

## Happy Ratters General Rules and Guidelines

Happy Ratters is a sport where dogs receive points for finding rats, crossing bridges, and going into burrows. The point system varies according to the level. Judge may allow a find, if dog shows a change of behavior, handler calls rat, and dog is not right on top of the rat.

### Dog eligibility and restrictions:

- Any breed or mix breed
- Must be over the age of 6 months
- Must be registered with Happy Ratters and have a registration number
- Dogs in heat run at end of class. Must wear panties. (NQ if squatting)
- Dogs in wheelchairs allowed.
- 3 legged dogs allowed, deaf dogs allowed, vision impaired dogs allowed
- Judge may ask handler and dog to leave if dog seems to be in distress
- Belly band may be worn for medical reasons. (NQ if there is leg lifting)
- Shirts may be worn for extenuating circumstance, i.e., stitches ready to come out with vet appointment scheduled, a healing sore that isn't "quite there," and similar scenarios to be permitted on a case-by-case basis. Shirts must be secured in fashion that they will not loosen or easily snag on items on the Happy Ratter course.
  - *It is up to the individual judge to determine whether the dog will be able to navigate the course safely. Judge's decision is final.*

### Not permitted

- Sick dogs
- Dogs with recently stitched wounds
- Dogs inappropriate for competition for health reasons
- DOG HEALTH AND SAFETY COMES FIRST
- Prong, Choke, Pinch, or electric collars are not allowed in the staging area or on the way from the staging area to the ring.
  - *Hosts who prefer that any particular type of collar is not permitted on their grounds should say so in their premium or registration form.*

**Dogs showing signs of aggression toward people or other dogs will not be allowed. Aggression is not tolerated and includes: actual contact, multiple lunging or excessive barking/growling at dogs and/or people**

### Handler eligibility and conduct:

- Anyone over 5 years
- Good sportsmanship must be exhibited at all times.

## General Competition and Ring Rules of conduct:

- Judge has final say in rings.
- No use of electronics in ring (no timing, no signaling, no Go Pros or similar handheld/handler worn video or timing devices, etc.)
- Videotaping will not be used for scoring purposes. Videotaping may be used for timing purposes in case of a timer malfunction.
- Dogs must be on leash, entering and leaving the ring, even if the handler carries the dog.
- When competing dogs must be off leash and run naked.
  - Handlers may carry their own leash while in the ring, place the leash in their pocket, or place the leash on the floor in the start box.
  - An exception is made for dogs in wheelchairs, and dogs who need a harness for balance reasons.
  - A collar or harness and lead may be worn for classes that are run outside as a safety precaution
- When “Rat” is called, the judge must confirm before the handler goes in to reward the dog.
- Small dogs may be picked up and held if the rat is being removed.
  - The handler may not move from position until the dog is placed on the ground.
- Handler must ask judge if they want to move items out of the way in those games/classes where the rules allow movement. Otherwise, touching/moving items will incur faults or NQ depending on the class or game.
  - At the judge’s discretion, under extenuating circumstances, (dog in cart, dog without vision) an exception can be made to the number moves allowed.
- **Treats are allowed. Faults for dropped treats. (see “Rule Specifics”)**
  - It is permitted to feed in the start box.
  - Food Rewards are allowed at the rat, after completing a burrow, and or a bridge.
  - Food Rewards may be used for rewarding a dog for coming when called.
  - Food is NOT to be used as a lure. Luring is a fault - 10 points each occurrence.
- **Praise is a must!** Food, toy, petting and/or verbal are all praise.
  - Remember to take that moment when the rat is found to connect with your dog and let them know how special they are.
- **All must have fun!!!!**

For the Standard/Regular class/es, all dogs will start at the Ratter Level, but dogs with a Barn Hunt Association Open title or higher, may begin trialing at the Expert Level if they prefer.

For the Games classes, all dogs start at the beginning levels in each of the games and work their way up. There is no “grandfathering” for the Games Classes.

Teams may opt to remain in a level instead of moving up after earning their title. They are then scored in the metallic class for that level. They compete against other metallic teams for placements and can earn bronze, silver, gold, and platinum medallions for points accumulated.

- Medallions at any level (Metallics): At each level medallions may be earned.
  - Bronze requires 1,000 points
  - Silver 2,000 points
  - Gold 3,000 points
  - Platinum 5,000 points

Points are cumulative from the start of that dog's runs in that particular level.

Titles with medallions get the letter after the title - so a bronze Ratter would be RATB, A gold Happy Ratter would be HRATG

Dogs may drop a level at any time, but may only compete in one level on any given trial. On a day with multiple trials, they could do one level trial 1 and a different level trial 2, if for example, they complete a title and wish to move up to the next level.

***Handlers may enter a maximum of 6 runs/day/dog, can be a combo of games or regular depending on number of trials offered.***

### **Faults - -10 points**

- Dropping Food
- Luring with food
- Physically assisting the dogs unless the dog is disabled and needs assistance or an older dog is "stuck" on the course.
- False Alert (handler and dog may keep searching, see games for exceptions)
- Moving items without asking judge's permission in classes/games where moves are allowed
- Roughing the rat
  - *Biting at the tube is okay and not a fault*
  - Dog picking up, carrying, rolling the tube is not okay and will faulted. Repeated roughing will be an NQ.
- Handler is deciding to call (stalling) and the dog is rolling the rat
  - continuing this pattern is an NQ
- Chasing steward
  - *A dog that follows the steward a few steps and without chasing or charging, then goes back to hunting on the handler's cue is not to be faulted. ("Where's my rat going? Oh, okay, my handler says it's fine, and I can get back to work.")*
  - If a dog chases or charges at the person, it is a 10-point fault
  - If a dog jumps at/on the steward/judge/person it is a 20-point fault.
  - If a dog bites clothing or steward/judge/person, this is an NQ and the dog is removed from the hunt area.

