



ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER NAVHDA NEWSLETTER

Editor: Roy L. Sanford

April 2010

2010 Calendar of Events

Training Day – March 6 @ 8:30 a.m. –

Contact Ken Horner: 303-968-7230

Training Day – April 10 @ 8:30 a.m. --

Contact Ken Horner: 303-968-7230

Training Day – May 1 @ 8:30 a.m. –

Contact Ken Horner: 303-968-7230

May 22 and 23 – Spring Test –

Contact Bryan Johnson: 303-235-9757

Training Day – June 5 @ 8:30 a.m. –

Contact Ken Horner: 303-968-7230

Training Day – August 7 @ 8:30 a.m. –

Contact Ken Horner: 303-968-7230

August 28 and 29 – Fall Test –

Contact Bryan Johnson: 303-235-9757

And, more to come.....

Letter from the President

80 degrees in March! With weather like this it won't be long before we can head to the field and start having fun. Hopefully you and your dog haven't been lying around like me and my dogs. If you have, remember to start slow and don't expect your pooch to perform at a high level. Watch yourself and your pooch. Take in plenty of fluids. If you have a young pup; get a couple of bumpers and start having fun. Get your pooch to chase a thrown bumper. He might even retrieve it back to you.

DO NOT place any pressure on the pup to retrieve it. This is fun and getting the pup focused on going after the bumper like they do in a NA test. I was up at Cobb SWA this last weekend even though it was 70+ degrees and all the water was open, the water was bone chilling cold. Even the retriever guy's weren't using the water. So I wouldn't recommend taking your pup in the water just yet. You can also help your pup start using his nose. I like to start by using hotdogs and drag them short and long distances with a couple of bends in the drag. After they master the hot dog, I tie a piece of hotdog to a wing clipped chukar or pheasant (Make sure your pup has contact with these birds and is not shy or afraid of them (We don't need any negatives' around birds.) and let the tracking begin. Pretty darn quick you won't need the hotdog. You can also start the pup on gun fire initiation in the back yard. If you aren't sure on how to do any of these exercises contact your Training Director or a senior member and they will be glad to help your get pointed in the right direction.

For those of you running in any test, especially UT, obedience is of the utmost importance. There are many obedience exercises that can be done around and in the house or garage until the weather becomes nice. Work on "whoa" with distractions. Fine-tune force fetch and the "hold" command. Remember to think outside the box and use your imagination when training. For any of the owners that are considering running in a UT test, I strongly suggest you get through the force fetch program. If you're not familiar with the program, contact the Training Director or a senior members and I sure they will get you started in the right direction. When training up at Cobb or any SWA please remember to pick up after yourself. Pack out what you packed in (including birds dead or alive). We have put a lot of hard work and effort in maintaining these places to train and test, so do your part. Good luck in this year training.

Birddog One out,

Rob Castor-Ekwall

President – RMC NAVHDA, 2010

RMC NAVHDA NEWSLETTER (CONT'D.)

Treasurer's Report

By Liz Dyer, RMC NAVHDA Treasurer, 2010

The RMC NAVHDA currently has a balance of \$4033.75. The CD is at approximately \$5080.00. There are no outstanding bills at this time. We have a total paid membership for 2010 of 42 people, about 10 members less than last year.

Should anyone be interested in seeing the balance sheet and or income statement, please e-mail me at ecd515@aol.com and I will send them to you.

Training Day Announcement--RSVP Required

By Ken Horner, RMC NAVHDA Director of Training, 2010

Saturday, April 10th is the next Training Day for the RMC NAVHDA. It will again be held at Cobb Lake (same spot as last month) and will start at 8:30am. Please bring your training "supplies"--that list can be found www.rmc-navhda.com in the February Newsletter. Also, if you plan to stay past the lunch hour, you may want to pack a snack as the grounds are not all that close to restaurants/convenience stores. Don't forget to pack water/drinks for you and your dog.

