



2025 SEASON WRAP UP



CHECK OUT OUR FANCY NEW TRAINING TABLES!

A huge thank you to Cal Rinas for building the training tables, the board mentioned needing training tables at the 2025 AGM and it seemed like within days Cal had it done, which was so amazing.

These tables were put to great use throughout the year and were enjoyed by many members, helping handlers safely and effectively work on foundational skills with their dogs.

We used these tables all the way from puppies in puppy class as a confidence booster and a pointing tool to the bigger dogs in their retrieving work. Your time, craftsmanship, and generosity made a huge impact on our training program and what we were able to offer membership in the way of programs. Thank you! It truly strengthened our club experience this year!

And for the work bee gals putting on the finishing touch, thank you! And a big thanks to everyone who joined in on the work bee for the 2025 season, it made training this year possible.

THANK YOU, JAMIE!

As Jamie Doud wraps up his term as President of Prairie Vista NAVHDA, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you for his leadership, energy, and countless hours dedicated to the club. Jamie guided PV NAVHDA through another strong and successful year, always leading with enthusiasm, generosity, and a genuine passion for the people and dogs that make this club special.

While Jamie assures us the legendary pastrami sandwiches and his mad skills teaching you how to teach your dog to retrieve everything aren't going anywhere.

We are incredibly grateful for everything he's done for our club. Thank you, Jamie!



EDIE'S PUPPY PROGRAM - JUST WOW!

We cannot say enough good things about Edie's puppy program this year. This program was an incredible asset to our club and to our puppies, providing thoughtful, incremental exposure to essential bird dog skills in a structured and supportive environment. Puppies were introduced to both upland and waterfowl work while learning tracking, swimming, and foundational field skills along the way. The results spoke for themselves & it should come as no surprise that our testing puppies had excellent performances in their NA tests. Thank you, Edie, for an outstanding program and for setting our young dogs up for success!



SPRING WORK BEE!

Thank you to everyone who came out to help with the spring work bee. With many hands pitching in, pens were made ready for the season, (Jamie, Wayne, John and Mel probably still have PTSD from all the chicken wire they installed)! We accomplished so much, training tables were painted, and essential maintenance was tackled efficiently.

Beyond the work accomplished, it was a great day spent together as a club, reinforcing the sense of community that makes Prairie Vista NAVHDA so special. We truly appreciate the time and effort of all who helped make it a success.



2025: THE PV NAVHDA TEST THAT ALMOST WASN'T

This year's test faced an extraordinary challenge when the Air Canada strike forced a last-minute postponement, putting the entire event in jeopardy. What followed was an enormous amount of behind-the-scenes work, and thanks to the incredible efforts of Helen and Jenna, our test was ultimately saved. As board members, they stepped up immediately, navigating complex logistics and working tirelessly to secure new judges and reorganize the weekend.

Their ability to manage a high-stress situation with efficiency and calm determination ensured that our members still had the opportunity to test. A little birdy told me Jenna may also be a candidate for an award for most hours spent on hold with an airline, Thanks Air Canada.

We cannot thank them enough for their dedication and leadership during such a critical moment. You ladies are amazing and such a resource to our club.



DO YOU REMEMBER... TESTING IN SEPTEMBER?

Postponing the test until September brought an unexpected but welcome change of pace this year. Cooler temperatures meant far more comfortable field conditions for both dogs and handlers, with no worries about testing in 32 degree heat this year! The shift in dates gave everyone a chance to focus on performance too.

Of course, the cooler weather also meant our judge from North Carolina spent much of the weekend bundled up in a Prairie Vista NAVHDA toque and puffer jacket at least until lunchtime each day! We are incredibly grateful to our test entrants for their flexibility and patience as a new date was assigned purely on Judge availability, and especially proud of the puppies who rose to the challenge and were willing to swim despite noticeably colder water at the end of September. Your commitment and positive attitudes made the weekend a success.

LUCKY DUCK! GRAND PRIZE WINNER

The Lucky Duck Retrieve kept everyone on edge this year, with Freya making us wait as she searched for just the right duck! In the end, Lucky Duck #19 sealed the deal, and Al Fortini took home the grand prize, a Beretta 686 Silver Pigeon Vittoria Sporting 20GA

Congratulations to Al, and a huge thank you to everyone who participated and enjoyed this fun and suspenseful event. It was a crowd favourite and added an extra layer of excitement to the weekend!

OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

Edie- Test Secretary
Jenna - Fundraising
Helen- Test Coordinator

Alex & Alyssa, Alexandra M, Andrea, Brendan & Monica, Brent & Jeannene, Cal, Colin, Deb S., Edie, Jamie, Jenna, Kate D, Kevin Handy, Leanna, Mary, Mel, Mike B., Mind, Paul H., Ron, Victoria and last but certainly not least Wayne.

Thank you everyone!



THANK YOU JUDGES!

We would also like to extend a sincere thank you to the judges, Senior Etienne Canuel, and Eric Vermette from Quebec and Kiley Caldwell from North Carolina, all of whom stepped in on extremely short notice and made our test possible.

Adjusting schedules and committing to a last-minute request is no small ask, and we are incredibly grateful for their willingness to support our chapter. Their expertise, fairness, and professionalism ensured a high-quality test despite the unusual circumstances. Prairie Vista NAVHDA truly appreciates your support and generosity.

Also a big thank you to Steve Weir for apprenticing at our test. Looking forward to having another local judge someday.



SAVE THE DATE

MAR 14, 2026 (1:00-2:30PM)

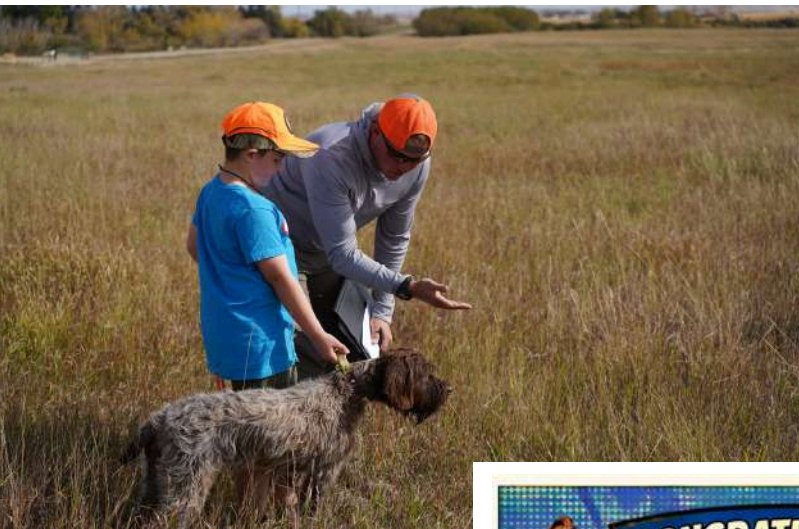
WELL DONE! JUNIOR HANDLERS IN NATURAL ABILITY

We were thrilled to have two junior handlers running their dogs in Natural Ability at this year's test. Congratulations to Zero, Jello, and their young handlers on outstanding performances. You kids truly made it look easy (and anyone who's handled an NA puppy knows that keeping them with you in the field is no small task!).

A special thank you as well to the accompanying judges, who were exceptional with the junior handlers, providing encouragement, clarity, and support throughout the process.

Watching these young handlers step up with confidence and sportsmanship made us all incredibly proud and was a definite highlight of the testing weekend.

This truly is the future of our sport, and we extend a sincere thank you to the parents for the time, training, and trust involved in supporting their kids as they ran a Natural Ability test.



PV 2025 INVITATIONAL TEAMS

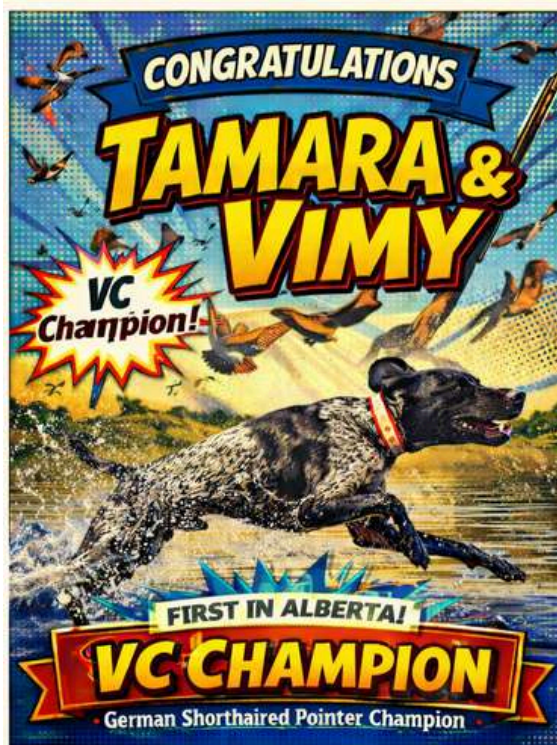
The Prairie Vista NAVHDA Chapter has proudly had teams attend the Invitational in both 2023 and 2024. However, 2025 marks a historic first for our chapter and our province. The first time an Albertan dog and handler team has victoriously returned home having earned the coveted Versatile Champion (VC) title.