## Non-Qualifying (NQ)

Dog and handler will be asked to leave the hunt area

- Dog is in distress or is asked to leave by the judge.
- Elimination in the ring, urine, feces or vomitus
- Leg lifting in a belly band or squatting in panties as though the dog was going to eliminate.
- Poor sportsmanship
- A dog bites or makes contact with clothing or steward/judge/person during rat removal.
- Continued roughing the rat, i.e., rolling the tube, carrying the tube, repeatedly picking up and dropping the tube

## Bonus Points:

- It is the judge's prerogative to offer 10 bonus points for dogs that hunt well on their own, dogs that take direction well, dogs exhibiting sheer enjoyment of the sport, or judge wants to recognize an improvement in the teamwork of the dog/handler.

## Obstacles and Performance:

- **Bridge:** all four feet must get on the bridge. The four feet do not need to be on the obstacle at the same time. If a dog lands on the bridge with its front feet, then follows through with the rear feet as the front feet step off, that is a successful performance of the bridge.
  - At the ratter and happy ratter levels, may be plywood or boards on the ground, dog car ramp on the ground, low agility table, Klimb® table, a PVC ladder on the ground, or boxes to walk on.
  - At the Expert and above levels the WagIt® bridge may be used, bang it boards, or a secured teeter (tip no more than 6") or 2x12 board up to 8' long no more than 12" off the ground. (All boards and planks must be secured for safety).
- **Burrow:** all four feet must go through or in the burrow (through burrow is a tunnel like structure).
  - At the Ratter and Happy Ratter Levels, the through burrows are 3 feet in length or less. Burrows may be agility chute houses, secured lawn/leaf bags, large secured trashcans. A dog going completely into a cardboard box also counts a burrow.
  - At the Expert Level, the through burrows can be up to 10 feet in length. Agility Tunnels may be used
  - At the Champion and Extraordinaire Levels, through burrows can be up to 20 feet in length. Agility Tunnels may be used.
  - At any level, a dog may go into a burrow, turn around, and come out. As long as all four feet have gone into the burrow, the dog will receive credit for completing the burrow.
  - Official burrows must be 24" across (diameter)

## Rats, Containers, and Removal Guidelines:

**Practice Rat:** Host clubs may opt to have a practice rat available during the Ratter Level only.

- The rat, in its container, is to be strapped to a board or placed in a box and monitored.
- The rat is to be removed when the Ratter level finishes running. If the Ratter level runs take longer than an hour to complete, the rat must be change hourly.
- Only the practice rat tube available. No litter tubes or empty tubes will be available for practice.

**Rat Removal:** Rat Containers may be removed from the search area at any time, not just when they are found.

- **Removing Containers**
  - Any container may be removed at any time, including dirty or clean containers.
  - Dog must be restrained by the handler or under control in a stand, sit, or down stay and kept 3' away from the container as the (Judge/ Steward) removes the container.
  - Once a rat tube is removed, it must be a minimum of 10 feet from the search area.
  - If a dog will NOT chase after the person removing the container, they may be released to hunt.
    - *A dog that follows the steward a few steps and without chasing or charging, then goes back to hunting on the handler's cue is not to be faulted. ("Where's my rat going? Oh, okay, my handler says it's fine, and I can get back to work.")*
    - If a dog chases or charges at the person, it is a 10-point fault
    - If a dog jumps at/on the steward/judge/person it is a 20-point fault.
    - If a dog bites clothing or steward/judge/person, this is an NQ and the dog is removed from the hunt area.

**Aggression is not tolerated and includes actual contact, multiple lunging or excessive barking/growling at dogs and/or people and will result in NQ and dog removed from hunt area.**

**When things go wrong:**

- **Judge/Timer Mistakes:** Always corrected to the benefit of dog and handler
- **Forgetting to place rat in search area:** Run stops, handler praises dog and leaves. Rat(s) replaced. Time starts anew and the team gets credit for bridges/burrows previously performed.
- **Call "no" when rat IS in tube:** If discovered during the run, credit dog, add more time if dog needs it to continue working (30 second average). Make sure time on score sheet is within SCT. If discovered after the run, credit dog with the find and adjust score sheet.
- **Timer Malfunction:** If discovered right away, stop run and restart. Credit any bridge/burrow/rat. If discovered later in the run, give handler the option of SCT or re-run.

## Notes for Judges:

- No special dispensation for any team (such as clearing the building), a level playing field for all.
- Spectators should not be hanging over the fence to watch, and it is fine to ask them to step back.
- Judge's steward should stay in place until needed and not anticipate retrieving the rat.
- Judge's movement should be minimal, stay out of the way of the working dog. The start box is a good place to stand.
- In all levels **except** extraordinaire and the Infestation game, judges should call Rat1, Rat2, Rat3, etc.
  - At Extraordinaire, the judge may call Rat1, Rat 2, Rat 3, etc if the rat number changes for each competitor.
- Judges may not have food of any kind on them.

## Happy Ratters Regular/Standard Classes and Titles

Dogs receive points for finding rats, crossing bridges, and going into burrows. The point system varies according to the level. Judge may allow a find, if dog shows a change of behavior, handler calls rat, and dog is not right on top of the rat.

Dogs with a Barn Hunt Association Open title or higher, may enter at the Expert level if they prefer.

### Visibility of Tubes:

- At the Ratter and Happy Ratter Levels, Rat Containers may be somewhat visible.
- At the Expert, Champion and Extraordinaire Levels, Rat Containers are concealed from sight.

### Height of Tubes:

- The key to rat placement is rat safety. Each level has a maximum height for the placement of rats, *if they can be safely secured* at that height.