For this training day, we will again be focusing on the Natural Ability Test and will work through all portions. If you have any specific questions, problems or things you would like to work on, please e-mail me or call me so I can be sure to have them on the list for the day. My e-mail is dyerL5769@msn.com and my cell is 303-968-7230. If there are any folks who want to work on Utility training, please let me know so that we can accommodate those wishes as well.

As before, if you want to do any training with birds, you will need to bring your own--unfortunately the chapter cannot supply them for each member. The chapter WILL provide pheasants for the track for everyone.

Please RSVP and let me know if you plan on attending. Look forward to seeing everyone next weekend.

Training Day Essentials

By Amanda Johnson, RMC NAVHDA Secretary, and Ken Horner, RMC NAVHDA Director of Training, 2010

- Leash
No longer than 6', 4' is better.
- Flat collar
A flat collar is essential. A chock chain/prong collar/e-collar is not always the correct collar for a given task.
- Check cord
This is not a leash! It is useful on specific tasks, like the track in NA. A rope will work. You may need gloves.
- Water bottles for the dog
Carry water into the field for the dog. On a typical training day in CO, you could go through at least 6-8 bottles of water for your dog. Bring a dish for water also.
- Water bottles for the handler
Carry water for yourself. Water and sport drinks work well. Bring more than you ever expect to drink!
- Blaze orange hat or vest
- A light weight vest or backpack to carry equipment into the field
- A place to secure your dog when not actively training
A crate, dog box, inside your car (will your dog EAT your car?)
- Birds for training including a bird cage and bird bag
- Blank pistols and blanks
- String for a bird drag
To retard bird flight, a 6" x 6" piece of cardboard with a five foot string attached to it and the bird is handy.
- Bumpers for water work and waders if needed.

RMC NAVHDA NEWSLETTER (CONT'D.)

Basics of Steadiness Training

By Ken Horner, RMC NAVHDA Director of Training, 2010

I have had quite a few people asking about steadiness training for the Utility Dog. As with all things in dog training, there are many different ways of approaching the process. I have tried various techniques and sequences and through both success and failure, I have found that the following works the best for me. (For the purposes of this article, we will assume that the dog is pointing solidly. If there are problems with pointing, it's a separate training issue.)

First, it is critical that all basic obedience work is completely finished before you start any steadiness training. By this I mean, "come", whoa", heel" and of course, the force fetch must be rock solid and crisp. No extra steps on the "whoa", no zigzagging on a "come", no drifting on "heel", and perfect out and back on every retrieve. It is critical to have the obedience training done away from the field and water so that you can apply the least amount of pressure possible once you move to those settings. You want the field and water to be positive, exciting situations for your dog...that will happen if you have done your homework and put in your time in the yard. Once you can tell yourself that the basic obedience work is solid, it is time to move a field (or somewhere you can use a shotgun or cap gun) to start the steadiness training.

Once you reach this point in the steadiness process, you will need to someone willing to be your training partner--you can reciprocate when he/she ready to start their dog. I begin by putting my dog on a "whoa", facing downwind. I then take a bird with its feet tethered and place it in front of my dog, on the side of my dog, behind my dog, on top of my dog, etc. If he takes even one step, I re-position him, give a firm "WHOA" and repeat the process until the dog handles that scenario with no steps taken. Next, I start tossing the bird in front of my dog, beside, behind, etc. I leave the wings free as the flapping will create more excitement. Again, if he takes any steps, I reposition him with a firm "WHOA" and repeat the process until he stands perfectly. I then turn my dog upwind and repeat everything that I did downwind--now he is dealing with the added excitement of scent.

