

UT TEST MARSHAL



Job Description:

The UT Test Marshal is responsible for overseeing and making sure the test runs smoothly. The Test Marshal should manage volunteers and make sure they understand their jobs and responsibilities. This person should also be capable of mitigating any problems that may arise throughout the day. The Marshal will identify and hand out running orders to the handlers before the opening remarks.

The Test Marshal must read and understand all aspects of the NAVHDA Aims Programs Test Rules book prior to test day. All overall test decisions and changes from the Judging Team are directed to the Test Marshal who in turn will communicate with the respective volunteers. The Test Marshal directly supervises both the Field and Water Events.

He or she is responsible for participants and dogs being ready to test in the proper order and must ensure that all gallery members stay at a distance where they are not a disturbance to the dog. The Test Marshal should have radio access to the judges and answers directly to the Judging Team.

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Running order sheets
- ☐ List of volunteers and their roles
- ☐ Contact info sheet for all handlers
- ☐ Aerial map of location
- ☐ Radio

Purpose and Scope (page 21)

The Utility Test is designed to test a hunting dog's usefulness to the on-foot hunter in all phases of hunting both before and after the shot, in field and marsh, and on different species of game.

While the dog that is successful in the Natural Ability Test might be likened to a promising young apprentice, the dog that successfully completes the Utility Test will have demonstrated that he is a master, or at the very least a good, solid and reliable journeyman.

This test is a challenging and demanding one, as befits the NAVHDA aim of "fostering, improving, promoting and protecting the versatile hunting dog in North America." It is not, however, an unreasonable test with unattainable goals. A very large number of fine dogs have already earned prize classifications in NAVHDA Utility Tests. It is interesting to note that the majority of these successful dogs have been owner-trained.

Serious breeders generally await results of the Utility Test before making a final evaluation of a dog's probable worth as a sire or dam. Most dogs entered in the Utility Test have reached maturity, and latent faults will probably have surfaced.

Water Group

- Search for a Duck
- Walking at Heel
- Remaining by Blind
- Steadiness by Blind
- Retrieve of a Duck

Field Group

- Search
- Pointing
- Steadiness on Game
- Retrieve of Shot Bird
- Retrieve of Dragged Game

UT FIELD MARSHAL



Job Description:

The UT Field Marshal is responsible for making sure the Field phase is conducted in a timely and orderly fashion. The Field Marshal is responsible for communicating with the handlers and making sure they are ready to go when he/she calls them to the field. This person should also be capable of mitigating any problems that may arise throughout the Field phase.

The UT Field Marshal should take direction from both the Judging Team and the Test Marshal to ensure the Field phase is run as quickly and smoothly as possible.

The Field Marshal should have radio access to communicate with the judges, the Test Marshal, and relevant volunteers.

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Running order sheet
- ☐ List of volunteers and their roles
- ☐ Contact info sheet for all handlers
- ☐ Aerial map of location
- ☐ Radio

Please make sure the judges' tent has been setup near the breakaway and that necessary items are available:

At the Breakaway:

- ☐ Judges' tent
- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Table
- ☐ Handler's gun (white)
- ☐ Shells for gunners (12 and 20 gauge)

UT Field Group (page 24)

Each dog is hunted for a minimum of 30 minutes over varied terrain known to contain game. Ideally, part of the course on which the test is conducted should be a wood-lot, shelter belt, or some other dense cover. On entering this cover, the dog should shorten his range to keep closer contact with his handler and search the cover thoroughly. A few experienced dogs may do this of their own accord, but others will have to be commanded to hunt close. The scoring of this phase of the search should be done solely on how well the dog performed the task. Whether a dog shortened his range of his own volition or on command is irrelevant.

During the search, the handler will carry an unloaded, break-open shotgun. On flushed birds, the handler will swing the gun as if shooting the bird. If quail are used, one or more pheasants or chukars must be used for each dog. It is acceptable to use all chukars or all pheasants in the UT test.