### Timing:

- There is a 30 second warning at the Ratter, Happy Ratter, Expert, and Champion Levels.
- There is NO 30-second warning at the Extraordinaire and Extreme Ratter Levels (which is why calling clear before time runs out creates bonus points).

### Class Level Details:

#### Ratter Level, (RAT)

- 2 ½ minutes, 1 rat, 1 Empty, 1 litter tube
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- All containers may be somewhat visible
- No moving of items allowed
- Title requires 300 points, 100 points are available each run.  
Rat 60 points, burrow 20 points, bridge 20 points
- *At least one rat must be found while earning the 300 points to title.*

#### Happy Ratter Level (HRAT)

- 3 minutes, 2 Rats, 2 litter
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 6 feet apart
- All containers may be somewhat visible
- One item may be moved with judge's permission only (*cont. on next page*)

- Title requires 300 points, 100 points available each run.  
Rat 40 points, burrow 10 points, bridge 10 points
- *No points if no rat is found*

### **Expert Ratter Level (XRAT)**

- 3 ½ minutes, 3 Rats, 2 litter
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 18" or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 4 feet apart
- Containers must be concealed from sight
- One item may be moved with judge's permission only
- Title requires 300 points, 100 points available each run.  
Rat 20 points, burrow 20 points, bridge 20 points
- *No points if no rat is found*

### **Champion Ratter Level (CHR)**

- 4 minutes, 4 Rats, 2 litter
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 2 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 2 feet apart
- Containers must be concealed from sight
- No moving of items allowed
- Title requires 300 points, 100 points available each run  
Rat 20 points, burrow 10 points, bridge 10 points
- *No points if no rat is found*

### **Extraordinaire Ratter Level (REX)**

- 4 ½ minutes. 1 to 5 rats (number unknown to handler), 2 litter tubes
  - NO 30-second warning
- Max Height of tubes: 3 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- Multiple rats can be in the same area
- Containers must be concealed from sight
- No moving of items allowed
- Title requires 500 points, 100 points available each run (5 legs)
- All rats 80 points, each rat is a % of 80 points, burrow and bridge 10 pts each.
- *No points if no rat is found*
- Bonus points in Extraordinaire
  - Calling clear correctly between 4:00001 – 4.5 minutes grants a 10-point bonus.
  - Calling clear correctly in under 4 minutes, earns a 30-point bonus
  - The team does not have to be fault free to earn the bonus, just correct on rat finding.
  - *Calling clear with rats remaining ends play, no bonus points will be awarded.*



### **Extreme Ratter (XREX)**

- 4 ½ minutes. 1 to 5 rats (number unknown to handler), 2 litter tubes
  - NO 30-second warning
- Max Height of tubes: 3 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- Multiple rats can be in the same area
- Containers must be concealed from sight
- No moving of items allowed
- All rats 80 points, each rat is a % of 80 points, burrow and bridge 10 pts each.
- *No points if no rat is found*
- Bonus points in Extreme Ratter
  - Calling clear correctly between 4:00001 – 4.5 minutes grants a 10-point bonus.
  - Calling clear correctly in under 4 minutes, earns a 30-point bonus
  - The team does not have to be fault free to earn the bonus, just correct on rat finding.
  - *Calling clear with rats remaining ends play, no bonus points will be awarded.*
- This prestigious award is given to the team that accomplishes thirty (30) 100- or 110-point or higher runs, after earning the REX title.
  - The REX legs do not count towards the XREX.
  - Ten (10) of the 30 must be 110-point or higher runs.

### **Extraordinaire Ratter and Extreme Ratter Classes Staging:**

Depending on the physical set up of the facility, Extraordinaire teams can wait outside, or in another room, where they can't hear how many rats are found. If there is no way to isolate the competitors, the judge may change the number of rats for each run. If Extraordinaire teams can be isolated and not hear the number of rats found, the judge may use the same number of rats for each *group* of competitors or change for each person as above.

### **Additional Titling for REXP and XREX – Multiples**

Teams who have earned REXP (Extraordinaire Platinum) will continue to accumulate points toward new titles following the format below:

- REXP2 – 10,000 points
- REXP 3 - 15,000 points
- And so on for each 5,000 points earned.

Teams who have earned XREX (Extreme Ratter) will continue to accumulate points toward new titles following the format below:

- XREX2 - 60 perfect scores, after earning the REX title. 20 of those 60 scores must be 110 points or higher
- XREX3 - 90 perfect scores, after earning the REX title. 30 of those 90 scores must be 110 points or higher
- And so on for each additional 30 perfect scores with 10 scores 110 points or higher

**SUMMARY TABLE—Regular/Standard Classes**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Rats</b>	<b>Other Tubes</b>	<b>Height/Spacing</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Ratter RAT</b>	2 ½ minutes	1 rat	1 empty 1 litter	Max 1' height	At least one rat must be found while earning 300 points to title. No moving of items allowed.
<b>Happy Ratter HRAT</b>	3 minutes	2 rats	2 litter	Max 1' height. Rats no closer than 6' apart.	No points if no rat. One item may be moved with judge's permission.
<b>Expert XRAT</b>	3 ½ minutes	3 rats	2 litter	Max 18" height Rats no closer than 4' apart.	No points if no rat. One item may be moved with judge's permission.
<b>Champion CHR</b>	4 minutes	4 rats	2 litter	Max 2' height. Rats no closer than 2 feet apart	No points if no rat No moving of items allowed.
<b>Extraordinaire REX</b>	4 ½ minutes	1-5 rats number unknown to handler	2 litter	Max 3' height. Multiple rats may be in one place.	No points if no rat No moving of items allowed. Call clear between 4:0001 and 4.5 min. 10-point bonus. Call clear under 4 min., 30-point bonus. Call clear rats remain, game over no bonus May be asked to wait in isolation or may be different # of rats per run.
<b>Extreme Ratter XREX</b>	4 ½ minutes 30 qualifying runs after REX title with 10 runs scoring 110 points or more	1-5 rats number unknown to handler	2 litter	Max 3' height. Multiple rats may be in one place	Same rules as Extraordinaire. 10 of the 30 scores must be 110 point or higher runs. The XREX count starts AFTER the REX has been earned.

