

17th July, 2020

RE: INCREASING MINIMUM AGE OF FLYBALL TRIALING DOGS TO 18 MONTHS OF AGE

– AN OVERVIEW FROM A MYOFUNCTIONAL THERAPIST.

Dear whom it may concern,

I am greatly appreciative of the opportunity to provide this letter of support regarding raising the minimum age of competition to 18 months of age to come into line with other ANKC sports.

My concern regarding dogs competing at 12 months of age is multifaceted, to begin with, dogs ready to compete at 12 months of age have been training for many months earlier to prepare them to be ready for competition. This preparation can include repetition of jumps and box turns that puts great strain on their developing joints, most of which will not be fully developed until 18-24 months of age.

Box turning with an immature body would cause me great concern in relation to the forelimb including Elbow Dysplasia, OCD of the elbow joint and potentially Medial Shoulder Instability. These conditions often go unnoticed until a dog becomes symptomatic or in the case of Medial Shoulder Instability it can go unnoticed for many years. I would also have concern about the polygenetic disease, Hip Dysplasia with a dog box turning at an immature age especially when training on a solid board with repetition.

Unless considerable body awareness & work towards mental stability in highly aroused dogs has been conducted with young dogs, it is my my opinion that it is unlikely they will have the mental capabilities to truly understand how their bodies work which can put them at increased risk of injury.

In my experience as a Myofunctional & Animal Neuro-myofascial Release Therapist, dogs who start early in sports will pay for it later with early arthritis and a general early breakdown of joints.

I recommend that dogs do not start competing until at least 18-24 months of age when their growth plates have closed. My recommendation is that sporting dog owners have their dogs x-rayed prior to competition training & trialing to ensure the growth plates have in-fact closed.

The Balanced Canine

Canine Myofunctional Therapist
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I would recommend that the committee overseeing this recommendation of raising the competition age to 18 months consult with experts in sports medicine such as the VSOM group in America, Dr Chris Zink in America, Dr Debbie Gross in America & locally, Dr Malcom Ware.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my support to this cause.

Regards

Sacha Packer

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