Two experienced gunners are required during the search... They will position themselves one to either side and just behind the handler with a reasonable distance between gunners. When the dog points, the gunners will move up on a general line: gunner-handler-gunner - and ready their guns for firing.

"Steady to Flush" ...begins when the dog is aware of the presence of the handler.... The steady to flush judgment ends when the bird leaves the ground.

"Steady to Wing" ...begins when the bird leaves the ground and ends when the gun is fired.

"Steady to Shot" ...begins when the gun is fired and ends when the bird hits the ground.

"Steady to Fall" ...begins when the bird hits the ground and ends when the dog is sent for the retrieve.

UT WATER MARSHAL



Job Description:

The UT Water Marshal shall manage the water portions of the test. Be sure to have the water setup ready well before handlers and judges begin arriving at the location. Handlers should wait in the parking area until called to an "on deck" location and eventually to the water. Use a radio to communicate with your Assistant Water Marshal so that handlers and dogs are called in an orderly fashion, and without unnecessary delays.

For the Sequence: Setup according to AIMS booklet and make any necessary adjustments required by the judging team. Make sure the Duck Handler has brought the ducks to the water in a cooler. They should be individually marked with a number and used sequentially (unless there has been a running order change). There should also be a test duck to test the winger.

- You will need a pickup dog to retrieve the test duck and ducks not retrieved during the test – Please DO NOT allow this dog to urinate or drop the duck at any point along the course
- You will need to assign someone as the distraction gunner during Steadiness by Blind

For the Search: Make sure the Duck Handler has brought the live ducks to the water location. They should already be prepared with flight feathers pulled and leg banded. Please make sure ducks are NOT set in a location that dogs must pass on their way to the water, or in a location that may interfere with their search.

- You will need to assign someone as a kayak operator to plant ducks as requested by the judging team

See additional info on the back of this card →

Required Equipment Checklist - SEQUENCE:

- ☐ Gun holder
- ☐ 2 break action 12-gauge guns
- ☐ 6 poppers per handler
- ☐ Heeling stakes (10 sets)
- ☐ Blind
- ☐ Decoys (6 - 8)
- ☐ Stones or small rocks (available at the water)
- ☐ Pickup dog
- ☐ Winger and electronics (tested)
- ☐ Cooler of ducks (including test duck)
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Running order sheet

Required Equipment Checklist - SEARCH:

- ☐ Break action 12-gauge gun
- ☐ Kayak, paddle, and life vest
- ☐ Steel shot
- ☐ 1 popper per handler
- ☐ Live ducks in crates
- ☐ Bird bags

UT ASSISTANT WATER MARSHAL



Job Description:

The UT Assistant Water Marshal shall help the Water Marshal manage the water portions of the test. Be sure to have the water setup ready well before handlers and judges begin arriving at the location. Handlers should wait in the parking area until called to an "on deck" location and eventually to the water. Use a radio to communicate with your Water Marshal so that handlers and dogs are called in an orderly fashion, and without unnecessary delays.

For the Sequence: Setup according to AIMS booklet and make any necessary adjustments required by the judging team. Make sure the Duck Handler has brought the ducks to the water in a cooler. They should be individually marked with a number and used sequentially (unless there has been a running order change). There should also be a test duck to test the winger.

- You will need a pickup dog to retrieve the test duck and ducks not retrieved during the test – Please DO NOT allow this dog to urinate or drop the duck at any point along the course
- You will need to assign someone as the distraction gunner during Steadiness by Blind

For the Search: Make sure the Duck Handler has brought the live ducks to the water location. They should already be prepared with flight feathers pulled and leg banded. Please make sure ducks are NOT set in a location that dogs must pass on their way to the water, or in a location that may interfere with their search.