Teams may opt to remain in a level instead of moving up after earning their title. They are then scored in the metallic class for that level. They compete against other metallic teams for placements and can earn bronze, silver and gold medallions for points accumulated.

- Medallions at any level (Metallics): At each level medallions may be earned.
  - Bronze requires 1,000 points
  - Silver 2,000 points
  - Gold 3,000 points
  - Platinum 5,000 points

Points are cumulative from the start of that dog's runs in that particular level.

Titles with medallions get the letter after the title - so a bronze Ratter would be RATB, A gold Happy Ratter would be HRATG

***Handlers may enter a maximum of 6 runs/day/dog. Entries can be a combo of games or regular classes depending on number of trials being offered that day.***

## Happy Ratters Games Rules and Titles

*Happy Ratters games are designed to test specific tasks/skills of dog and handler teamwork.*

All dogs start at the beginning levels in each of the games. The games are open to **all** dogs competing in Happy Ratters.

### Box-A-Rat

**Objective: To show dogs can find rats hidden in multiple layers of boxes**

- No clean or dirty tubes at all levels
- Tubes must be concealed and not be visible to handler
- Only boxes are used on the course; no bags or any other items
- Dogs can move the boxes while searching, but will be *faulted* if there is major shredding.
- In levels with more than one rat, more than one rat can be placed in the same area at the discretion of the judge/

#### Level One:

- 1 ½ - 2 minutes, 1 rat
  - Time range given; course time to be determined by the judge based on the difficulty of the course
  - 30-second warning given before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- 2 faults allowed
- 1 box may be moved with judge's permission only

#### Level Two:

- 2 – 2 ½ minutes, 2 rats
  - Time range given; course time to be determined by the judge based on the difficulty of the course
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- 2 faults allowed
- 1 box may be moved with judge's permission only

#### Level Three:

- 2 ½ - 3 minutes, 3 rats
  - Time range given; course time to be determined by the judge based on the difficulty of the course
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 18" or lower if this can safely be done
- 1 fault allowed
- NO moves allowed

**Level Four:**

- 3 – 3 ½ minutes, 4 rats
  - Time range given; course time to be determined by the judge based on the difficulty of the course
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 2 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- 1 fault allowed
- NO moves allowed

**Level Five:**

- 3 ½ - 4 minutes, 1-4 rats (number unknown to handler)
  - Time range given; course time to be determined by the judge based on the difficulty of the course
  - NO 30-second warning
- Max Height of tubes: 3 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- NO faults allowed
- NO moves allowed
- Bonus points in Level Five
  - Calling clear correctly before time expires grants a 25-point bonus.
  - Calling clear with rats remaining ends play, no bonus points will be awarded.

**Box-A-Rat (HRBR) Titles**

- Level 1 – HRBR1 – 300 points
- Level 2 – HRBR2 – 300 points
- Level 3 – HRBR3 – 300 points
- Level 4 – HRBR4 – 300 points
- Level 5 – HRBR5 – 500 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 2 Rats in the House and continues to earn a total of 2,000 points (silver) HRBR2S
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 Rats in the Garden and continues earns 3,000 points (gold) HRBR1G

## **Double Dutch - a pairs game where one team honors the other while hunting**

**Objective:** to challenge dogs/handler ability to work individually with another dog honoring while the working team is hunting.

- Ring Setup: two fenced (lattice fencing, ring gates, expens) start boxes on opposite sides of the ring.
  - This may be a visual barrier.
- If a handler wants to run two of their own dogs, they'll need people as holders
- Before the game starts, both dogs must be on leash and under control of their handlers
- Teams decide which dog will run first.
- Dog 1 is released to hunt, while dog 2 waits on leash in its start box. The handler of the running dog, goes with the dog as in the regular classes. Small dogs may be picked up and held by the handler, but must be on leash. (Note: slip leads might save time)
- Dog 1 either finds a rat and returns with its handler to the Dog 1 start box or has a false alert and returns, with handler, to the start box. There are no faults for a dog not finding a rat, it simply time wasted in switching back and forth between the dogs.
- When dog 1 is on leash, dog 2 may be released to hunt. The handler will enter the course with its dog as in the Regular classes.
- Dog 2 either finds a rat and returns with its handler to the Dog 2 start box or has a false alert and returns, with handler, to the start box
- If all the rats have not been found, repeat back at dog 1, continue until time runs out.
- Dog returning to start box must be put on leash and under control before next dog runs
- The type of fencing used (lattice, expens, ring gating) must be noted in the trial premium so the exhibitors have the information needed to make an informed decision on whether to enter their dog in the game.
  - Trial hosts should note in the premium if a visual barrier will be used.

