



Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau

1725 Dakota Ave S • Huron, SD 57350

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www.HuntHuronSD.com or email: cvb@huronsd.com

Huron Ringneck Festival Bird Dog Challenge

The Huron Ringneck Festival Bird Dog Challenge will take place on November 6 and November 7, 2025. Attached is the application form and rules for the 23rd Annual Bird Dog Challenge. Please review the rules carefully and be sure to submit your application prior to the **October 4, 2025, deadline** (if there are any openings following the deadline, spots will be filled on a first come basis).

Application forms for the Ringneck Festival Hunt are available online at www.hunthuronsd.com or upon request. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call us at 1-800-487-6673 or email cvb@huronsd.com. We look forward to seeing you!

Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau

2025 Ringneck Festival Bird Dog Challenge

Bird Dog Dates: Thursday and Friday, October 30 and 31, 2025

Application Deadline: October 4, 2025 (any openings following deadline will be filled first-come basis)

Registration Fee: \$175.00 per team

Age Limit: All Hunters must be 18 years of age to participate. Signature of waiver is also required.

Rules of Competition

Point System:

60	Shots Not Taken
200	Birds Harvested
30	Birds Shot
75	Finds (Flush or Point)
45	Full Retrieves
20	Partial or Normal Retrieves
1	Every Second Remaining

Competition Specific Rules

ONE DIVISION FOR FLUSHERS AND POINTERS (Limited to 10 shells)

15 minute event—6 Birds, 2 Hunters, 1 Dog

1. Competition for 2 hunters, 1 dog. Dogs of all ages are permitted.
2. Each hunter is limited to 5 shells each, with a total of 10 shells combined for entire team.
3. Teams will be accepted until the deadline date and up to as many as time allows. Contestants must change 1 element of team (hunter or dog change) and pay another entry fee to enter more than once.
4. Competitors may not run.

Competition Rules

A. Trespass Area/Internal Boundary Buffer Zone

5. Trespass Area (leaves hunt property): Hunters or dogs may not trespass under any circumstances, except injury. If a pointing dog inadvertently goes on point in a trespass area, permission to retrieve the dog needs to be given by an official **before** leaving club property. Under **no** circumstances will a bird be allowed to be harvested in a trespass area. Hunters who leave club property with permission of an official **may not carry a firearm** when retrieving a dog.
6. Internal Boundary Buffer Zone: Marked out of bounds by the tournament official, this creates a safe buffer zone inside club property. Reasons for this include protection of club neighbor property, buildings, or other competition areas. These zones **are not intended to be hunted**, therefore **no** hunter is allowed to shoot inside of a buffer zone.

Specific rules regarding the buffer zone include:

7. A dog may only enter the buffer zone in **hot pursuit** of a bird.
8. A find or retrieve may be awarded only if the bird is shot by the hunter **inside** the hunting field.
9. Retrieves must be to the **inside** of the hunting field for retrieve points to be awarded.
10. Trapped birds in a buffer zone are treated as a **normal trapped bird**. The retrieve must be to the inside of the hunting field.
11. Hunters may enter the buffer zone **only** with the intent to flush a pointed or worked bird (**this must be confirmed and approved by the judge** before the hunter enters the buffer zone). The flushing hunter's firearm **may not** be carried into the buffer zone when attempting to flush the bird.
12. **No safeties will be awarded** to competitors for birds that flush into another competition hunting field and no shots may be taken. Only the find points will be awarded for the dog work.
13. **A hunter may enter the buffer zone to retrieve a dead bird, but only with the judge's**

permission. The judge will grant permission provided the retrieve does not interfere with adjoining field's competition.

Important Note: In the case of the last bird, the clock **does not stop** until the bird touches the hunter's hand. The hunter **must be in bounds** to stop the clock.

B. Dogs Leaving Fields

14. When a dog leaves its designated hunting field and moves into another active competition field, it is the responsibility of the handler with his **voice, whistle, or electric training collar** to regain control of dog. If the dog flushes a bird in another competitor's field, full points shall be awarded to the competitor in that field for the bird. No points will be awarded to the hunting team that lost control and the clock will continue running.
15. If the hunter cannot gain control of the dog, he can leave his gun and physically go into the field only with permission of the judge in the invaded field, and lead or carry the dog out of the field.

