



North Dakota Retriever Club Event Volunteer Opportunities

Last Revised: 2 Jan 2023

NDRC regular members are required to provide a minimum of two days of volunteer service during the year at NDRC sponsored events and activities. Additional volunteer beyond the two-day minimum is encouraged. Events with volunteer service opportunities include our AKC Hunt Tests and Field Trials, occurring from June to September each year.

Some of the volunteer jobs and tasks that club members available be asked to work during their two days of volunteer time include:

- Preparing and delivering lunches to other workers during Hunt Tests and Field Trials
- Serving as a Stake Chair
- Serving as a Marshall
- Bird Hanger
- Bird Technician (Bird Thrower or Planter)
- Gunner
- Traffic Control

For a detailed description of some of these jobs is included below.





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EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Things you should have when working a Hunt Test or Field Trial

- For Hunt Tests – Dark (black is ideal) or camo clothing
- For Field Trials – Both dark clothing and a white jacket (you may need to switch depending on which station or job)
- A duck call
- A shotgun (12 gauge preferred but 20 is also acceptable)
* Unless otherwise noted ammunition is provided at hunt tests and field trials
- Hearing protection (recommend electronic hearing protection)

Optional Items you may want to bring with to a Hunt Test or Field Trial

- Gloves (work gloves or mechanics gloves recommended)
- Camp Chair (Club has some chairs for bird stations)
- Thermos and/or Water Bottle (Water is provided but always good to have more)
- Bug repellent
- Sun block
- Wellies (Rubber Boots)
- Wide Brimmed Hat
- Rain Suit



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Flyer Station

People Required: 2 to 3 people

- 1 x Bird Technician (Bird Thrower)
- 1 to 2 x Gunners

Description: In Hunt Tests (HT) and Field Trials (FT) there is usually one live flyer shot for the test. This is often the first series of most events. A bird, usually a duck is thrown into the air and shot.

Equipment: Holding blind, radio, duck crates, chairs, ear protection. For Hunt Tests clothing should be dark color or camo. For Field Trials a bright white, shirt or jacket is worn. Bring your own shot gun, either a 12 or 20 gauge with full choke. You should expect wet feet, dress as you need.

How it works: The two judges will set up a test, evaluating wind, cover, terrane changes, distance, and water options. The stake chair will assist, providing equipment and people to set up the number of stations needed for each series. The judges and stake chair will direct the volunteers to set up their assigned station at a specific location. Once all the stations are settled the judges will instruct the flyer station to throw and shoot the bird to specific fall area. The directions are "right to left" "left to right" "angle back". The right or left is from the judge's perspective.

The judges will state the order of the birds. Depending on the stake, singles or multiple birds thrown, before the dog is sent to retrieve them.

For singles a station will be selected to be "number one", bird is thrown/shot, dog is sent. A different station is selected to be "number two", bird is thrown/shot dog is sent. For multiples the judge will determine the order of the birds. Station 1, 2, 3

When a dog is ready to come to the line the judge will call "Guns up" That means all stations are in position to shoot/throw their birds. That means guns are loaded and ready. Duck is in hand.

The judge will "call" for the bird from each station by waving an object. There is about a 3 second delay between each throw. When it isn't your turn stand quietly.

Gun safety is paramount. The flyer station is positioned to ensure the safety of people and dogs. If the throw is errant and the duck swings toward unsafe area do not shoot. If the throw is correct direction shoot until the duck is hit. Get CLEAR instructions from the judges about raking.

If the duck is missed and flies away a "no bird" is called. The dog is not sent, and every effort will be made to recover the bird. If recovery is not possible or quickly accomplished, then abandon the effort under the judge's direction. The stations will all reset, dead bird stations will pick up their birds.

The judge will give directions for action after the bird is shot.

- Stand quietly (any movement distracts the dogs, not good)
- Sit down
- Retire: hide behind holding blind, bush or mound





Dead Bird Station(s)

People Required: 1 to 2 Bird Technicians

Description: One to two people hide behind a holding blind, bush, or other feature with a chair, radio, boomer or popper gun and ammo and a bag of dead birds, usually ducks. On the direction of the judge the person will, for a Hunt Test (HT), use a duck call, shoot then throw the bird to a spot designated by the judge. For a Field Trial (FT) a shot and then throw is the sequence. FT a white jacket/shirt long sleeved is worn, in HT dark or camo clothing.

How it Works: In Hunt Test and Field Trials there are multiple Dead Bird stations. Minimum of two stations for a series up to four stations for some series. The number is determined by the type of event and changes with each setup. The more advanced dogs will have highest number of Dead Bird stations.

The two judges will set up a test, evaluating wind, cover, terrane changes, distance, and water options. The stake chair will assist, providing equipment and people to set up the number of stations needed for each series. The judges and stake chair will direct the volunteers to set up their assigned station at a specific location. Once all the stations are settled the judges will instruct the dead bird station to throw the bird to specific fall area. The directions are "right to left", "left to right", or "angle back". The right or left is from the judge's perspective. Judges will communicate using radios, volume just high enough for you to hear and not to distract the dogs.

The judges will state the order of the birds. Depending on the stake, singles or multiple birds thrown, before the dog is sent to retrieve them. For singles a station will be selected to be "number one", bird is thrown/shot, dog is sent. A different station is selected to be "number two", bird is thrown/shot dog is sent. For multiples, the judge will determine the order of the birds. Station 1, 2, and 3.

When a dog is ready to come to the line the judge will call "Guns up" That means all stations are in position to shoot/throw their birds. That means boomer is ready. Duck is in hand. The judge will "call" for the bird from each station by waving an object. There is about a 3 second delay between each throw. When it isn't your turn stand quietly.

The judge will give directions for action after the bird is thrown. Directions may include to stand Quietly (any movement can distract the dog, which is not good), sit down, or retire (hide behind holding blind, bush or mound).

Sometimes dogs will struggle in the field. Your job is to do NOTHING, unless the judge says to help.

Ways to help include standing up and holler "hey hey", faking a throw toward the bird on the ground. Only under specific directions from the judge will you rethrow or touch a bird. If the dogs comes near your station, do nothing and never make eye contact.



Be sure there are no birds on the ground in your station. They are bagged. Stations will need to be "re-birded". Workers will bring more birds. Never drag birds. Carry them clear of the ground so the scent will not distract the dogs to the wrong area.

Things might happen that there is a no "bird called" The judges will make that call, dog is not sent. The stations will all reset, dead bird stations will pick up their birds.



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Blind Planter Station

People Required: 1 Bird Technician

Description: One person with a radio, chair, and bag of dead birds, wearing dark or camo clothing is hidden from view of the dogs on the line behind a holding blind, bush, or other feature.

How it Works:

At a specific time during the dog's performance the blind planter will rush out and place a dead bird exactly where the judge as instructed. The spot is the same for all dogs. There usually is a ribbon, stake or bush that identifies the area to the handler, as seen from the line (where the dog sits before being sent to retrieve).

Be sure there are no birds on the ground in your station. They are bagged. Stations will need to be "re-birded". Workers will bring more birds. Never drag birds. Carry them clear of the ground so the scent will not distract the dogs to the wrong area.

Sometimes dogs will struggle in the field. If the dogs come near your station, do nothing. Never make eye contact. Your job is to do NOTHING unless the judge says to help.

Things might happen that there is a no "bird called" The judges will make that call, dog is not sent. The stations will all reset, all stations will pick up their birds.