### **Level 1**

- 2 rats
- 2 minutes
- Visual divider between honoring dogs (fence)
- Rats should be no closer than 10 feet to starting box
- Scoring: 100 points, 25-point fault if a dog doesn't find a rat (all rats are found by one dog)
- Both teams get the points

### **Level 2**

- 4 rats
- 4 minutes
- Visual divider between honoring dogs (fence)
- Rats no closer than 10 feet to starting box
- Scoring: 100 points, 25-point fault if a dog doesn't find a rat (all rats are found by one dog)
- Both teams get the points

### **Double Dutch Titles**

- Level 1 - HRDD1 – 300 points
- Level 2 - HRDD2 – 300 points
- Metallic Medallions can be earned at any level. (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 and earns a total of 3,000 points (gold) HRDD1G

## **Dump Hunter: A distance game**

**Objectives:** Dog ability to hunt independently, to work at a distance, and handler read at a distance.

- 1 rat
- No bridge. No burrow.
- The rat tubes are placed so they cannot be seen, but not buried deeply in the items on the course
- Handler has to stay on the start box or behind the start line. Handler can go to reward dog once they call rat and judge confirms
- 2 minutes to play
- Handler can call the dog and direct and even call dog back to them, but the handler may not leave the box or cross the start line.
  - *NQ if handler crosses the start line or leaves the start box **before** calling “rat.”*
- *No Faults allowed*
- Scoring -- points then time
- Level 1 5’ rat distance
- Level 2 10’ Rat distance
- Level 3 15’ rat distance

Dump hunter can be played in either a line with all the obstacles against a wall and tape or cones to mark the line the handler cannot cross, or in more circular format where the obstacles are on multiple sides, and the handler stays in a start box or on a start mat.

### **Dump Hunter Titles (300 points needed per title)**

- Level 1, 5’ distance - Dump Hunter Novice (HRDN): 300 points
- Level 2, 10’ distance - Dump Hunter Pro (HRDP): 300 points
- Level 3, 15’ distance - Dump Hunter Master (HRDM): 300 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 2 and earns a total of 1,000 points (bronze). HRDPB
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 and earns a total of 3,000 points (gold) HRDNG



## Earn A Rat – a handling/handler awareness game

**Objective:** To show the teamwork of dog and handler, ability to do obstacles (burrow or bridge) before finding a rat

- 3 tubes with rats
  - no dirty or clean tubes
- Rats are not placed in close proximity (at least 10' apart)
- 2 ½ minutes to play
- Obstacles on course:
  - Bridge/s: table or ramp or ladder
  - Burrow/s: chutes, tunnels barrel
  - Handler can reward at bridge or burrow as well as at rat
- Game starts in start box
  - Performing a bridge or burrow earns the right to hunt a rat
  - Handler calls “rat” when one is found
  - After rat is found, dog must do another bridge or burrow (either) to earn the next rat
- Rat found and called followed by rat found and called is an NQ. The team is done and exits the ring.
- Rat found and called, followed by rat found and NOT called, team may continue. The handler may reward the dog at this rat, but must do a bridge or a burrow before the handler can call “rat.”
  - Handler keeps track of whether it is safe to call “rat.”
- If there is a false alert, dog must do a bridge/burrow to earn right to hunt again
- If the dog takes two obstacles (bridge or burrow) in a row, it is a 10-point fault **only** if the dog was directed by handler.
- IF the dog takes two obstacles in a row as they fall in the dog’s path, that is not a fault. There is no penalty
- No more than 2 things can be moved with judge’s permission

## Earn a Rat Title

- Happy Ratter Handler (HRER) – 300 points
- Earn A Rat is a point game and does not have difficulty levels like some of the other games.
- Once HRER is earned, competitors continue to earn points as “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes. HRERB, HRERS, HRERG, HRERP
  - Example: Dog earns 1,000 points in Earn a Rat (Bronze) HRERB
  - Example: Dog earns 3,000 points in Earn a Rat (Gold) HRERG

### **Infestation: A multi-rat game**

**Objective:** Handler ability to read dog, dog ability to hunt multiple rats, handler ability to know when the dog is done finding rats.

- 2-6 rats, number unknown to handler
- Only 2 moves of obstacles allowed with judge's permission
- 3 1/2 minutes time limit
  - no 30-second warning
- No burrow or bridge requirement
- 100 points per run
  - 100/# of rats = points per rat
- Lots of "stuff" crazy "urban" alley
- Only tubes containing rats will be on the course. There are no empty or dirty tubes.
- If handler calls a location with no rat (False Alert), a 30-point fault will be assessed.
  - One False Alert is allowed
  - Second False Alert ends the game
- Earn bonus points if you call "Finish" successfully when all rats are found and you have incurred no faults
  - call in 3:0001-3:2999 minutes 30 points
  - call 2:000001-3 minutes 50 points
  - call less than 2 minutes 75 points
- Scoring is calculated on points then time

**Infestation Titles:** Once HRJP title has been earned (300 points), competitors compete as "Metallic."

Infestation is a point game and does not have difficulty levels like some of the other games. Title levels are:

- Junior Pest Control (HRJP): 300 points
- Pest Control (HRPC): 600 points
- Terminator (HRTB): 1,000 points (Bronze)
- Exterminator (HREXS): 2,000 points (Silver)
- Master Exterminator (HRMXG): 3,000 points (Gold)
- Rat Dispatcher (HRDP): 5,000 points (Platinum)

**Rats in the Garden and Rats in the House! Searching games in unique and challenging locations.**

**Objective:** A test of your dog's hunting skills in new environments. The rules for Rats in the Garden and Rats in the House! are the same, the only variable is the location in which the game is played.

- No clean or dirty tubes at all levels
- Tubes must be concealed and not be visible to handler.

**Rats in the Garden** – an outdoor searching game with a yard or garden theme, (wheelbarrows, planters, flower pots, kids' toys, slides, pools). Dogs may be run off leash in a secure fenced in area or on leash (any length).

**Rats in the House!** – an indoor searching game using a house theme, (chairs, tables, sofas, book cases, laundry bags, things found in a home.)