C. Stocking

16. Stocking shall include **six** birds.
17. Birds shall be placed at random by stockers.
18. When placing a bird in the field, if the bird flies away upon setting, it **should be replaced**. If the flyaway flies away after all stockers have returned and while the competitors have been removed from the containment area, then it shall be considered **bad luck**.
19. If a bird flies into the field while stockers are stocking, it is considered good luck.
20. If in the course of setting the fields, the stockers flush a bird that flies away, the bird **shall be replaced**.
21. If the team coming out flushes a bird purposely or accidentally, the judge may rule:
 - a. **Purposeful** – The team will be fined 200 points, and the bird shall be replaced. The bird replaced should be placed somewhere other than where the bird was flushed.
 - b. **Accident** – It shall be considered bad luck.
22. Following all competitions, all dogs should be **brought to lead**, and the team should promptly leave the field.

D. Spectators on the Set

23. Spectators can observe the set, but under **no** circumstances can **competitors view their own set or any sets prior to their run**. Containment areas should be developed for the hunters while their set is taking place.
24. There will be **no communication** of any type between the spectators & competitors regarding sets.
25. No hunters can watch the run preceding their turn.
26. It is the responsibility of the managing tournament official to **consistently** monitor rules for their events.

E. Ammunition

27. Hunters may use all gauges of shotguns 12 gauge or smaller while competing, but **no shells larger than 2 ¾"** for 12 gauge but a competitor **may use 3"** shells for 20 gauge guns or smaller.
28. If a bird is shot by an illegal shell, it shall not count in the point total for the team. The judge will warn the hunter of the violation. Should the hunter continue using the illegal shell(s) after the warning, the hunter **will be disqualified by the judge**.
29. If a hunter runs out of shells, he **may not exchange** with the other hunter. If both hunters run out of shells, **the run is considered completed**. Time will be stopped and the hunters will exit the field. **No points will be awarded for time remaining** on the clock when the run is scored.

F. Non Bird

30. Bird points will be awarded for the species of a particular tournament. When another bird is accidentally shot, the shell will count and be deducted, but no finds or retrieves will be award. If a fur-bearing animal (i.e. skunk or raccoon) is engaged by the dog, with the permission of the judge and if legal with the state, a hunter may dispatch the fur-bearer from the field and the clock will continue to run. No shell will be charged. There will be no reruns or interference. In the event a dead bird is found it may be awarded points.

G. Trapping

31. A bird may be trapped by a dog. The team trapping the bird will be allowed one trap per run without penalty, all additional traps will be assessed a 30-point penalty. A hunter, of the captain's choice, will be deducted one (1) shell.
32. **A bird may not be trapped by a hunter.** Hunters should not stump birds or kick them with the intent to harm. This will result in **loss of bird points**. A hunter may catch the bird **only after adequate attempts** have been made to flush it naturally (confirmed by the judge). The hunter may then assist it to fly (throwing it up in the air) so a shot may be taken. In the event all birds in an event are trapped, the hunter may, after the clock has been stopped, prove a fully qualified retrieve to the judge. The handling hunter only, will throw one of the harvested birds not less than 15 yards away from themselves and the dog must retrieve firmly to hand within 30 seconds.

H. Gun Malfunctions

33. A gun malfunction by either teammate shall be considered bad luck. It is the option of the individual to leave the field and return with another gun of legal gauge, and the clock will continue to run. The hunter has to leave the field himself and cannot appoint someone else to leave or enter the field in his place.

I. Dog in Heat

34. The promoter may accept dog in heat entries provided that are placed at the end of the day, so as not to affect another teams' competition.

J. Dog Injured

35. If a dog is injured and unable to continue its competition prior to harvesting fifty percent (50%) of the birds in the field, the judge shall take an independent dog in the field and harvest down to equivalent of Y2 the birds in the field prior to the stocking.

K. Dead Bird Found in Field

36. When a dog traps a bird, there must be an adequate demonstration of life for the judge to rule a trap. If in the judge's estimation there is no life, it will be counted as a dead bird. Dead birds are awarded 45 points, provided it is the type of bird being hunted in the existing tournament. Dead birds are defined as consisting of the entire, intact carcass. Wings or body parts do not constitute a dead bird.

L. Birds Entering the Field

37. When a bird enters the field, it may be found, harvested and retrieved as if that bird were set for that competitive run. In the event a staff error creates an unfair advantage, an official ruling may require removal of birds from the field (ex. A bird crate overturns at the end of field, stock and additional birds escape into the field thus creating an unfair advantage).

