

Holding a NAVHDA Handler Clinic



This pamphlet addresses the procedures for holding a sanctioned NAVHDA Handler Clinic. You will find the information to be quite complete and useful. Free information packets and brochures defining other sanctioned NAVHDA events and guidelines are available from the **NAVHDA International Office, P.O. Box 520, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60006-0520. Telephone 847.253.6488, Fax 847.255.5987, Web site: www.navhda.org, Email navoffice@navhda.org**

1 Everybody Benefits

The Handler Clinic is a tool developed by NAVHDA to educate aspiring judges, handlers and other NAVHDA members. The intensive two day weekend training session is conducted by an official NAVHDA Handler Clinic Leader. During a clinic, participants are familiarized with the NAVHDA system and philosophy of judging versatile hunting dogs by learning how to use judge work cards and scoring Natural Ability, Utility Preparatory, and Utility dogs. The Handler Clinic is one of the requirements for becoming an "Approved Apprentice" in the NAVHDA Judge Development program.

A clinic provides everyone involved with an opportunity to learn about versatile hunting dogs. Members with their first pup see other dogs work and gain insight into what their new pup is doing and why. A breeder acquires knowledge about what characteristics to look for in breeding stock and progeny. A handler benefits by learning how NAVHDA evaluates versatile hunting dogs. Even an experienced handler will learn something new during any clinic due to the diversity of the group and the depth of discussion.

2 Look Before You Leap

There are a few prerequisites and possible pitfalls for a chapter to consider before making a commitment to hold a Handler Clinic.

Consider this

1. It is recommended that newer chapters without established NAVHDA members request a New Chapter Clinic. A New Chapter Clinic is just that. It will be lead by someone who will assist your chapter with organizational questions, test set-up or any group of topics. This is not an official Handler Clinic. Please discuss the difference between a New Chapter Clinic and an official Handler Clinic with the Director of Promotion or call the NAVHDA office for assistance.

2. The Official Handler Clinic chapter should have a few potential Utility dogs and should have developed beyond the beginning stages of understanding the NAVHDA philosophy.
3. Birds may be in short supply. Please see section 8 of this packet entitled "Stock Up."
4. The chapter's treasury must be able to support the cost of hosting a full weekend clinic.

Estimate a budget

Preparing an estimated budget for a proposed Handler Clinic helps your chapter decide whether hosting a clinic is financially feasible and serves as an aid in setting enrollment fees once the decision is made.

The following is a sample budget:

Estimate of Handler Clinic Expenses

International Organization Fee.....	\$450.00
Optional Quail or Chucker	
20 Quail at \$6.00	\$120.00
20 Chucker at \$8.00	\$160.00
3 Ducks at \$10.00	\$30.00
3 Pheasants at \$10.00	\$30.00
Clinic Leader Lodging (2 nights)	\$150.00
Clinic Leader Meals	\$60.00
Printing and Postage	\$20.00
Poppers & Shells	\$20.00
Estimated Cost to Chapter.....	+/- \$900.00

Based on these estimates, the chapter needs around 12 participants at \$80.00 each to break even. The above is only an estimate; be sure to check local land use fees, bird costs, etc. early in planning. Once dates are set, most chapters require deposits along with enrollments.

3 Get the Go-Ahead

Make a date

When trying to find the best weekend to hold a clinic, your chapter should contact the surrounding chapters to avoid conflicts with test dates. This also helps boost enrollment by getting the word out early, and gathering opinions on which weekends work better from seasoned chapters.

Fill it out

Once it has been decided that a Handler Clinic is financially feasible and physically possible for your chapter, it is time to send in the sanctioned Handler Clinic Application found in this packet. Approval of the dates and assignment of the Clinician will be handled by the Director of Judge Development.

Mail it to:

Director of Judge Development
NAVHDA
P.O. Box 520
Arlington Heights, IL 60006-520

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The Price We Pay

What's the fee?

There is a fee of \$450.00 for a sanctioned Handler Clinic. Your chapter will be invoiced for this amount.

This payment must be received no later than thirty days after the clinic. Pre-payment is advised.

What's included?

The transportation cost for the assigned Clinic Leader is paid by the Clinic Leader and reimbursed by the International. However, your chapter is responsible for meals and housing for the Clinic Leader during the weekend.

The clinic materials will be sent to your Clinic Secretary by the NAVHDA office. Each packet contains enough materials for 20 participants.