**Level One:**

- 2 ½ minutes, 1 rat
  - 30-second warning given before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- 1 fault allowed
- 1 item may be moved with judge's permission only

**Level Two:**

- 3 minutes, 2 rats
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 6 feet apart
- 1 fault allowed
- 1 item may be moved with judge's permission only

**Level Three:**

- 3 ½ minutes, 3 rats,
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 18" or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 4 feet apart
- NO faults allowed
- 1 item may be moved with judge's permission only

**Level Four:**

- 4 minutes, 4 rats,
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- Max Height of tubes: 2 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- Rats must be no closer than 2 feet apart
- NO faults allowed
- NO moves allowed

### **Level Five:**

- 4 ¼ minutes, 1-6 rats (number unknown to handler)
  - NO 30-second warning
- Max Height of tubes: 3 feet or lower if this can safely be done
- Multiple rats can be in the same area
- NO faults allowed
- NO moves allowed
- Bonus points in Level Five
  - Calling clear correctly before time expires grants a 25-point bonus.
  - *Calling clear with rats remaining ends play, no bonus points will be awarded.*

### **Rat in the House (HRRH) and Rats in the Garden (HRGR) Titles**

- Level 1 – HRRH1/HRRG1 – 300 points
- Level 2 – HRRH2/HRRG2 – 300 points
- Level 3 – HRRH3/HRRG3 – 300 points
- Level 4 – HRRH4/HRRG4 – 300 points
- Level 5 – HRRH5/HRRG5 – 500 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 2 Rats in the House and continues to earn a total of 2,000 points (silver) HRRHS
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 Rats in the Garden and continues earns 3,000 points (gold) HRRGG

## **Rat Race (formerly “Rapid Relay Rat”) – A hunting speed game**

**Objective:** Dog ability to find a rat quickly, handler ability to read dog quickly

- 4 tubes with rats on course
  - no dirty or clean tubes
  - no bridge
  - no burrow
- Initially, handlers/dogs are given 35 seconds to start
- If a rat is successfully found in first 35 seconds, the team earns another 30 seconds to hunt for next rat.
- Each rat found earns another 30 seconds.
  - Handlers are encouraged to take time to reward their dogs when a rat is found.
  - The next 30 second time period starts only when the handler has released the dog to hunt or the dog independently resumes hunting without handler direction
- Game ends with a false alert or when 4 rats found in time allotted.
- 25 points awarded per rat found
- Team keeps points earned
- Scoring is calculated on points then time
- The class will require *two* timers: one timing/resetting for the 30 second increments and one timer running overall clock, It may be possible to run the class with a single multi-tasking timer, but two timers are preferred.

### **Rat Race Titles**

- Happy Ratter Rat Race (HRRR): 300 points
- Rat Race is a speed game and does not have difficulty levels like some of the other games.
- Once HRRR is earned, competitors continue to earn points as “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes. HRRRB, HRRRS, HRRRG, HRRRP
  - Example: Dog earns 1,000 points in Rat Race (Bronze) HRRRB
  - Example: Dog earns 5,000 points in Rat Race (Platinum) HRRRP

## **Rat Trap – A Scent Detection Game**

**Objective:** Test your dog's ability to find the rat in a field or a room full of tubes.

- An indoors or outside searching game with many tubes!
- Only Tubes with the Rat/s and clean tubes are on the course
  - No litter tubes
- All tubes are visible
- All tubes are secured to the ground or, if played indoors secured to a block or some sort of holder, so the tubes are secured and will not roll.
- Run on or off leash indoors if fenced.
- Can be run either off leash outdoors a secure fenced in area, or on leash (any length).
- Handler can pick up the tube when there is more than one rat on the course.

### **Level One:**

- 2 minutes, 1 rat
  - 30-second warning given before time elapses
- 12 -20 tubes total
- 2 faults allowed
  - 10-point fault for calling wrong tube (false alert)
  - Third false alert ends the game with an NQ and no score

### **Level Two:**

- 2 ½ minutes, 2 rats
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- 12 -25 tubes total
- 2 faults allowed
  - 10-point fault for calling wrong tube (false alert)
  - Third false alert ends the game with an NQ and no score

### **Level Three:**

- 3 minutes, 3 rats
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- 12 -25 tubes total
- 2 faults allowed
  - 10-point fault for calling wrong tube (false alert)
  - Third false alert ends the game with an NQ and no score

### **Level Four:**

- 3 ½ minutes, 4 rats
  - 30-second warning given to exhibitors before time elapses
- 15 -30 tubes total
- 1 fault allowed
  - 10-point fault for calling wrong tube (false alert)
  - Second false alert ends the game with an NQ and no score

### **Level Five:**

- 4 minutes, 2-10 rats, number unknown to handler
  - NO 30-second warning
- 15 -30 tubes total
- 1 fault allowed
  - 10-point fault for calling wrong tube (false alert)
  - Second false alert ends the game with an NQ and no score
- Bonus points in Level Five
  - Calling clear correctly before time expires grants a 25-point bonus.
  - *Calling clear with rats remaining ends play, no bonus points will be awarded.*

### **Rat Trap Titles**

- Rat Trap Level 1 – HRRT1 – 300 points
- Rat Trap Level 2 – HRRT2 – 300 points
- Rat Trap Level 3 – HRRT3 – 300 points
- Rat Trap Level 4 – HRRT4 – 300 points
- Rat Trap Level 5 – HRRT5 –500 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 and continues to earn a total of 5,000 points (platinum) HRRT1P
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 4 and continues earns 3,000 points (gold) HRRT4G

