

BEST PRACTICES FOR AKC FIELD TRIAL AND HUNTING TEST EVENT COMMITTEES

Updated November 1, 2024

EVENT CHAIRPERSON:

6 - 12+ Months Prior:

- A. Assemble the Committee: Secretary, Bird Steward, Captain of the Guns, Field Marshal, Safety Officer, Hospitality Chair and Wrangler. Consider back up assignments for key positions.
- B. Remind committee members to refresh themselves on all rules as well as any recent changes or updates from AKC. Sometimes rule changes can affect overall event planning.
- C. Ensure committee members have completed AKC-required Darkness to Light® training and encourage safe sport practices.
- D. Secure suitable grounds; establish and maintain communications with the person(s) responsible for lease of the site.
 - 1. Site must be available before and after actual event hours and have adequate parking areas and good access roads.
 - 2. Requirements for insurance, deposits, site usage limitations, additional site requirements etc.
 - 3. Establish extent of owner/manager site involvement during the event.
 - 4. Discuss any potential problems that may result from the event and work to resolve them beforehand. Keeping frequent communication can help avoid oversights by site management.
 - 5. ***A special note: It is vital for all clubs to respect the land where the events are held. Private landowners and governmental bodies become very disenchanted with dogs and dog people when their property is damaged or destroyed.***
- E. Determine legal requirements such as state and/or local licenses, permits or other requirements, insurance and other land use requirements, including any regulations on type of shot allowed on the event site.
- F. Hire Judges, send contracts or letters confirming assignments and dates. Make sure Judges Affirmation Forms have been signed when needed.
- G. Work with the committee and club Treasurer to set entry fees.
- H. Make financial and reporting arrangements with club Treasurer, including appropriate levels of liability insurance recommended for the type of event. Communicate and coordinate these arrangements with Committee Chairs.
- I. Solicit event sponsors such as Tractor Supply, local feed, gun or other related companies.
- J. Solicit or determine trophies or prizes (if any) that are to be offered.
- K. Secure Parent Club permission if needed. (Pointing Breeds)

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Ensure the Premium List Material is submitted to the Trial/Test Secretary by the various Event Committee Chairs by the deadline(s).
- B. Ensure the AKC Event Application, Parent Club permission, Judges Panel, Emergency Plan and Premium List are submitted to AKC by their deadlines.
- C. Review the AKC procedures for [Dealing with Misconduct](#) with all members of the Event Committee.

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- D. Work with committee to layout the course(s).
- E. Take equipment inventory.
- F. Arrange for ATVs, boats, anchors, oars, and life jackets as needed for the event type.
- G. Arrange for delivery/removal of port-a-potties if needed.
- H. Ensure trash cans are readily available especially near areas where handlers may tend to congregate.
- I. Secure 2-way radios/walkie talkies or other communications equipment if needed.
- J. Arrange for emergency towing vehicles to be available in the event of inclement weather if there is a potential need.
- K. Arrange for Judge's gifts.
- L. Arrange for a nearby host hotel.
- M. Visit the hotel and inform them of the event.
- N. See if they will offer a special rate to participants, free rooms for Judges or other discounts.
- O. Make hotel arrangements for Judges if needed.
- P. Coordinate with Event Secretary to include appropriate information in the Premium List.
- Q. Follow up with committee members/make sure everything is on track/secure help where needed.
- R. Ensure all payments are made in a timely manner including the AKC Event Application Fees.
- S. Arrange for someone to transport Judges to/from airport if needed.
- T. Arrange for someone to take event photos.
- U. Assign traffic control and parking supervision if needed.
- V. Ensure extra orange vests (or other color as required) are on hand in case they are needed.
- W. Ensure appropriate Test Dogs are on hand during the event for each series. (Retrievers)
- X. Appoint someone to oversee the transportation of the club's equipment to and from the grounds.

Week before the Event:

- A. Inspect grounds and assign volunteers to make sure areas are clear of hazards, such as broken glass, etc., and there is fresh dog/horse water on the course as appropriate for the event type.
- B. Designate exercise and camping areas.
- C. Work with committee to make adjustments to course(s).

Day Before the Event:

- A. Committee and Judges meet to inspect grounds and determine nature and objectives for hunting situations and finalize course layout. (Retrievers)

Day of the Event:

- A. Make sure signs are put up and taken down.
- B. Arrive early, check the courses and the wind direction.
- C. Inspect routes to falls and blinds (Retrievers) Ensure all blinds are properly marked. (Retrievers)

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- D. Meet with Judges to explain the layout of the grounds; point out any hazards, tree lines, fences or natural barriers which can affect the running, answer questions and plan the mechanics of the event as needed.
- E. Check in with key committee members.
- F. Make sure a properly completed and signed copy of the Disaster and Emergency Plan is posted.
- G. Supervise the event and make sure the Test or Trial stays on schedule.
- H. Address any problems or disputes that may arise.
- I. Work with Judges and Event Committee to decide if an event should be halted due to weather and at what point the event shall resume.
- J. Work with Event Secretary to investigate and document serious injuries to a dog/death of a dog.
- K. Make sure Treasurer is on hand or make appropriate arrangements for Judges to be paid at the end of the event.

