

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE MASTER NATIONAL

The purpose of this document is to acquaint you with the many activities surrounding the Master National Hunt Test Obviously, no single document can cover all situations encountered but familiarity with the events listed herein will certainly help. If you have questions, please contact the applicable source; if you are not sure who to contact, use the MNRC website ([www.masternational.com](http://www.masternational.com)) and contact the club secretary.

**General:** *First & foremost, congratulations on your dog(s) qualifying to enter the event. Entries represent the 'cream of the crop' of retrievers from the US & Canada and just getting here is a great compliment and achievement of which you can be justifiably proud; we are certainly proud of you and your dog(s).* Your best source of information is the MNRC website. It is well organized and contains a plethora of information for you. You will also find any of the board members, especially your regional representatives, are anxious to assist you; information on who they are and how to contact them are on the website under the heading, "About Us". You can also find the bylaws/constitution of the MNRC at this location

**Schedule of Events:** you will find a schedule of events on the website which will include the name of the meeting/event; the location, date and time. Please be advised to check the website regularly, some changes in an event this size are inevitable. The final schedule will be also found in the Catalogue in your "Handler's Bag"; there's one bag for every dog entered.

**Training Week:** the week prior to the MNRHT offers local properties for training. The Host club will have a training brochure, usually found at the host hotel lobby, for you. There is usually no charge for the brochure and it will contain all necessary info (location, directions, special restrictions, local eating facilities, etc.) needed to access the properties. Various training properties are selected by random draw (notice of date/time/location of this meeting will be published on the website) by the host club, usually in the HQ hotel. Training **groups** need to be formed and one member of each group will 'draw' for the group. Birds (ducks & pheasants) will be available for purchase the week of training and you must be familiar w/local hunting/live gunning regulations and be in compliance with them in order to train on any of these properties. Please be respectful of the properties; the MNRC reserves the right to remove anyone from training properties for violating the local laws and/or the MNRC policies on training on these grounds.

**Set Up Week:** while dogs entered in the event are training in the local area of the MNRHT the week before the test, the host club members, the MNRC board and judges are working on the test grounds to define what the tests will look like. Scenarios for tests are set up and 'set up' dogs (those not entered in the tests) are used to determine if the tests are adequate to test dogs skills, meet time requirements and meet the goal of offering requirements of two master tests during test week. All dogs are timed on the scenarios, judges score dogs' performances and the scenarios are designed to accurately simulate the actual tests if selected.

**Opening Ceremonies:** this event is usually held on a Thursday evening the day before the annual meeting. There is no charge to participants and it is jointly sponsored by the MNRC and selected sponsors; please take time to thank the sponsor representatives at the event. In addition to a nice dinner, the brief program will introduce dignitaries, there are usually silent and live auction items that interest retriever enthusiasts, and the selection of the number of the first dog to run (same number starts in all flights) will be made in a most interesting manner. Additionally, the 'rotation' numbers may also be announced here. They will also be announced at the "Handler's Meeting". It's a fun evening and a great opportunity to see friends.

**Annual Meeting of MNRC:** the annual meeting is usually held the day after the Opening Ceremonies and the day before testing begins. **All member club delegates & proxies MUST check in with the MNRC Secretary prior to the meeting in order to be eligible to vote.** It represents the annual ‘business meeting’ and covers election of judges (regional delegates elect regional judges) for the next year, regional representatives (each region has an elected director who is elected by regional delegates only and vice presidents elected by all delegates), vacancies that result in unexpired terms are filled by the board of directors appointments, bylaws/constitution amendments, and other MNRC business items. Bitch checks will also be scheduled this day and all female dogs must be approved by one of the Vets to run the tests. Periodic, unannounced bitch checks may also be conducted during the testing. Store sales of MNRC and local, host club merchandise will be available this day, too.

The chief marshal will meet with committee (steward, traffic, bird thrower, gunners, marshals, etc.) chairs and then committee chairs will meet w/their committee members.