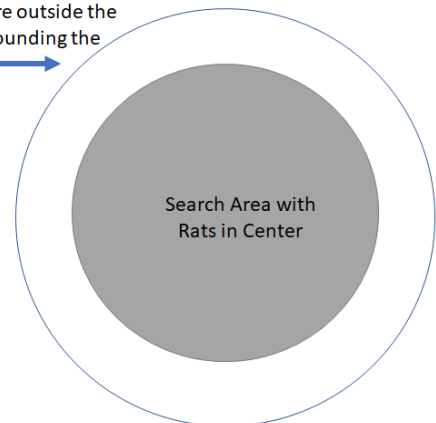
## Silent Hunt

**Objective: To show dogs working independence**

- Ring is set up with either the search area in the middle of the ring or along two walls of the ring (see diagrams below)
- Handler may choose to start anywhere along the designated start line, outside the search, which will be marked by cones, soccer dots, or a line taped to the floor.
- Once the handler cues the dog to hunt, *the handler must remain perfectly still and silent.*
- The judge will inform the handler when rat is found, and the handler may move in to reward the dog
- At Levels 2 and 3, the handler may reward the when the judge calls that a rat has been found, then must go back to their original starting position and recue the dog to hunt. Handler must again remain still and silent after recuing the dog.
  - The handler may remove each rat as it is found and hand to the ring steward or restrain the dog while the rat is removed.
  - The time will pause when the handler goes to reward and while the rat is being removed.
  - Time will restart when the handler is back behind the start line, at the original staring point, and recues the dog to hunt.
- No clean or dirty tubes at all levels
- Tubes must be concealed and not be visible to handler
- No bridge; no burrow

**Diagram 1**  
**Search area in the middle of ring**

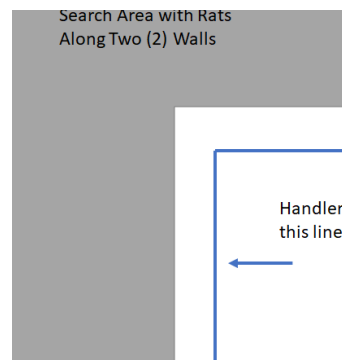
Handler can start anywhere outside the line marked by cones surrounding the search area.



**Diagram 2**  
**Search area along two walls**

Search Area With Rats  
Along Two (2) Walls

Handler can start anywhere along this line marked by cones.





**Level One:**

- 2 minutes, 1 rat
  - No 30-second warning given before time elapses. The judge is calling the “rat,” so the handler doesn’t need to know.
- *Max Height of tubes: 1 foot or lower if this can safely be done*
- 1 fault allowed
  - If handler calls “Rat,” a 10-point fault will be incurred.
- NQ if handler moves or speaks (except for calling “Rat” as stated above) after releasing the dog

**Level Two:**

- 3 minutes, 2 rats
  - No 30-second warning given before time elapses. The judge is calling the “rat,” so the handler doesn’t need to know.
- *Max Height of tubes: 18” lower if this can safely be done*
- No faults allowed
  - If handler calls “Rat,” this will be an NQ
- NQ if handler moves or speaks after releasing the dog

**Level Three:**

- 3 ½ minutes, 3 rats
  - No 30-second warning given before time elapses. The judge is calling the “rat,” so the handler doesn’t need to know.
- *Max Height of tubes: 2 feet or lower if this can safely be done*
- No faults allowed
  - If handler calls “Rat,” this will be an NQ
- NQ if handler moves or speaks after releasing the dog

**Silent Hunt Titles**

- Level 1 – HRSH – 300 points
- Level 2 – HRSSH – 300 points
- Level 3 – HRSSSH– 300 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 Silent Hunt and continues to earn a total of 2,000 points (silver) HRSHS
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 3 Silent Hunt and continues to earns 3,000 points (gold) HRSSSHG

### **Ultimate Distance: A distance game**

**Objective:** Dog ability to hunt independently, to work at a distance, while the handler sits in a chair!!

- 1 rat
- No bridge no burrow
- Rat tube is placed so the tube cannot be seen, but it is not buried deeply
- Handler has to stay **SEATED**....can get up to reward dog once they call rat and judge confirms
- 2 minutes to play
- Handler can call and direct, call dog back to them, but may not leave the chair!
  - NQ if they do
- No Faults allowed
- Scoring — points then time
  - Level 1 5' rat distance
  - Level 2 10' distance
  - Level 3 15' distance

### **Ultimate Distance Titles (300 points needed per title)**

- Level 1, 5' distance – Ultimate Distance Novice (HRUDN): 300 points
- Level 2, 10' distance – Ultimate Distance Pro (HRUDP): 300 points
- Level 3, 15' distance – Ultimate Distance Master (HRUDM): 300 points
- Handler may elect to remain at any level or go back to any level, once title has been earned and run “Metallic” for Bronze (1,000 points), Silver (2,000 points), Gold (3,000 points), and Platinum (5,000 points) Medallions as in the Regular/Standard Classes.
  - Example: Dog stays at Level 1 and earns a total of 3,000 points (gold) HRUDNG
  - Example: Dog has Level 3 and continues to earn 2,000 points (silver) HRUDM