- You will need to assign someone as a kayak operator to plant ducks as requested by the judging team

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- ☐ 2 break action 12-gauge guns
- ☐ 6 poppers per handler
- ☐ Heeling stakes (10 sets)
- ☐ Blind
- ☐ Decoys (6 - 8)
- ☐ Stones or small rocks (available at the water)
- ☐ Pickup dog
- ☐ Winger and electronics (tested)
- ☐ Cooler of ducks (including test duck)
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Running order sheet

Required Equipment Checklist - SEARCH:

- ☐ Break action 12-gauge gun
- ☐ Kayak, paddle, and life vest
- ☐ Steel shot
- ☐ 1 popper per handler
- ☐ Live ducks in crates
- ☐ Bird bags

UT WATER ASSISTANT

Job Description:

The Water Assistants should be available to assist the Water Marshal during ALL water phases of the test. Duties may include setting up at the water location, staging handlers/dogs, operating the kayak, managing the pickup dog, and cleaning up the water location at the end of the day.

Be sure to have the water setup ready well before handlers and judges begin arriving at the location. Handlers should wait in the parking area until called to an "on deck" location and eventually to the water. Use a radio to communicate with your Water Marshal so that handlers and dogs are called in an orderly fashion, and without unnecessary delays.

Required Equipment Checklist - SEQUENCE:

- ☐ Gun holder
- ☐ 2 break action 12-gauge guns
- ☐ 6 poppers per handler
- ☐ Heeling stakes (10 sets)
- ☐ Blind
- ☐ Decoys (6 - 8)
- ☐ Stones or small rocks (available at the water)
- ☐ Pickup dog
- ☐ Winger and electronics (tested)
- ☐ Cooler of ducks (including test duck)
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Running order sheet

Required Equipment Checklist - SEARCH:

- ☐ Break action 12-gauge gun
- ☐ Kayak, paddle, and life vest
- ☐ Steel shot
- ☐ 1 popper per handler
- ☐ Live ducks in crates
- ☐ Bird bags

See additional info on the back of this card →

Water Group (pages 22-24)

Walking at Heel

A course should be a serpentine style using 10 pair of stakes or trees. Gates should be placed about 3-4 feet apart, in a manner that allows for comfortable passage for the dog and handler. The distance between successive gates should be approximately 5 yards. An additional 5 yards from the last gate to the blind on the shore of a lake or marsh.

Remain by Blind

Upon arrival at the blind, the handler is allowed to position the dog in or at either side. The handler, after positioning the dog to his satisfaction, walks to a hidden spot designated by the Judges and fires two blank shotgun rounds at an interval of approximately 10 seconds.

Steadiness by Blind

The handler enters the blind, leaving the dog close by, outside of the blind. Two assistants are required, one a "gunner" stationed out of sight to either the right or left of the blind, and the other a "thrower" hidden in such a position that he can throw a dead duck high in the air so that it lands beyond the decoys in open water approximately 50 yards from the blind. At a signal from a designated Judge, the gunner fires one shot. The handler will shoulder their gun and fire one shot. On signal, the gunner fires a second shot. Next the Judge will signal the thrower to launch the dead duck. When the duck is in the air, the handler, without prompting, shoulders their gun and fires their second shot to simulate shooting the bird.

Retrieve of Duck

The dog must pick up the duck without hesitation and return it to the handler, without delay, using either a land or water route.

Search for Duck

The handler will fire one blank shot over the water and send the dog. From then on it is desirable that the handler interfere as little as possible with the dog's search. Each dog is allowed approximately ten minutes to search out the duck.

JUDGES' ATTENDANT



Job Description:

The Judges' Attendant should be available to the judges at all times and your primary job is to make sure the judges have what they need, when they need it. This could be a pen, a drink, a snack, or possibly even something from their vehicle. If they need it, please make every effort get it. In the early morning, setup the judges' canopy at the breakaway point. Make sure there is a chair for each judge. Make sure each judge has a cooler filled with COLD drinks, and make sure these coolers travel to each location. Restock the coolers as necessary. Clean out coolers at the end of each test day, return any unused drinks to the refrigerator (if available), and refill the coolers at the beginning of the next test day.

