

Social Media & Virtual Meeting Best Practices

Bracco Italiano Club of America

The Bracco Italiano Club of America aims to foster a positive and welcoming environment for all breed enthusiasts. Our members should understand that posts made on social media are a direct reflection of those posting and the organizations and clubs that they are associated with. When faced with a disagreement or conflict, we encourage our members to carefully consider their posts and how those may reflect upon them and the Club.

As members of the Bracco Italiano Club of America, we are all part of a greater mission. Our breed depends on each of us to contribute to the betterment of the breed. There is no acceptable place for cyberbullying against other members, breeders, or owners over social media. The most important issue that we should consider above our personal issues with others is protecting the integrity of the Bracco Italiano breed in every aspect. We would like to encourage our members to become more involved in the BICA and put aside personal feelings so that we can all work together to make our club the best it can be.

Please consider the following “netiquette” when posting about our breed online:

- Use respectful language – this includes avoiding name-calling, cursing, or expressing deliberately offensive opinions.
- Respect people’s privacy – don’t share information about other members without their consent.
- Respect differences – as long as someone’s dog isn’t being hurt or endangered, differences in ownership or training are perfectly OK.
- Be welcoming – the way you interact with people can have a very real impact on how those people will feel about joining breed activities, and if they want to stay involved.
- Ask consent before giving feedback – it can be tempting to want to share your knowledge with others online. Part of good sportsmanship is recognizing that people don’t always want your opinion and that sharing suggestions without consent can lead to conflict.
- Avoid all forms of cyber-bullying to maintain a positive and welcoming environment.

The BICA also encourages members to remain professional during virtual club meetings. Below is a summary of virtual meeting best practices to ensure club meetings are respectful and efficient:

- Pay attention to your video, microphone, and screen sharing settings to avoid accidental sharing of video, conversation, or other content.
- Present yourself professionally.
- Mute yourself when entering a meeting and remain muted if you are not speaking.
- Do not talk over other participants.
- Ideally, use the “raise hand” button if you wish to speak.
- Ensure your workspace is quiet and has an appropriate background (or use a virtual background).

- When possible, check your Wi-Fi, test audio and video, and get familiar with the software before entering the meeting.
- Use your real name as your screen name to aid in roll call.
- Be on time to meetings.

Social Media and Virtual Meeting Misconduct

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in loss of social media, virtual meeting, and/or club privileges. Violations are tallied on a year-long basis.

1. **First Violation:** Verbal or written reminder of the rules.
 - a. We are all human and can make mistakes. As soon as possible (either through the club social media, email, or during a virtual meeting), a member will receive a brief reminder of the rules.
2. **Second Violation:** Reminder, first written warning, and pause from privileges.
 - a. As soon as possible (either through the club social media or during a virtual meeting), a member will receive a reminder. An email will be sent from the Board to the member with a notification and warning of the violation.
 - b. If the violation occurs during a virtual meeting, they will be warned and muted for the remainder of the meeting (if they refuse to be muted or become belligerent, they may be removed from the meeting).
 - c. If the violation occurs on social media, the member's Club social media privileges will be suspended for 14 days.
3. **Third Violation:** Second written warning and pause from privileges.
 - a. An emailed notification and warning will be sent from the Board.
 - b. If the violation occurs during a virtual meeting, the member will be verbally notified of the violation and then immediately removed from the meeting.
 - c. If the violation occurs on social media, the member's Club social media privileges will be suspended for 28 days.
4. **Fourth Violation:** Revocation of privileges and Ethics review.
 - a. An emailed notification of the violation will be sent from the Board.
 - b. If the violation occurs during a virtual meeting, the member will be verbally notified and then immediately removed from the meeting.
 - c. If the violation occurs on social media, the member will be permanently banned from Club Social Media.
 - d. A fourth violation in a year will be considered a violation of the Bylaws Article I, Section 2(c). The Board will schedule a special meeting to review the member's behavior and decide if charges are warranted (Article VI, Section 2). If charges are deemed necessary, the Board will follow procedure as outlined in the Bylaws (Article VI, Section 2-4).
 - e. Threatening or abusive behavior may result in escalation directly to Fourth Violation procedure.
 - f. At any time, an individual member may prefer charges against another individual member (including an officer or board member) for alleged misconduct

prejudicial to the best interests of the club of Bracco Italiano breed (Article VI, Section 2).

Please refer to the excerpts below from the BICA Code of Ethics and the AKC Code of Sportsmanship, both of which pertain to in-person activity and posts on social media.

BICA Code of Ethics, General Conduct:

As a member of the Bracco Italiano Club of America I shall:

1. Be dedicated to the preservation and welfare of the purebred Bracco Italiano and ensure my actions are in the best interest of the breed
2. At all times exhibit good sportsmanship and good will and conduct myself in a manner which reflects positively on myself, the breed and the BICA
3. Seek the advice and assistance, when needed, of more experienced members on the care and welfare of the Bracco, and if sought out will graciously provide assistance and share the benefits of my knowledge
4. Refrain from the use of any untrue, slanderous or defaming statements against another member, kennel, breeder, a specific dog/kennel, the BICA and Judges, etc. on any public forum including social media
5. Be a responsible dog owner, providing the dogs in my care with a safe and loving home providing them with the best possible care in regard to nutrition, housing, cleanliness and veterinary care
6. Utilize appropriate health testing programs such as OFA, CAER or PennHIP for evaluation of individual traits in all of my Bracco Italiano and make all records public through these organizations.

The AKC Code of Sportsmanship:

- Sportsmen respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen commit themselves to values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- Sportsmen refuse to compromise their commitment and obligation to the sport of purebred dogs by injecting personal advantage or consideration into their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsman judge judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsman judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsman exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsman exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- The sportsman respects the AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies governing the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen find that vigorous competition and civility are not inconsistent and are able to appreciate the merit of their competition and the effort of competitors.

- Sportsmen welcome, encourage and support newcomers to the sport.
- Sportsmen will deal fairly with all those who trade with them.
- Sportsmen are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportsmen spurn any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed upon them.
- Sportsmen always consider as paramount the welfare of their dog.
- Sportsmen refuse to embarrass the sport, the American Kennel Club, or themselves while taking part in the sport.

Sources and References:

- <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/sports/good-sportsmanship-online/>
- <https://www.americanbloodhoundclub.org/american-bloodhound-club-constitution-bylaws/>
- <https://caninechronicle.com/breaking-news/akc-social-media-complaints/>
- https://www.akc.org/rules/policy-manual/akc-board-administration-policies/?fbclid=IwAR2_rhhQJpFhlzZ25ad5Eyi3zeTYHUZsKdFdLoOQmpbQ8bKrRWoJfcVQxJg
- <https://www.thebraccoclub.org/code-of-ethics>
- <https://www.verywellmind.com/ten-rules-of-netiquette-22285>