After the Event:

- A. Check with Judges for suggestions for improvement.
- B. Ensure the grounds are left at least as good as you found them.
- C. Approve bills to be paid.
- D. Confirm all Judges and other hired personnel have been paid.
- E. Check with committee members and Treasurer to ensure you have everything you need for the final Committee Report.
- F. Check to see that AKC Recording Fees and reports are submitted on time.
- G. Ensure thank you letters are sent to Judges.
- H. Prepare and deliver final Event Report, including financial results to the club.

EVENT SECRETARY

4 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Coordinate with the entire Event Committee to gather information needed for the Premium list and ensure required copy(s) is (are) mailed to AKC on schedule.
- B. Order Ribbons and Rosettes.

1 - 2 Months Prior:

- A. Upload Premium List to [AKC Event Management System](#) to ensure event is advertised on the AKC website and is available to those using the [Event Search Tool](#). This also feeds into other sites that list events being offered.
- B. Send Premium List to prospective participants as well as nearby All-Breed and Specialty Clubs.
- C. Receive and process entries, confirm eligibility of dogs and entry forms have been fully completed and determine Pro vs Amateur status of handler if required. (Retrievers)

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D. Prepare Wait List.

Final Week Prior:

- A. Hold the Draw, Prepare Running Order and Catalog.
- B. Gunner's Certification. (Pointing Breeds)

Day of the Event:

- A. Provide score/evaluation sheets to judges.
- B. Coordinate adjustments to Running Order. (Move ups, DQs, Pulls etc.)
- C. Record score sheets.
- D. Make ADA Accommodations as needed.
- E. Award ribbons.
- F. Get Judge's Certification of results/scores and sign catalog. (Certification)
- G. Work with Event Chairperson to investigate and document serious injuries or death of a dog.
- H. Work with Judges and Event Committee to investigate and document any DQ by Committee or allegations of Unsportsmanlike Conduct and/or Protests against any dog.

After the Event:

- A. Prepare and submit all AKC reporting:
 - 1. Trial Secretary's Report (within 7 days of event), Judges Sheets, Trial Reports and Event Fees as required.
 - 2. Coordinate payment to AKC with Chairman and/or Treasurer.
 - 3. DQ by Event Committee.
 - 4. Cancellations of awards.
- B. Provide recap to Chairperson for Final Event Report.
- C. Refund entry fees, if needed.

SAFETY OFFICER

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Become familiar with AKC's policies concerning emergency procedures at events.
 - 1. [How to Develop an Event Emergency Plan](#)
 - 2. [AKC Disaster & Emergency Plan Forms & Instructions](#)
 - 3. [AKC Active Shooter Attack Resources](#)
- B. Work with committee to develop written procedures covering different emergency situations.
- C. Inventory and replenish First Aid Kits for humans, horses and dogs as appropriate.
- D. Make arrangements for an Official Event Emergency Veterinary Services and provide all relevant information to the event Secretary to publish in the Premium List.

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Day of the Event:

- A. Have multiple copies of emergency telephone numbers, directions to the emergency facilities, the hours the facilities operate and information on any alternate facilities are available posted where they can be easily accessed.
- B. Make sure there is at least one working cell phone available during event hours
- C. Remain on site and available in case there is an emergency

CAPTAIN OF THE GUNS (if required for event type)

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Secure qualified gunners and review AKC Safety Requirement for appropriate type of test.
- B. Provide a list of suggested guns to Event Committee for approval.
- C. Ensure all official guns in the field are licensed within the jurisdiction in which event is held.
- D. Coordinate ammo/popper needs with Chairman and Treasurer.
- E. Work with Chairman to provide holding and camouflage blinds to hide gun stations.
(Retrievers)
- F. Set up and manage all communication with guns to include making them aware of teams, accommodations, directions to fields, rotations, starting times, expense policy and procedures as well as any meetings.

Day of the Event:

- A. Determine from the Judges the gunning and throwing requirements in each test.
- B. Make sure gunners are wearing customary hunting attire for the event, as well as appropriate eye and ear protection.
- C. Closely monitor the gunning to ensure that the event is shot safely and effectively.
- D. Be prepared to confront issues with gun team members if needed.
- E. Report any issues or unusual incidents to the Chairperson.
- F. Be prepared to act as a member of the disciplinary committee should an incident occur requiring the need for one.

BIRD STEWARD (if required for event type)

6 - 12 Months Prior:

- A. Order Birds/Ducks and Set Pricing.

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Order bird bands if needed.
- B. Secure Assistant Stewards, Bird Planters, Bird Throwers, Blind Planters and launchers as needed.

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- C. Ensure workers have customary and proper attire for event type including rain gear, rubber boots and/or waders.
- D. Provide game calls. (Retrievers)
- E. Arrange for care and storage of birds/ducks.
- F. Arrange for dead bird/duck disposal.
- G. Plan for sale/disposal of left over birds/ducks.