The Invitational is widely regarded as one of the most demanding tests of all hunt test. Earning a UT Prize I and receiving an invitation places these dogs among a very small and elite group, and the dedication required to prepare for and travel to the Invitational cannot be overstated. The year leading up to it is grueling, and at the Invitational itself, many exceptional dogs do not pass.

Both of our teams rose to the challenge is a testament to their grit, determination, and unwavering commitment. Their hard work, countless hours of preparation, and resilience under pressure paid off in a truly extraordinary way. We would like to extend a very special congratulations to Prairie Vista NAVHDA members Tamara Champagne & Vimy and Ron Belt & Freya on their exceptional achievements at the Invitational.

These accomplishments reflect years of thoughtful training, perseverance, and true partnership between dog and handler. We are incredibly proud to celebrate these teams & their success.

BRINGING HOME THE COVETED VERSATILE CHAMPION (VC) TITLE! READ THEIR STORIES BELOW!



TAMARA & VIMY

We asked Tarmara to tell us a little bit about what it was like in her own words:

“The 2025 NAVHDA Invitational was an unforgettable experience with Vimy, made even sweeter by one of the best weather days of the entire week and a dog who showed up confident, steady, and fully prepared for every phase of the test. We were the first brace in the field that day, and from the moment I sent my dog off, it felt like I was out hunting with friends. What stood out most for me, though, was the water work. It’s my favorite aspect of NAVHDA to train, and it was incredibly rewarding to step back and watch everything come together in the double mark, blind, and honor. I never once questioned whether his performance would be good enough, though I certainly didn’t expect a max 200 score.

Preparing for this level of testing is no small undertaking; it demands organization, long-term commitment, access to water and land, reliable training partners, and the discipline to keep showing up long before the Invitational feels real. This experience reinforced just how critical solid obedience and polished retrieving are at the highest levels of NAVHDA testing, and it also reminded me that none of this happens in isolation. A successful dog training journey is only possible with the support of dedicated clubs and training partners, for which I’m incredibly grateful.”

Photo credit: Autumn Koback



SD-CH, SD-GCH, VC, Honor Points Canadian Victory NA PZ1, UT PZ 1, SD-E, SDE, FDJ, CD, WD