Once he can complete those tasks perfectly, I introduce a shotgun or cap gun and work an entire steadiness sequence. When I begin this portion, I toss the bird in the air and shoot in the air. If the dog is steady, he is allowed to go on the retrieve. If he is not steady, he does not get the retrieve. I then repeat the sequence until he remains steady and gets the retrieve. **It is important to note that, at this point, if you have any trouble with your retrieve, get out of the field and go back to the yard to firm up your force fetch. You do not want to be applying any unnecessary pressure in the field/water that can be fixed in the yard. It's a quick way to ruin a good hunting dog. Fixing a training mistake is much more difficult and time-consuming than taking the time to train a dog correctly the first time. I know, I've done it.**

When the dog is handling this steadiness sequence perfectly--i.e. the dog is on whoa, you toss the bird, shoot in the air, he is steady and you send him on the retrieve, you officially move to the field. At this point, I introduce launchers so that I can control the sequence. I load the launchers (I always use three launchers/session), plant them and mark them so I know exactly where they are--a clothespin with a bright ribbon works well for this. I attach a long lead (at least 20-30 ft.) to my dog, heel him into the field, and release him with my command to start hunting. Once he points the first launcher/bird, I ask my training partner to grab hold of the end of the long lead. I walk in from the side of the dog (so that he can always see me) and give the "whoa" command repeatedly as I am walking toward him. Once I feel my dog is ready, I release the launcher and shoot the bird. Ideally, my dog has remained steady. If he has, he gets the retrieve and we move on to the next bird. But, he probably won't be steady on the first one...or the second...maybe even the third. In that case, we continue to work birds until he does remain steady and gets the retrieve. Having your training partner on the end of the lead will give added control and emphasis to your "whoa" command should your dog break. In these initial field sessions, I do give the dog some leeway--I may allow him a couple of steps if I feel he is trying to do the work. You want him to begin to understand that "if I'm steady, I get the retrieve, if I'm steady, I get the retrieve". Being a bit lenient with a step or two in the beginning will help the dog understand this more quickly and can be easily cleaned up once they understand.

Once the dog is doing the work perfectly on the lead, with no help from my training partner and a single "whoa" command, I remove the lead. We then repeat the sequence with just the "whoa" command. When the dog is doing that perfectly, I remove the launchers. The bird will now be able to move, run, jump, etc, adding excitement. Once the dog is completely steady and solid in this situation with only one "whoa" command, I remove the "whoa" command all together.

A finished, steady dog is one who will point a bird and remain steady through flush, wing, shot and fall until sent for the retrieve by his handler. Other than "fetch" and "out", no commands need to be given. It's a beautiful partnership to watch.

RMC NAVHDA NEWSLETTER (CONT'D.)

Dog Care on Training Days

By Amanda Johnson, RMC NAVHDA Secretary 2010

At our house we feed breakfast to our dogs before training days. That's a full breakfast. Many of you may have been told, to only feed half a meal or no meal at all. This is all personal preference, and should be determined by how your dog performs best. If you have never tired skipping a meal or feeding half instead of none, I suggest you try it out in the training season and get a feel for your dogs' performance.

When you arrive at a training day, consider that you put on your boots, maybe even stretch out a bit. Ok, so it's nothing formal, but you do it right? How about your dogs? They have been in the box for the drive up to Wellington; all excited up to get out and find the birds! Consider giving them a stretch also, a quick run up the hill to the ponds and/or a more formal stretch of all four limbs, back, and pasterns.

I will take a moment here to discuss water at training days, mostly because this just can't be discussed enough. You must bring water for your dog, and way more than you will ever think you will need. Bring a camel back or bottles of water with a pop tops, not just a lid. Personally I have used nearly 2 liters of water during the field portion of the NA test. With many more bottles used later in the day.

What is important here is that your dog will actually take water from you. I have heard from new members that their dog just won't drink water, "I'll water him later at home." And I have seen dogs that are nearly in heat stroke because of this action. If your dog will not drink water alone, consider baiting the water. Rehydrate Sports Drink for Dogs (www.gundogsonline.com) and my personal favorite, Ice Pups from The Honest Kitchen (www.thehonestkitchen.com), are just two of the products available over the counter. These products are usually a high fat and protein powder, that can be used to bait dogs to eat their dry food and/or entice them to drink water.