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Canopy
- ☐ Chairs for EACH judge
- ☐ Personal cooler for EACH judge filled with ice and drinks
- ☐ Cooler with ice cold, wet cooling rags
- ☐ Baggie for collecting used cooling rags
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Lunch for EACH judge (may require order and pickup)
- ☐ Extra pens
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Hand sanitizer

Judges and Judging (page 5)

NAVHDA realizes that careless or biased judging would not only be unfair to the dogs but would also defeat any attempts by NAVHDA to improve the versatile hunting breeds. The length of time available to a Judge to observe an individual dog during a test is relatively limited and only a thoroughly competent Judge can assimilate all the many facets of the dog's performance and express a fair and accurate opinion. For these reasons, NAVHDA exercises great care in the training and selection of its Judges. They are selected from among experienced hunters who possess character and integrity and have also trained and handled versatile hunting dogs. In a further effort to achieve fairness and objectivity, it is required that each NAVHDA sanctioned test be judged by three Judges.

Judges Are Required To:

- Qualify a dog he/she has trained and handled in a NA, UPT, UT or Invitational Test within the previous three years. Further, each judge is required to qualify a dog he/she has trained and handled in a UPT, UT or Invitational Test within the previous six years.
- Attend a NAVHDA Judges Workshop every third year.
- All NAVHDA judges are reviewed by the Executive Council annually and qualified persons are reappointed for the following year.

UT DUCK HANDLER

Job Description:

The Duck Handler needs to make sure ducks are available and ready to go for the Drag, the Sequence, and Search phases of the UT test. ALL ducks must be banded prior to being dispatched or released. Please DO NOT handle ducks near participating dogs and DO NOT leave ANY birds, crates, feathers, or bird scent in an area in which a dog must pass to get to any portion of the test.

For the Drag: ducks should be dispatched early in the morning, banded, and individually numbered (1 for each dog participating that day, plus 1 extra to test the winger at the water sequence). Use a permanent marker and mark the bill and webbing of one foot. Place them in a cooler. Communicate with the Duck Drag Captain and have the cooler available and ready to go at the start of the Drag portion of the test (typically occurs immediately after field portion). Once each dog completes the drag, return the duck to the cooler. Once the Drag portion is complete, take the cooler of ducks to the water location. Your role also includes assisting the Duck Drag Captain during the drag.

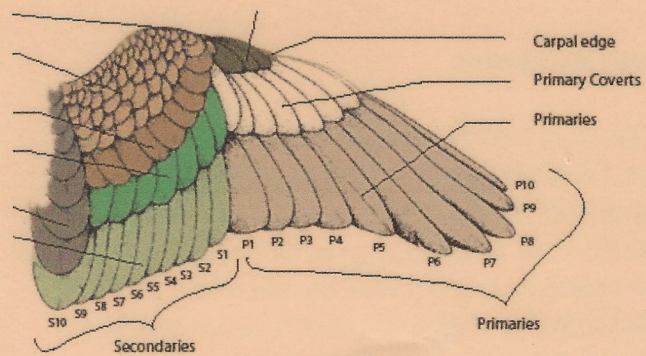
For the Search: remove the flight feathers from one wing and apply a band. Keep the live ducks in crates. If there are 6 dogs running, you will need 9 live ducks. (7 dogs = 11 ducks). Take the crates to the water location.

See additional info on the back of this card →

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Duck crate/s
- ☐ Bird bags
- ☐ Duck dispatch kit
- ☐ Leg bands
- ☐ Banding tool
- ☐ Permanent marker
- ☐ Long rope
- ☐ Cooler
- ☐ Newspaper or baggies to wrap ducks

Location of Primary Feathers:



THROUGHOUT THE TEST WEEKEND

Make sure the birds are shaded, have food and water, and are housed adequately (and safe from predators) overnight.