Day of the Event

- A. Assume charge of birds/ducks including delivery, storage and keep a running count throughout the event.
- B. Meet with bird planters to confirm bird placements in varying wind conditions in order to provide a consistent test of bird-finding ability.
- C. Instruct and supervise Blind Planters including rotation of personnel. (Retrievers)
- D. Monitor changes in wind and weather during the event and work with Chairperson and Judges to make adjustments as they are needed.
- E. Monitor storage areas to minimize any stressful conditions.
- F. Ensure humane treatment of birds/ducks.
- G. Ensure dead birds/ducks are handled in a respectful manner and stored in a discreet location.
- H. Rotate ducks allowing drying time. (Retrievers)

After the Event:

- A. Coordinate the sale or other placement of left over birds/ducks.
- B. Ensure proper disposal of all dead birds/ducks.

FIELD MARSHAL

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Secure and assign Line Marshals.
- B. Secure white/chalk boards and markers.
- C. Work with Chairperson to lay out course(s).
- D. Work with Chairperson to plan holding blinds (Retrievers).
- E. Prepare/Secure any signage that may be needed on the courses .

During The Event:

- A. Arrive early and mark the Breakaway lines, holding blinds and any other signage that may be helpful to handlers, Judges or gallery.
- B. Ensure equipment appropriate for the event type is on hand including chairs for judges, empty shotguns for use by handlers, blind markers, boat, holding blinds, launchers, spray paint, extra camouflage, decoys, bird sacks, game calls and waders.

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- C. Ensure the Line Marshals have the running order prior to the start time.
- D. Speak to Judges to get any special requirements or instructions and make sure all Line Marshals and helpers are aware of them so they can be passed on to all workers, handlers and gallery.
- E. Call for Test Dogs when needed. (Retrievers)
- F. Start the event each day.
- G. Ensure there is a good system of communication to the handlers about dogs that are currently in action and how long before the next dogs will be needed at the line.
- H. Announce the braces and callbacks.
- I. Announce the location for each series. (Retrievers)
- J. Verify that all handler's guns are unloaded before proceeding to the line and verify blank rounds are loaded in stakes that require blank rounds to be shot.
- K. Make sure everyone in the field is wearing appropriate colors for the event.
- L. Control the gallery so they do not in any way interfere with the running of event.
- M. Communicate with Bird Planters and others to keep the flow of dogs constant. Signal the Blind Planters to plant the blind. (Retrievers)
- N. Collect score sheets from Judges and deliver them to the Secretary.
- O. Communicate with Judges to prepare and organize a proper list for callbacks.
- P. Secure suitable bye dogs when needed.

After the Event:

- A. Make sure all equipment is gathered and returned to the designated person(s) including clipboards, chalkboards, communications equipment and all breakaway, blind or other markers.
- B. Take down all signage on the courses.
- C. Ensure all trash is properly disposed of.

HOSPITALITY CHAIR

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Inventory Supplies .
- B. Arrange for someone to bring the judges breakfast each morning.
- C. Plan Judges and workers lunch and/or dinner .
- D. Plan for handler meals and/or refreshments and set prices.
- E. If offering handler, gallery and/or workers lunch recruit helpers for tasks such as food prep, serving, taking money, clean up etc.
- F. Coordinate with Secretary to publish relevant lunch/dinner information in the Premium List.
- G. Create shopping list and coordinate with Chairperson and/or Treasurer to purchase needed supplies.
- H. Make reservation for Judges and/or post event dinner(s) and coordinate with Chairman to determine invitee list.

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- I. Manage RSVPs if needed.

During the Event:

- A. Arrive early and have coffee and/or other hospitality items ready when Judges, workers and others arrive.
- B. Bring cash boxes or container to keep money/make change if selling items or asking for donations.
- C. Check to see that judges are comfortable – snacks, Kleenex, water etc.
- D. Coordinate with Field Marshal for timing of Judges lunches and have the lunches ready promptly.
- E. Communicate timing of workers' and/or handlers' lunch if offering.
- F. Coordinate and oversee lunch preparations, service, and clean up.
- G. Plan a small afternoon snack to send out with judges following lunch – cookie, brownie, small bag of trail mix etc. Something they can carry in their pocket.

After the Event:

- A. Coordinate and manage the sale or donation of any leftovers.
- B. Ensure everything is cleaned up and trash is properly disposed of.
- C. If there is a Judges Dinner, arrive early and check in with the restaurant to make sure everything is in order.

WRANGLER (If there will be horses)

Note: If you are renting horses for a Gallery, the contract usually includes a Wrangler to handle this along with overall management of all the rented horses. If horses are contracted for Judges and workers, someone with appropriate knowledge within the club can fill this role.

3 - 6 Months Prior:

- A. Secure horses for judges, workers and gallery. (If appropriate)
- B. Arrange corral / stake out.

During the Event:

- A. Arrive early to prepare for and assist with the delivery and tacking.
- B. Monitor the horses throughout the day and make sure they are watered and rested as needed.
- C. Coordinate/Communicate to arrange for pick up.

After the Event:

- A. Assist with untacking and pick up as needed.
- B. Assist with any cleanup as needed.

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