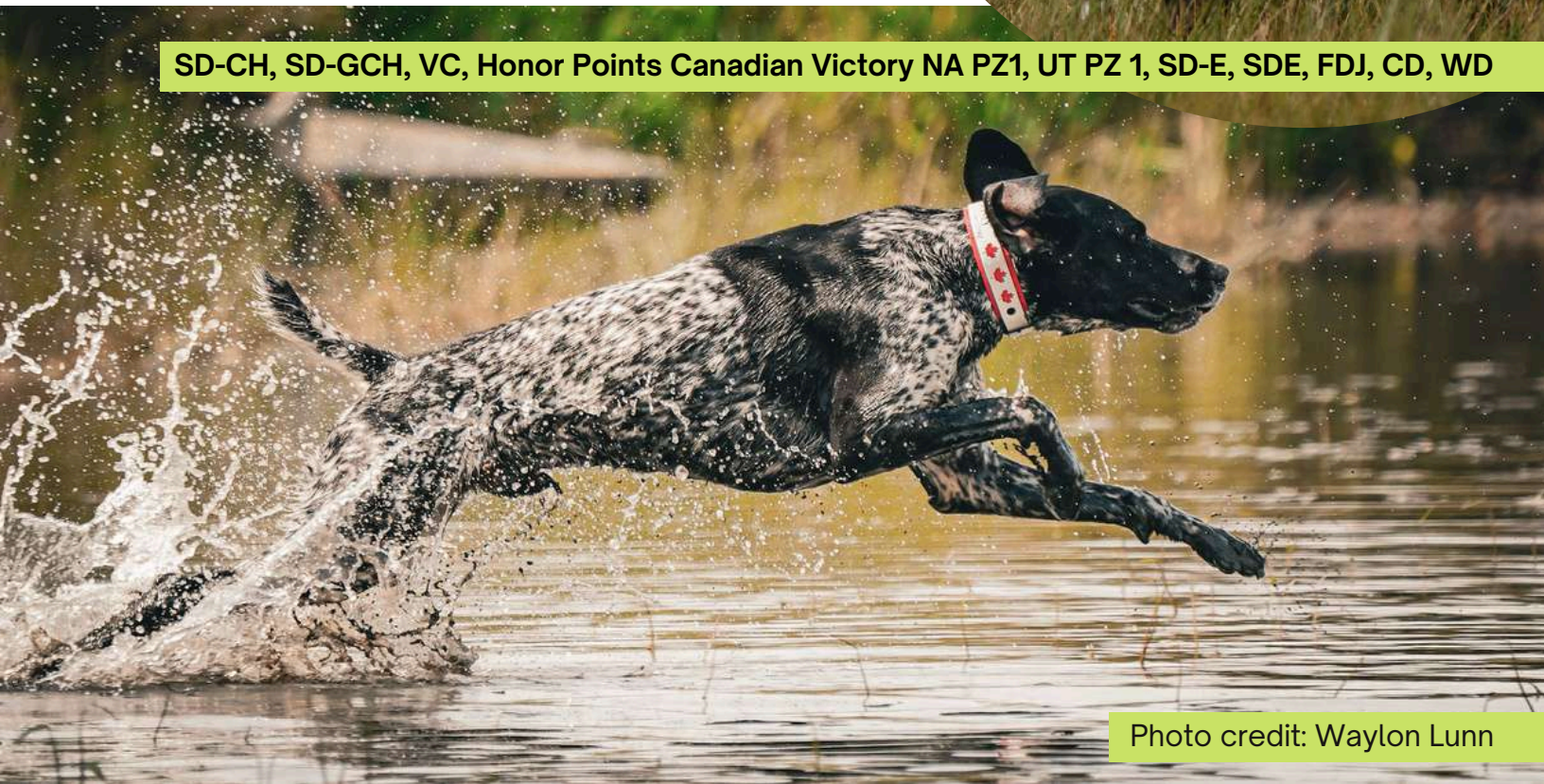


Photo credit: Waylon Lunn

RON & FREYA

The NAVHDA Invitational is as much about problem-solving and adaptability as it is about preparation. We asked Ron to share what the experience was like from his perspective, and his story captures both the challenges and the humour that come with testing at the highest level.

“A trip to the Invitational is always at the top of the list for a NAVHDA dog and Freya was able to punch her ticket for 2025, in 2024 capping off what was a great year for her.

We worked hard on honouring and had some great water training with Tamara and Vimy, but with not a lot of hot weather for any heat conditioning, but how hot could it be mid-September in Iowa?

As the day drew near it was apparent that it was going to be very hot, 34 degrees hot, as well as a few other contingencies it was hard to train for: a brace mate that would lie down on point. Look! a squirrel! Really! As we were waiting for the blind retrieve (she'd never seen one of those before and much more interesting than fetching a dead duck).



Photo credit: Autumn Koback

A chukar on the path as we were heading down to the heel and double mark retrieve, now she's excited - not a 'heeling' frame of mind.

Not that it was all bad, second brace in the field so only about 27 degrees as we finished, a final 'fetch over' that got her heading over to get her duck after a fruitless look for squirrels, and an understanding judge that let her calm down a bit before her heeling after the chukar fiasco. Best of all, a PASS and cross that one off the bucket list. Good girl, Freya! Special thanks to Tamara and Vimy and all those that helped with her training, it truly does take a village.”

VC AFTCH GCH Crossiron's Feelin' Groovy FDX WDE NA 1 (112), UT 1 (204)



Photo credit: Autumn Koback