**Handler’s Meeting:** this meeting is held the same day as the ‘Annual Meeting’ and is **MANDATORY** for all handlers to attend. Judges will be introduced, judge’s instructions to handlers will be provided and handlers have the opportunity to ask questions of the judges. The chief marshal will announce the paring of the judges and judges will ‘draw’ to see which flight (A, B, C or D) they will judge and also draw to see which specific test will be run first in each flight. This random drawing is a very fair and equitable manner to decide which flight is judged and which test is run first.

**AKC Retriever Hunting Test Advisory Committee Report:** the five member committee appointed by the AKC to recommend changes/clarifications in retriever hunting test regulations usually makes an annual report on their deliberations over the last year and info on what they are currently reviewing to the participants.

**AKC Report:** an AKC representative usually updates the participants on what the AKC is doing in the retriever hunting test program. They also provide participants their ‘interpretation’ of regulations. This is an excellent opportunity to dialogue with AKC representatives on a particular issue you have special interest in.

**Communications During Event:** the usual method of communications from the HT Committee, the MNRC board and other ‘special’ needs, is done thru a texting system to each of the participants. To be sure your number is listed with MNRC and is entered into the texting system; clearly list it on your premium when submitted. You can also check with the MNRC web master, Mia DiBenedetto. If your number is listed but you’re not receiving texts, be sure your phone is not blocking the messages. To do this, enter the numbers 313131 in the “To” space for sending a text from your phone and the word (case sensitive) Help in the message space under the ‘To’ space.

**Test Week:** testing of the dogs usually begins on Saturday morning promptly at 8 am. The goal of the tests is to provide the equivalent of two master test requirements during the 9 days of testing which is why a dog earns ‘two passes’ toward next year’s qualification if the dog passes all series in this test.

For callbacks and continuing ‘blogs’, use the MNRC website for the latest info. If you have any difficulty seeing the info posted, please refresh your browser.

**Workers Appreciation Dinner:** Usually held on Tuesday evening of ‘test week’, this dinner is in honor of volunteers who work at the event. Volunteers are critical to the success of the MNRHT each year. Volunteers are needed in all facets of the tests; marshals, bird stewards, bird throwers, gunners, traffic control, etc. you will be required to volunteer for at least two shifts when the premium is completed and you will receive an assignment that does not conflict w/your running order at the committee meetings held on the day of the annual meeting. The worker’s party is designed to ‘thank’ volunteers and there is no charge for this dinner. Additionally, volunteers are given a special “worker’s pin” to commemorate their efforts. This event is supported by MNRC and various sponsors; please let each sponsor know your appreciation of their support.

**Frankie’s Party:** Named after Frank Prendergast, a charter member of the MNRC still active in the event, this dinner is supported entirely by various sponsors; please let them know your appreciation for their support. It is usually held on Thursday evening of test week.

**Closing Ceremonies:** this event is held the last day of the test and consists of honoring dogs who qualified at the event. Dogs get a pewter plate, the AKC rosette for qualifying at a master test (the dog gets credit for 2 ‘passes’ toward next year’s qualification requirements), a goose band w/inscribed info (date & location of this event), multiyear pins (if eligible) and congratulatory handshakes from judges and MNRC board members.

**Additional Events/Items:**

**Local, Host Club Event:** The local, host club usually will offer a special event, usually a dinner, to all participants. The nominal fee for this dinner is to help the local club raise funds for their club (they keep 100% of the funds) and you are encouraged to participate. The Host club works for 1-2 years preparing for the MNRHT and puts in a tremendous amount of effort to support the MNRHT.

We hope this information is helpful in your preparations for the event and if you have any questions, feel free to contact either of your regional representatives (director or vice president); contact info is available on the website, [www.masternational.com](http://www.masternational.com). Good luck to you and your dog(s) and we hope you enjoy the event!!

Respectfully submitted by Bill Teague  
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