DUCK DRAG CAPTAIN



Job Description:

The Duck Drag Captain needs to take direction from the judging team to establish the requested drag location. Make sure ducks are available and ready to go for the Drag portion of the test by assisting and coordinating with the Duck Handler. Confirm ducks have been dispatched, banded, and individually marked. Please DO NOT handle ducks near participating dogs and DO NOT leave ANY birds, crates, feathers, or bird scent in an area in which a dog must pass to get to any portion of the test. Please note: some handlers may choose to use fur instead of a duck.

For the Drag: use ducks in sequential order (unless there has been a running order change). Place the duck in a bird bag and provide it to the judge along with the rope. Once each dog completes the drag, wrap the duck (in paper or baggie) and return the duck to the cooler. Once the Drag portion is complete, the Duck Handler should take the cooler of ducks to the water location.

See additional info on the back of this card →

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Bird bags
- ☐ Long rope
- ☐ Dispatched ducks (and possibly fur)
- ☐ Cooler
- ☐ Newspaper or baggies to wrap ducks
- ☐ Running order sheet

Retrieve of Dragged Game (page 27)

The drag track should be between 100 and 200 yards depending on the terrain with one bend (not a sharp hook) near the center of the course. The first part of the drag should be over fairly open cover so the dog's attitude and actions can be observed. The balance of the track should be out of sight of the handler. This is important since some dogs, when they feel they are out of sight, abandon the search or mishandle or bury the game.

The game used should be cold. If the handler desires fur, they must provide the cold, furred game animal. The start of the drag can easily be marked with some feathers or fur, and the game should be deposited at the exact end of the drag in cover, but not in a hole or depression. The Judge who made the drag should then continue walking in the same direction and conceal himself 15 to 20 yards (depending on the density of the cover or terrain) from the game on the down wind side to observe the dog's actions when it arrives at the game. When this Judge is concealed, he signals his colleagues to start the test.

The handler brings the dog up on a lead, and the Judge points out the start of this drag. The handler shows the dog the start of the drag and commands it to retrieve. At this point, the dog is on his own and no signal or command is permitted.

The manner in which the dog works the drag matters little. This can vary widely with the weather, experience, and temperament. If there is a side wind the dog may run the drag on the down-wind side. Some dogs work with head high, others with the nose touching the ground.

A dog performs well when it finds the game quickly, picks it up, and returns eagerly to the handler. The dog should sit or stand close to the handler and hold the bird until the handler takes it.

UT BIRD CAPTAIN



Job Description:

UT Bird Captain is responsible for assembling and managing the Bird Planters, and typically helps plant birds as well. You and your team are to plant birds throughout the field/s and in a manner AS INSTRUCTED by the senior judge. You will typically plant 5 birds for the first run of the day, and 4 birds for each subsequent run...however, please TAKE INSTRUCTION from the senior judge. Use numbered flags to mark the plant locations determined by the senior judge. **MAKE SURE ALL ARE REMOVED** from the field before the first run.

Setup the bird tent and remain there throughout the entirety of the field phase. Have birds loaded in bird bags IN ADVANCE of each run. Wait for radio instructions before planting the field. Utilize a 4-wheeler or UTV to hasten the bird-planting process. Please DO NOT run the 4-wheeler directly to every plant location, but instead drive along the mowed "lanes" and walk on foot to the plant location. After your birds have been planted return immediately to the bird tent. Once all bird planters have returned to the bird tent, radio to the judges to let them know **BIRDS HAVE BEEN PLANTED**. Remain at the bird tent and restock your bird bags in preparation for the next run. Have your radio readily available so you receive instructions when needed. **BE PREPARED** to run a bird (or two) to the judges should they call for a bird during the current run.

See additional info on the back of this card →

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Bird tent and net
- ☐ Bird crates (if boxes take utility knife)
- ☐ 4-wheelers and/or UTVs
- ☐ Bird bags
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Aerial map and 5 numbered flags
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Orange shirt and hat
- ☐ Cooler for dead birds

UT Field Group (page 24)

Search (page 24)

Each dog is hunted for a minimum of 30 minutes over varied terrain known to contain game.... The scoring of this phase of the search should be done solely on how well the dog performed the task. Whether a dog shortened his range of his own volition or on command is irrelevant.