M. Disqualification

38. A hunter may receive a run disqualification of any of the following reasons:
 - a. Shooting more than the allowed limit. Violating the no-trespass rule.
 - b. Ignoring the judges ruling and warnings concerning buffer zone usage.
 - c. Continually disregarding judge warnings concerning competition rules.
 - d. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
 - e. Running.

39. A hunter may receive an events disqualification (extremely serious) for continually abusing event rules, after being appropriately warned (see Sportsmanship for complete details of the results of an event disqualification).
40. When a hunter is disqualified, the judge should encourage the team to continue and remove birds from the field. Should the team not continue to hunt, the judge and/or stockers should make their best effort to flush down to fifty percent of the originally set birds.
41. Hunters who receive a run disqualification **are not entitled to reimbursement** of their entry fees, and reruns are not permitted. In addition, scores will not be posted, and prizes will not be awarded.

N. Bird Parts

42. Whenever bird parts are found in the field, it is the judges' or stockers' responsibility to remove them. Hunters **should never drop or leave bird parts** in the field. If they do, they will receive a warning. Competitors who continue to drop or leave bird parts in the field **after they have been warned will be fined 100 points per offense.**

O. Find Awarded 75 Points

43. A point or flush where, in the judges' opinion, the dog, through its action or behavior, was **working the bird.**
44. There will be no second finds unless the judge has reasonable doubt that it may be the same bird. **Only proven birds may be awarded find points.**

P. Bird Count

45. The clock will be stopped when the proper number of birds are harvested for the event. Judges should count birds while still in the field to determine that the competition is complete. If the proper number of birds is not proven to be harvested, **time will immediately resume and continue until either the final bird(s) are harvested, or the clock runs out of time.**
46. Competition is complete when the final bird touches the hunter's hand and the judge witnesses it. The hunter **must be in bounds.**
47. When a competitor or judge agrees there is serious confusion regarding bird count or rules interpretation, **a brief time-out may be taken.** During a time-out period, the dog **must be on the lead (the clock will not stop until it is).** Both competitors must be together with the judge. The only items discussed **must be controversial issues,** and time resumes immediately following the discussion.

Q. Safety

48. A competitor may request a safety, when he feels there is the probability of harm to the **building, vehicle, gallery, or judge.** The judge must immediately respond. When a safety is granted, **full points for find and retrieve shall be awarded,** and a **shell shall be deducted.** There are **no dog or competitor safeties.**
49. **No safeties will be awarded** in a buffer zone.
50. If either hunter fires a shot after the safety is call, **none of the additional shots are deducted from either hunter.** The judge's ruling is the overriding call and therefore precedence is held.

R. Full Retrieve Awarded 45 Points

Normal or Partial Retrieve Awarded 20 Points

51. Retrieve points will be granted when a dog picks up the bird and proceeds toward the hunter. This also applies to trapped birds. Specific rules concerning a fully-qualified retrieve include:
 - a. A trapped bird **does not qualify** for a full retrieve.
 - b. The full retrieve **must be to the handling hunter.** The handling hunter is identified to the judge prior to the start of the run.
 - c. Once shots are taken and the bird is hit, the handling hunter **must remain at the**

location where the shot was taken. The judge will mark the position and warn the hunter to return to it if they have moved.

- d. The dog must retrieve the bird and return to the handling hunter.
- e. The handling hunter may **pivot on one foot only in a 360-degree circle.** Should the hunter wish to entice the dog to complete the retrieve, he/she may proceed **backwards or at a right angle** (90 degrees) to the dog's current position. Once movement has been made by the handling hunter, **no forward movements may occur** (the pivot: point is now the current position of the handling hunter). The judge will warn the hunter of loss of full retrieve if compliance to this is not made.
- f. **The dog must place the bird firmly in the hand of the handling hunter or within the pivotal circle of the hunter.**
- g. During the course of the retrieve, the other hunter **is not allowed to physically aid the dog, other than to help by calling the dog to locate the bird.**
- h. The handling hunter may use an electric training collar during the retrieve. Leads or other physical means **will not be allowed.**
- i. Should the handling hunter elect to disregard any of the qualified retrieve rules, the retrieve **will be considered a normal retrieve** and is therefore judged according to the rules of a normal retrieve. The judge will notify the hunter(s) when this occurs.
- j. Normal retrieves are awarded when the dog picks up the down bird and carries forward towards the handling hunter. The act of carrying it forward **must be discernible to the judge** and should constitute **true forward movement.** The judge will warn the hunter(s) if the dog is not fulfilling the requirements of a normal retrieve.