I also want to make some suggestions for snacks or treats to bring to training day. The subject of dog nutrition is very complex. I will make a short statement here about dry/kibble foods: Dry dog food is mostly carbohydrates; it has to be, in order to form those small little bits. Dogs are carnivores and thrive best on fat and protein from animal sources. To that end, I am suggesting that you bring snacks and treats that are high in fat and protein and very low in carbohydrates. So that means leave the kibble at home! Bring snacks like hard boiled eggs (shell an all), dried jerky treats, cheese (use in small amounts, if your dog does well with dairy), and cooked or raw meatballs. If you stop for a snack, give your dog one also!

Now that you have had a long hard day of training, unloaded the dogs and all your gear; take a moment to stretch your dog out again. While you are stretching him out, go over him carefully looking for thorns, foxtails, ticks, and abrasions, especially his feet. Make sure to check the eyes for weed seeds and consider rinsing them with Eye Wash for good measure. Give him a nice dinner, maybe even something special....Hardboiled egg anyone?

Colorado Youth Outdoors Announcement

Colorado Youth Outdoors is running a nation-wide raffle called "Catch a Memory". For a \$20 raffle ticket, you have chance to win a flight for yourself and/or 3 guests into Colorado, a \$1000 shopping spree for each person at Charlie's Fly Box in Denver and a private flight directly to an exclusive ranch in Wyoming for 4 days and 3 nights of world class fishing.

Tickets may be purchased online at www.cyoraffles.com or I can supply physical tickets. Proceeds from the raffle benefit both Trout Unlimited and Colorado Youth Outdoors who works to build healthy relationships between parents and youth through outdoor activities. Please help us get the word out and pass this on to as many people as you can. Just cut and paste the message below into another email.

Thank you for your time.

Brad Wright

Cast Your Chance to Win
*and Catch a Memory
of a Lifetime!*



A National raffle benefiting
Colorado Youth Outdoors and Trout Unlimited

Twelve miles of private, world-class fly fishing on the North Platte, Big Creek and several other small ponds await the winner and three guests. This is a unique opportunity to experience 140,000 acres of pristine wilderness in the heart of southern Wyoming's Medicine Bow Mountains. This exclusive fishing destination is home to one of the oldest and largest guest ranches in the country. Enter for your chance to catch a memory that will last a lifetime and to support two worthy causes.

Raffle winner and three guests will each receive:

- Roundtrip flights to Denver International Airport (Continental US only)
- \$1,000 shopping spree to Charlie's Flybox (American Anglers 2009 retailer of the year)
- Private flight to destination
- 4 days of premier fishing with personal guide
- 3 nights lodging and the opportunity to enjoy all the amenities at the ranch
- Gourmet meals and inviting hospitality beyond compare
- Commemorative memory book and DVD

RAFFLE TICKETS ARE ONLY \$20.

Raffle begins January 4, 2010.

Drawing will take place on June 30, 2010.

Trip Date: September 18-21, 2010.



Cast your chance to win this trip of a lifetime!
Visit www.cyoraffles.com to purchase your ticket.

RMC NAVHDA NEWSLETTER (CONT'D.)

LITTER ANNOUNCEMENT GERMAN SHORTHAIRED POINTERS

Sharpshooter's Stumptown Vidalia (Vida), **UT Pz I X Int. Ch., VC** Briarwood's Ace II (Bob)

Expected whelp date is March or April 2010, with the puppies being ready to go to their new homes by May or June 2010.

For complete information and photos on both Vida and Bob, please go to www.stumptownkennel.com
To contact Paul Ecker, Vida's owner, call 503-784-0193 or e-mail him at paul@stumptownkennel.com

For further information on Bob, you can contact Ken Horner, Centennial, CO at
303-968-7230 or e-mail him at dyerL5769@msn.com.