During the search, the handler will carry an unloaded, break-open shotgun. On flushed birds, the handler will swing the gun as if shooting the bird.... Two experienced gunners are required during the search.

Pointing (page 26)

Judgment of pointing begins when a convincing point is established. Judgment of pointing ends when the dog is aware of the presence of the handler.

Steadiness on Game (page 26)

The highest score in steadiness can only be awarded when quiet, confident and sportsmanlike team work between handler and dog is displayed during most of the bird contacts.

Retrieve of Shot Bird (page 26)

A good versatile hunting dog will accomplish the retrieve quickly, happily and eagerly. On command, the dog should go quickly to the fallen bird, pick it up, return directly to the handler and then wait calmly until told to release the bird to hand.

THROUGHOUT THE TEST WEEKEND

Make sure the birds are well cared for, have plenty of shade, and are kept dry in rainy conditions.

At the end of each test day

Make sure that the remaining birds are picked up at the end of the day, provided with food and water, and are housed adequately (and safe from predators) overnight.

UT BIRD PLANTER

Job Description:

UT Bird Planters are to plant birds throughout the field/s and in a manner AS INSTRUCTED by the senior judge. Gather this information from your Bird Captain as they will have received instructions from the senior judge. It is recommended that bird planters use gloves while planting the birds.

Setup the bird tent and remain there throughout the entirety of the field SEARCH phase. Have birds loaded in bird bags IN ADVANCE of each run. Wait for radio instructions before planting the field. Utilize a 4-wheeler or UTV to hasten the bird-planting process. Please DO NOT run the 4-wheeler directly to every plant location, but instead drive along the mowed "lanes" and walk on foot to the plant location. After your birds have been planted return immediately to the bird tent. Once all bird planters have returned to the bird tent, have the Bird Captain radio to the judges to let them know BIRDS HAVE BEEN PLANTED. Restock your bird bags in preparation for the next run. Listen to the radio so you receive instructions when needed. BE PREPARED to run a bird (or two) to the judges should they call for a bird during the current run.

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ 4-wheeler or UTV
- ☐ Bird bags
- ☐ Aerial map of test location
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Orange shirt and hat
- ☐ Bird tent
- ☐ Bird crates/boxes (utility knife)
- ☐ Cooler for dead birds

THROUGHOUT THE TEST WEEKEND

Make sure the birds are well cared for with food and water, have plenty of shade, are stored safe from predators, and are kept dry in rainy conditions.

UT Field Group (page 24)

Search (page 24)

Each dog is hunted for a minimum of 30 minutes over varied terrain known to contain game. Ideally, part of the course on which the test is conducted should be a wood-lot, shelter belt, or some other dense cover. On entering this cover, the dog should shorten his range to keep closer contact with his handler and search the cover thoroughly. A few experienced dogs may do this of their own accord, but others will have to be commanded to hunt close. The scoring of this phase of the search should be done solely on how well the dog performed the task. Whether a dog shortened his range of his own volition or on command is irrelevant.

During the search, the handler will carry an unloaded, break-open shotgun. On flushed birds, the handler will swing the gun as if shooting the bird. If quail are used, one or more pheasants or chukars must be used for each dog. It is acceptable to use all chukars or all pheasants in the UT test.

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Retrieve of Shot Bird (page 26)

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PICKUP DOG

Job Description:

The Pickup Dog should be available at the water location to assist the Water Marshal during the Water phase of the test. The pickup dog will be responsible for retrieving any test ducks. You and your dog should wait quietly and patiently until you are called into duty. Depending on how the day goes, you may or may not be called into action. Regardless, please wait in a location where you can quickly and easily get to the water but NOT be a distraction to any test participant.

Please DO NOT allow this dog to urinate or drop the duck at any point along the course.

Required Equipment Checklist:

- ☐ Dog
- ☐ Leash and/or e-collar
- ☐ Tie out or crate (if necessary)