S. Injured Hunter

- 52. When a hunter is injured in the field, it is the option of the team for one individual to choose to continue, unless the judge determines that time must stop, and all focus must be on the injured participant. In this event, the run will be considered suspended and the tournament handled as if there were a disqualification (suspended on scoreboard).

T. Training Aids

- 53. Bells, beeper collars, and electric training collars are permissible. Due to the hazards of tripping, check cords are discouraged. They may be used, however only if they are **10' long or less.**

U. Sportsmanship

- 54. All competitors are required to adhere to the rules of good sportsmanship. Intimidation motives or abusive behavior towards any tournament staff members (spectator, security, stocker, judges, etc.), will not be tolerated. Competitors who do not comply with this requirement **will receive a warning which will be summarily communicated to the managing tournament official. Only two warnings will be permitted per competitor. Competitors who receive more than two warnings will suffer disqualification of all performed runs. The competitor will then no longer be permitted to compete for the duration of the tournament.**

V. Firearms Safety

- 55. All competitors are required to practice safe firearms handling before, during, and after their competitive runs. Firearms should be unloaded with actions open before entering a field and returned to a similar state when the run is completed. Should a competitor be operating in an unsafe manner with their firearm while in the field, **the judge will issue a warning to correct the behavior.** Should the behavior not be corrected, **the run will be assessed a 100-point penalty.** Further unsafe behavior will result in a **warning with an automatic penalty assessment.**



**RINGNECK FESTIVAL BIRD DOG CHALLENGE
OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM**

(Please complete entry form in its entirety)

Dog's Name: _____ Breed: _____

Please circle which day your team would prefer to run: Thursday Friday

First Shooter's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (____)_____-_____-_____ Cell (____)_____-_____

E-Mail: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Telephone: _____

Second Shooter's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (____)_____-_____-_____ Cell (____)_____-_____

Emergency Contact: _____ Telephone: _____

Total Entry Fee included: _____

Return Entry Form and Waivers to
Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau
1725 Dakota Ave S • Huron, SD 57350
1-800-487-6673 • (605) 352-0000 • Fax: (605) 352-8321 • cvb@huronsd.com
www.HuntHuronSD.com

All entry fees should be received by **October 4, 2025**.
Teams will be accepted until the deadline date and up to as many as time allows.

Ringneck Festival Competition Hunt & Bird Dog Challenge Waiver

WHEREAS, the undersigned is a Participant, Team Member or otherwise involved, in the **HURON RINGNECK FESTIVAL**, known as and hereafter referred to as the “**Ringneck Festival**”. The undersigned does agree to participate in said activities fully realizing the inherent danger in any type of sporting event of this nature and agrees to and assumes the risks inherent therein:

WHEREAS, the undersigned desires to release certain parties from any damages that may arise, directly or indirectly, as the result of his/her participating in the Competition Hunt or Bird Dog Challenge known as the “**Ringneck Festival**”.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of being allowed to participate in the “**Ringneck Festival**” the undersigned assumes all risks inherent in such an activity and does hereby release and forever discharge the “**Ringneck Festival**,” its committee, as committee of the hunt, and members, as members of the hunt, and individually: The Huron Chamber and Visitors Bureau, host facilities, hosts, scorekeepers, judges, sponsors, hunters and all landowners upon whose land they may be hunting, from any and all manner of actions, causes of action, claims and demands whatsoever, in law or in equity, which may arise now or in the future as a result of, or pertaining to, the undersigned participation in said hunt or any of its activities.

AND, in consideration of being allowed to participate in the hunt known as the “**Ringneck Festival**” the undersigned consents to allow pictures, his/her name and/or likenesses of him/her to appear in any official documentary or exclusive coverage of the “**Ringneck Festival**” in any manner incidental to the undersigned participation and without compensation to the undersigned.

I, _____ (print name) being duly sworn, say that I am the person referred to in this record of application: that the statements herein contained are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and that I have read and understand the Release and Rules of the Hunt.

In Witness Thereof, I have hereunto affixed my hand this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Participant _____ (signature)

Town/State _____

Now on this ____ day of _____, 2025 before me, a Notary Public, in and for said person personally appeared to me known to be the identical person who signed the above release and acknowledge the execution thereof his/her voluntary act and deed.

Witness my hand and seal on the day and year above last written.

Notary Public Signature

My commission expires: _____

A waiver form needs to be filled out for each team member.
Return the forms to: Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau – Ringneck Festival
1725 Dakota Ave S, Huron, SD 57350
If you have questions call 1-800-487-6673 or email cvb@huronsd.com