Handler's Clinic – July 17 and 18

By Brian Thoman, RMC NAVHDA Member 2010 and Senior NAVHDA Judge

RMC will host a Handler's Clinic on July 17 and 18. The cost is \$75 for the weekend. So what is a Handler's Clinic? The Handler Clinic is an educational tool developed by NAVHDA to help dog owners and handlers understand the testing system. The clinics are conducted by designated clinicians; all of whom are NAVHDA Senior Judges. During the two day clinic weekend, participants experience all aspects of the Natural Ability, Utility Preparatory, and Utility tests. The first few hours of each day are devoted to informal classroom instruction. There is discussion of test mechanics, the scoring system and NAVHDA philosophy.

The group then goes out to the field to judge and score dogs being run in actual test conditions. After each dog has run and been scored, there is a discussion of performance and scoring as observed by the participants and the clinic leader. The discussion includes strengths or weaknesses of training and handling observed in the demonstrations and how they may have affected the dog's inherited skills.

For more information visit: <http://www.navhda.org/clinic.html>. There will be more information about time and place as the event gets closer. Don't forget to check the website for updates. If you are interested in becoming an apprentice judge, you must attend a handler's clinic no more than three years before you submit your application to become an apprentice judge.

Paid Advertisements

In the past we have seen items like ads for litters of puppies, training equipment, and other services. Advertisements in the RMC Newsletter are published for the information of all RMC members. Accuracy of all information is the responsibility of the advertiser. A donation of \$10 is asked for each submission to help offset the cost of mailing the newsletter. The editor reserves the right to edit for length to fit into the newsletter's format. Let us know if you have an advertisement to run in our newsletter!

Chapter Officers for 2010

Rob Castor-Ekwall, President
Scott Wilkey, Vice-President
Amanda Johnson, Secretary
Liz Dyer, Treasurer
Ken Horner, Director of Training
Bryan Johnson, Director of Testing
Pete McIntosh, Director of Judging
Matt Wagner, Director of Promotions and Fundraising
Roy Sanford, Newsletter Editor
Joe Castanado, Web Master

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matthewnwagner@yahoo.com
randmsanford@q.com
jcastinado@comcast.net

Feel free to contact these people to ask questions, make suggestions or voice your opinion.

RMC NAVHDA NEWSLETTER (CONT'D.)

Rocky Mountain Chapter 2010 Renewal Application

Memberships run from January 1 through December 31 each year. Members joining after August 1st will have a valid membership through the following year. Below is an easy renewal form that you can print out, fill out, and send in with your membership dues.

Membership dues are \$35. To continue your membership, receive our newsletters and/or communications, receive advanced information about upcoming events and other membership benefits, it is important that you renew your membership for 2010. We have a great year planned with two tests scheduled in the spring and fall along with some great training days mixed in during the year. Check out our website at <http://www.rmc-navhda.com/> for updated information on test dates and other activities. We will have access to Swift Ponds on Mondays (shared access with the Ft. Collins retriever club) for water training which is an added bonus for all of our members. CYO has granted us permission to use the ponds for our Spring and Fall test dates as well as two additional dates during the year for any functions we would like to hold for our members.

It is only through your continued support that we can fund our local chapter. Thanks much for your continued support and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

-----Cut Here-----

2010 Rocky Mountain Chapter Application

Name (please print) _____ \$35 per year membership dues
includes all family members
Spouse/Significant Other Name (if applicable) _____
Children's Name(s)/Age(s) (if applicable) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____
Breed of Dog(s) _____ Date Joined Chapter _____
NAVHDA Registration Number _____

If you want to receive the RMC Newsletter via the internet please write your preferred email address below.

Make checks payable to: **RMC NAVHDA**. Mail chapter dues to: Liz Dyer – 19159 E. Hinsdale Lane, Centennial, CO 80016.
Chapter members must belong to NAVHDA International. Membership includes a chapter newsletter. Dues may be tax deductible.