**GAMES Summary Tables for Quick Reference and Course Set Up**  
**See rules for how to play.**

<b>Game</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b># Rats</b>	<b>Notes/Equipment</b>	<b>Faults</b>
Box-A-Rat	1 ½ - 2 m.	Level One	1	Only Rats.	2 fts/1 move
	2 - 2 ½ m.	Level Two	2	Boxes only. No	2 fts/1 move
	2 ½ - 3 m.	Level Three	3	bags/other items.	1 flt/0 moves
	3 - 3 ½ m.	Level Four	4	Bonus for calling	1 flt/0 moves
	3 ½/ -4 m.	Level Five	1-4	“clear” at Level 5	0 flt/0 moves
Double Dutch	2 m.	Level One	2	Visual dividers	25-pt. fault if
	4 m.	Level Two	4	Lattice fence, ring gates, expens	1 dog finds all rats
Dump Hunter 3 levels	2 m.	Level One 5’ Level Two 10’ Level Three 15’	1	No bridge, no burrow, no other tubes	No faults
Earn A Rat	2 ½ m.	300 HRER, then metallic	3	Only Rats Bridge, burrow, ramp, ladder, chute, tunnel, barrel	False alert, B/B to cont. no fault if obst taken w/o direct.
Infestation	3 ½ m.	300 HRJP, then metallic Bonus points for quick call “clear”	2-6	Only Rats	1 false (30 pt flt) 2 moves no 30s warning
Rats in the Garden	2 ½ m.	Level One	1	Only Rats.	1 flt /1 move
	3 m.	Level Two	2	Outdoors. On leash or fenced.	1 flt /1 move
	3 ½ m.	Level Three	3	Garden, yard	0 flt /1 move
	4 m.	Level Four	4	items.	0 flt /0 move
	4 ½ m.	Level Five	1-6	Bonus for calling “clear” at Level 5	0 flt /0 move no 30s warn at Level 5
Rats in the House	2 ½ m.	Level One	1	Only Rats.	1 flt /1 move
	3 m.	Level Two	2	Indoors.	1 flt /1 move
	3 ½ m.	Level Three	3	House-like stuff	0 flt /1 move
	4 m.	Level Four	4	Furniture, etc.	0 flt /0 move
	4 ½ m.	Level Five	1-6	Bonus for calling “clear” at Level 5	0 flt /0 move no 30s warn at Level 5
Rat Race	35s, 30s, 30s, finish	300 HRRR, then metallic	4	Only Rats. Two timers. 1 for overall, 1 for 30 second timings.	False alert ends game.

Continued on next page

**GAMES Summary Tables for Quick Reference and Course Set Up (cont.)**  
**See rules for how to play and fault limits.**

<b>Game</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b># Rats</b>	<b>Notes/Equipment</b>	<b>Faults</b>
Rat Trap	2 m. 2 ½ m. 3 m. 3 ½ m. 4 m.	Level One Level Two Level Three Level Four Level Five	<b>1</b> 12-20 <i>t</i> <b>2</b> 12-25 <i>t</i> <b>3</b> 12-25 <i>t</i> <b>4</b> 15-30 <i>t</i> <b>2-10</b> 15-30 <i>t</i> ( <i>t</i> = tubes)	Indoors or outdoors. On leash or fenced. Many tubes w/tie downs No dirty tubes Bonus for calling “clear” at Level 5	2 faults 2 faults 2 faults 1 fault 1 fault <i>no 30s warn at Level 5</i>
Silent Hunt	2 m. 3 m. 3 ½ m.	Level One Level Two Level Three	1 2 3	No bridge, burrow or other tubes. Handler must be still and silent.	1 fault No faults No faults <i>pause timer when handler goes in to reward dog &amp; remove rat; time restarts when handler recues dog</i>
Ultimate Distance 3 levels	2 m.	Level One 5’ Level Two 10’ Level Three 15’	1	No bridge, no burrow, no other tubes. Chair, Handler remains seated	No faults

## Versatility Titles

At each Level in Happy Ratters, competitors can earn Versatility and Ultimate Versatility Titles.

**Versatility Title:** Complete the Standard Level Title and 5 games at that level

**Ultimate Versatility:** Complete the Standard Level Title and 7 games at that level

**Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, and Rat Trap have 5 levels**

Ratter	Level One in Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, Rat Trap
Happy Ratter	Level Two in Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, Rat Trap
Expert	Level Three in Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, Rat Trap
Champion	Level Four in Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, Rat Trap
Extraordinaire	Level Five in Rats in the Garden, Rats in the House, Rat Trap

**Earn A Rat, Infestation, and Rat Race don't have levels per se, so versatility titling levels will be determined by points**

Ratter	300 points in Earn A Rat, Infestation, Rat Race
Happy Ratter	600 points in Earn A Rat, Infestation, Rat Race
Expert	900 points in Earn A Rat, Infestation, Rat Race
Champion	1200 points in Earn A Rat, Infestation, Rat Race
Extraordinaire	2000 points in Earn A Rat, Infestation, Rat Race

**Double Dutch has 2 levels. The designation for versatility will be applied as follows.**

Ratter/Happy Ratter/Expert	Double Dutch 1
Champion/Extraordinaire	Double Dutch 2

**Dump Hunter, Silent Hunt and Ultimate Distance have three levels. The designation for versatility will be applied as follows:**

Ratter/Happy Ratter	Dump Hunt Level 1, Silent Hunt Level 1, Ultimate Distance Level 1
Expert	Dump Hunt Level 2, Silent Hunt Level 2, Ultimate Distance Level 2
Champion/Extraordinaire	Dump Hunt Level 3, Silent Hunt Level 3, Ultimate Distance Level 3

Example: A team earns their Ratter title, 300 points in Earn A Rat, Level 1 in Dump Hunter, Level 1 in Ultimate Distance, Level 1 in Rats in the House, and 300 points in Rat Race (Standard level title plus 5 games at that level), they have earned their RV – Ratter Versatility. Then if they continue on and earn Level 1 in Rat Trap, and Level 1 in Double Dutch (Standard class title plus 7 games at that level) that team is now RUV – Ratter Ultimate Versatility.

## Versatility Titles Chart

Level	Versatility Titles
Ratter	RV, RUV
Happy Ratter	HRV, HRUV
Expert	XRV, XRUV
Champion	CHV, CHUV
Extraordinaire	REXV, REXUV

*Certificates for Versatility Titles will be created by the Happy Ratters office and sent to the competitors.*

## Lifetime Achievement Awards

Awards are based on the cumulative number of points earned by a dog across all classes in that dog's lifetime. Points will be tallied annually.

Number of Points	Lifetime Level
10,000	Amethyst
15,000	Topaz
20,000	Ruby
25,000	Emerald
30,000	Sapphire
35,000	Diamond

*Certificates for Lifetime Achievement Awards will be created by the Happy Ratters office and sent to the competitors*