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Print a Flyer

Effective advertising helps keep the enrollment level high and the stress level low. To fully entice and inform potential attendants, send a flyer out early and include the following information:

1. Date and time.
2. Location.
3. Brief description. Stress the fact that clinic attendance is an excellent opportunity to better understand the NAVHDA philosophy and system of judging.
4. Cost. No person may enter one day of the clinic. State

that this is a two day clinic for "X" amount of dollars. The amount charged is the decision of your chapter.

5. Mention that the clinic will be held rain or shine.
6. Name, phone number, mailing address and e-mail address of contact person.
7. Deadline for enrolling.
8. Enrollment form. Be sure to ask for the mailing address, phone number and e-mail address of each entrant in case you find it necessary to contact them. State "Applications must be accompanied by a check" to save your chapter from the hassle of billing and more paperwork. Some chapters accept a partial payment when the application is submitted and collect the balance at the clinic.

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Roster Duty

The chapter appointed Clinic Secretary receives all enrollment forms and types an official list of names and addresses of members attending the clinic. A star must be placed next to the names of all Apprentice Judges. To allay any confusion, use this list as a master for related mailings and attendance numbers. This list will be given to the Clinic Leader upon arrival.

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Welcome and Inform

Each participant must be mailed a letter welcoming them to the Sanctioned NAVHDA Handler Clinic and informing them of the following details:

1. Each entrant should bring a current NAVHDA "Aims, Programs and Tests" rule book. They should be told to familiarize themselves with the contents.
2. A very good map with motel and camping information should be distributed to those traveling to a new area.
3. Include any information that may help members plan and pack for comfort. They may need to be told to dress for varying weather conditions and terrain, to wear blaze orange for their own safety, or to bring a lawn chair for discussions. Participants should also be made aware of any food charges that may not be included in the enrollment fee.

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Stock Up

Birds

It is a sad fact that live spring bird costs are generally high and birds are in short supply. Confirm bird costs and availability early in the planning stages. Get a firm commitment for birds, preferably in writing.

For the Handler Clinic you will need 3 pheasants, 3 ducks and 20 quail.

Books

All attendees should have a current NAVHDA rules book. **Be sure to have extra books for sale** before and at the clinic for those needing them. You may also want to supply emergency pens and pencils.

Food

A Food Chairperson should be appointed to handle this important task. After all, if the food runs out, nobody's going to have a good time. The Food Chairperson must keep in close contact with the Clinic Secretary to be sure the amount of food prepared and purchased matches the number of people attending the clinic. When estimating the number of meals needed, don't forget to include the workers.

For a morning break each day, you may want to include coffee or tea and a roll in the clinic charge.

We recommend you charge for lunch each day and try to make some money rather than include it in the enrollment fee. However, this is a chapter option. Selling lunch tickets first thing in the morning works very well.

Get as many food donations as possible. All that is expected for lunch is a sandwich, salad or chips, and a light dessert. Offer plenty of beverages and remember that some people may require diet drinks. Ice water should be free and available at all times.

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Assemble a Staff

The workers listed below are all you should need to handle the concessions and field work. Be careful not to have too many non-participating people involved. They can be distracting to those enrolled in the clinic.

Field workers

One gunner with a break action shotgun who can double as the bird planter is sufficient for the Natural Ability phase. You may wish to have a second person act as the bird planter.

Two gunners with break action shotguns and one bird planter are needed for the Utility Preparatory and Utility phases. These three people will then help with the water phase and duck work. The gunners must be excellent shots! They must also have a thorough understanding of where they should be at all times and when to shoot and when not to shoot. There will be about twenty people on the field. This is an abnormally large number for NAVHDA events and **safety must be foremost!**

Dogs

The dogs that run for judgement are to be average dogs picked by the chapter. The two Natural Ability dogs, one Utility Preparatory dog and one Utility dog should be dogs that will perform, but not Prize I dogs. A prepared, but unreliable young dog is an excellent choice. The Clinic Leaders are not looking for the perfect dog. It is easier to teach from an average performance than from a perfect one.

The scores received at a Handler Clinic will not be recorded in the NAVHDA database.

Concessions workers

You will need one or two people to set up tables, handle the lunch tickets, prepare and lay out the food and keep the beverages flowing.

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Hold the Clinic!

Now that all of the planning and hard work has paid off, it is time to hold your sanctioned NAVHDA Handler Clinic.

The first few hours on Saturday are spent in discussion. Everyone then goes to the field to judge the dogs. For the remainder of the weekend, attendees will see the dogs run and fill out the Judge work cards supplied in the Handler Clinic materials packet. They will share their results and insights in discussions led by the Clinic Leader.