



“City Rat, Country Rat” Games League Judges’ Briefings

2026 Springfield Version



General Info

General Briefing Highlights



- Dog must enter/exit ring on leash but run “naked” - put leash in bucket, on ground
- Time starts when handler or dog breaks plane of start box
- No intentional touching of dog/course/equipment
- **No treats in ring**
- Can't push/shove/force dog into tunnel
- Eliminating in ring = NQ & dismissed
- If NQd but not dismissed, judge can show a RAT tube if desired
- Must call RAT before pick up tube (but OK if pick up before judge confirms)
- If tube is Litter and the game allows faults, can remove tube after fault and continue
- Tube removal = Remove/Restrict (2 feet from wrangler)/Redirect (same as Barn Hunt)
- Praise period - after correct call, can touch dog, can pick dog up (if replace same spot)
- Handler can end run with no penalty: stops time and team keeps accumulated points

General Briefing Highlights

- Dog must enter/exit ring on leash but run “naked” **OR with just a flat buckle or snap collar (no dangling attachments)** - put leash in bucket, on ground, carry, or put in pocket
- Time starts when ALL dog’s feet leave start box/line (dog leaves first OR with handler)
- No intentional touching of dog/equipment (except where judge permission rule applies)
- Can treat & use toys in ring (start, rat, B/B, recall) but may NOT use treats to lure
- Can’t push/shove/force dog in/onto burrow or bridge
- Eliminating in ring = NQ & dismissed
- If NQd but not dismissed, judge can show a RAT tube if desired
- Must call RAT before reward dog or touch tube (but OK if pick up before judge confirms)
- If tube is Litter and game allows faults, can remove tube after fault and continue
- Tube removal = Remove/Restrain (**4 feet from wrangler**)/Redirect (same as Barn Hunt)
- Praise period - after correct call, can touch dog, can pick dog up (if replace same spot)
- Handler can end run with no penalty: stops time and team keeps accumulated points

Week 1 Games

COUNTRY RAT GAME - WEEK 1

Flip A Coin



Time: 3:00

Rats: 4

Litter: 2

Object of the Game:

- Dog finds rats at a limited distance from handler

Key Facts:

- Course split in half = one side is heads; other is tails
- 2 rats and 1 litter on each side
- Handler has to stay on side chosen by coin flip until correct call is made
- After correct call can go in for praise/removal...
- But then must go directly back to designated side

How It Ends:

- Run out of time (no penalty) OR
- When all rats found

Scoring:

- 2 points per rat found on handler side
- 4 points per rat found on opposite side
- 1 point for tunnel
- Max score: 13

Faults:

- One false alert allowed: -1 point penalty
- 2nd false alert: NQ

Other Penalties:

- NQ if handler crosses line before rat is called
- NQ if handler does not return to designated side immediately after praise/removal

To Q: Find at least one rat

Rat Trap - 2 trials offered



Object of Game:

- Test dog's ability to find rat in ring full of many tubes (all non-rat tubes are clean/empty, no litter tubes)

Key Facts:

- Level 1: 1 rat, 12-20 total tubes (2:00)
- Level 2: 2 rats, 12-25 total tubes (2:30)
- Level 3: 3 rats, 12-25 total tubes (3:00)
- Level 4: 4 rats, 15-30 total tubes (3:30)
- Level 5: 2-10 rats, 15-30 total tubes (4:00) - bonus points for calling "Clear" correctly
- 30 second warning before time expires (in all but Level 5)
- Can run on or off leash

Faults: two allowed in L1-L3; 1 allowed in L4, **none allowed in L5**

Penalties: 10 point fault if tube rolled out of container

To Q:

- Find at least one rat within time (and have positive score)

100 points available per run, divided by # of rats; subtract faults to determine total awarded towards Rat Trap title (300 pts to title)

CITY RAT GAME - WEEK 1

Rat Race



Time: varies, 30 seconds past the last rat found

Rats: 4

Litter: 0

Object of Game:

