes the AKC Parent Breed Club. If NAMASCUSA becomes the parent club, then the current registries/registrations accepted by NAMASCUSA will continue to be accepted. Registry rules will be reviewed on on-going bases. If NAMASCUSA is the parent club, then NAMASCUSA registered dogs will be allowed to register as the new breed (regardless of size).

Additional Comments from meeting: Registrations are not dependant on pedigree's going back to Spike. In the early years NAMASCUSA required at least 1/8th of the pedigree go back to Spike, that requirement was lifted sometime in the 90's. That requirement was lifted in the mid-90's by NAMASCUSA.

8) My second question is if the lower height limit of the new breed is not adjusted to allow the smaller dogs to compete in the conformation ring, will the Toy Aussies still be allowed to register as the new breed, but still have a venue for conformation by showing as a Toy Aussie with IABCA or NAKC?

That depends on each venue and how they accept the new breed, they are doing that now with dogs that have AKC registrations and also NAMASCUSA or toy registrations via NSDR. AKC is not concerned if you show in other venues with a different name.

Additional Comments from meeting: Those dogs that meet the breed standard will be shown in the conformation ring. Again the breed standard will be defined by the AKC Parent Breed Club.

9) The issue of Toy Sized Aussies hasn't really been answered. If I own a show quality 12.5" toy sized dog now, I am able to compete in Rare Breed Conformation shows. If I register her with NAMASCUSA and then, ultimately AKC, I will no longer be able to show her in conformation because she will not meet the breed standard according to size. Sure, I can now compete in agility and other

things...but not conformation? I think we need to know before we vote if Toy Aussies will be brought into AKC in the new breed standard or not. The "other" (NAS) mini/toy aussie group already has included them, so why should I vote yes for NAMASCUSA to take our smaller aussies to AKC, if I don't know if NAMASCUSA will include the toys in their new breed standard?

Again, that will depend on the show venue and how they accept the new breed. We do not know if the UKC (NAS) is going to approach AKC. This vote is whether or not we are going to be the parent club for the "MAS."

Additional Comments from meeting: Many of us are going to have some dogs that are smaller and some that are larger than the Breed Standard and we will not be able to show those dogs in AKC. AKC does not care if we use our papers from other registries to show those dogs in the other venues for which they are eligible. There are many reasons other than to show conformation for those who wish to seek AKC approval. One of the reasons is that there will be many more venues of all types for everyone to participate in all around the country.

Another key reason is that AKC has a consistent well-established registry that is very easy to use. Their registry is completely separate from any of the parent breed clubs so is not subject to disruptions if there are "political" problems going on as sometimes happens in an all volunteer breed club. Right now, the only registries we have for the MAS are either run by all-volunteer Breed Clubs or are owned by individuals. While these registries have worked ok to this point, but at any time, it is possible that they could fold due to unforeseen circumstances and then where will our dogs be?

One of the main questions for those who are going to vote will be: Do I want the whole package of benefits that go along with being an AKC recognized breed or do I not feel that there is a benefit in being an AKC recognized breed? The next question is do I want NAMASCUSA to become the Parent Club for AKC according to the "Proposal" that has been submitted and approved by the AKC Board?

We do not know if the UKC (NAS) is going to approach AKC and NAMASCUSA has nothing to do with their pursuit of UKC Recognition.

The vote that is going before the NAMASCUSA membership will be to determine if they (the NAMASCUSA membership) wish to accept the AKC Parent Club status according to the tenants of the "Proposal" that has been presented. Any other "changes" that might take place if the vote is "yes" will be decided upon by those members who choose to remain if that is the way the vote goes.

- 10) I have been reading some of the comments posted on the AKC question/statement areas. I am concerned about the vote going to the membership without our vote counting toward acceptance/rejection of the Toy Aussie as well. I get the overall impression that the Toy's want to be a big part of AKC acceptance, if not in the driver's seat. NAMASCUSA is not a Toy club, and therefore, those members will only be voting to gain acceptance for their specific size and not have the best interest of the Mini in mind. I personally feel this is crucial to our size surviving a move to AKC without the Toy breeders taking over what the Mini breeders are attempting to do. Can we put the vote to the membership to accept or reject the Toy at the same time we ask for the vote to accept or reject the AKC proposal? A vote for or against at the same time would give the club and its members a clear intention of where our breed will be after the move to AKC. If the "New Name Mini" becomes a venue for the Toy, what will happen to the Mini of the Toy breeders take over?

We are a miniature Aussie club now, if the membership votes yes to being the parent club then the breed standard will be voted on by the membership.
See #5 above...

Foreign Registry Concerns

- 11) What happens to all of the dogs outside of the USA should we go into AKC?? Apparently, you have to be a US Citizen to register your dogs with AKC. So, if NAMASCUSA becomes the parent club for "the new breed" and my dogs are in the current registry.... where does that leave them if I cannot register with AKC? NAMASCUSA is no longer a registry, just a parent club. Even my US born dogs that I have imported may not be eligible.

On behalf of all of our foreign members of NAMASCUSA, the committee wants to let you know that we have been looking into this and will report back to you all once we have definitive answers. Our goal is to make sure that the foreign members have answers before an official vote is taken regarding AKC acceptance as the Parent Breed Club for the MAS.

Additional Comments from meeting: NAMASCUSA is in the process of attaining specific answers from the various foreign registries and will report back to the membership their findings.

Back Up Plans

- 12) As members of NAMASCUSA we should be told what the back up plan is. Does the NAMASCUSA board know what it is, and if not, why not? Full disclosure is needed to make an educated vote.

If the membership of NAMASCUSA votes "NO" to NAMASCUSA being the Parent Club to represent the "MAS" in AKC, we have no say in the "back-up plan" that USASA stated to their membership. We have no say in the name, the history, the size, the group designation, nothing. To answer the question clearly, we don't know what USASA and AKC have discussed or decided as the "back-up" plan if the NAMASCUSA membership votes "NO" to being the Parent Club representing the "MAS" into the AKC.

Additional Comments from meeting: NAMASCUSA is only privy to what we worked out with the proposal. We have no knowledge or power over any other group or individual as a back-up plan via AKC or USASA.

Housekeeping Questions

- 13) Has AKC (or USASA for that matter) put an actual deadline (date) on the proposal acceptance? Is there a deadline that NAMASCUSA get back to them that the membership has voted either yes or no not to be the parent club?

The next step is for the AKC board to give a final sign off acknowledgement of the official vote taken by the USASA membership to approve the proposal and split the Australian Shepherd breed. The NAMASCUSA membership vote would follow after this. There is not a set deadline but it is likely that once the Board decision comes back, NAMASCUSA will need to begin its voting process in a reasonably quick time. There will be 30 days from the time of the mailing of the vote and the date ballots will be due back.

- 14) Do we have any kind of timeline set up yet for ballots to go out and when they'll be due back?

See above answer.

15) Who is going to be the independent vote counter? It really can't be anyone who's a member of the club.

It will be an independent company, not associated with this club.

16) I want to know who will be counting the ballots, and can we have a second company verify the results?

It will be an independent company, not associated with this club. We will look into having another company or a notary also review the votes. That is an excellent idea.