- Dog finds rats and handler reads dog *quickly*

Faults: ends game, keep points earned

Penalties: n/a

Key Facts:

- 35 seconds to find first rat
- After each correct call, time resets so have 30 seconds to find each additional rat

To Q:

- Find at least one rat

25 points for each rat found awarded towards Rat Race title (300 pts to title)

How It Ends:

- Fault
- Run out of time (no penalty) OR
- When all rats found

Week 2 Games

COUNTRY RAT GAME - WEEK 2

Ups & Downs



Time: 3:00

Rats: 4

Litter: 2

Object of the Game:

- Dog finds rats at varying height placements

Key Facts:

- 2 rats + 1 litter on ground
- 2 rats + 1 litter elevated
- Higher rats worth more points

How It Ends:

- Run out of time (no penalty) OR
- When all rats found

Scoring:

- 4 points per rat found elevated
- 2 points per rat found on ground
- 1 point for tunnel
- Max score: 13

Faults:

- One false alert allowed: -1 point penalty
- 2nd false alert: NQ

To Q: Find at least one rat

Box-A-Rat



Object of Game:

- Show dog's ability to find rats hidden in multiple layers of boxes

Key Facts:

- Level 1: 1 rat (2:00), 1 move
- Level 2: 2 rats (2:30), 1 move
- Level 3: 3 rats (3:00), NO moves L3+
- Level 4: 4 rats (3:30)
- Level 5: 1-4 rats (4:00) - bonus points for calling "Clear" correctly
- 30 second warning before time expires (in all but Level 5)
- Allowed hide height increases w/ levels

Faults: two allowed in L1-L2; one allowed in L3-L4; NO faults allowed in L5 → if exceed ends game, team keeps points

Penalties: n/a

To Q:

- Find at least one rat within time (and have positive score)

100 points available per run, divided by # of rats; subtract faults to determine total awarded towards Box-A-Rat title (300 pts to title)

CITY RAT GAME - WEEK 2

Infestation



Time: 3:30

Rats: 2-6, unknown #

Litter: 0

Object of Game:

- Dog ability to hunt multiple rats; handler ability to read dog, including when clear

Key Facts:

- Can move two objects w/ judge permission
- No bridge or burrow
- Bonus points if call "Clear" successfully and have no faults (30-75 pt bonus depending on timing)

Faults: one allowed, 2nd ends game

Penalties: n/a

To Q:

- Positive score when time expires

100 points available per run, divided by # of rats; subtract faults or add bonus points to determine total awarded towards Infestation titles

Village Rats **new game**



Object of Game:

- Show dog's ability to differentiate clean vs. rat tubes in course created entirely of pop-up fabric play tents and plastic playhouses (all non-rat tubes are clean/empty, no litter tubes)

Key Facts:

- Level 1: 1 rat, 2 clean tubes, 5-6 houses (2:30)
- Level 2: 2 rats, 2 clean tubes, 6-7 houses (3:00)
- Level 3: 3 rats, 3 clean tubes, 7-8 houses (3:30)
- Level 4: 4 rats, 4 clean tubes, 8-9 houses (4:00)
- Level 5: 1-5 rats, 4 clean tubes, 9-10+ houses (4:30) - bonus points for calling "Clear" correctly
- 30 second warning before time expires (in all but Level 5)

Faults: two allowed in L1-L2; 1 allowed in L3-L4, none allowed in L5

Penalties: 10 point fault if tube rolled out of container

To Q:

- Find at least one rat within time (and have positive score)

100 points available per run, divided by # of rats; subtract faults to determine total awarded towards Village Rats title (300 pts to title)

Week 3 Games

Burrow Bonanza



Time: 2:00

Rats: 1

Litter: 0

Object of the Game:

- Do as many unique tunnels as possible (up to 8 options available!)

Key Facts:

- Tunnels can be taken once each direction for points
- Rats can be called & removed but have no value
- If your dog finds a tube, best to just call it because no litters out!

How It Ends:

- Run out of time (no penalty) OR
- When all tunnels completed

Scoring:

- 1 point for doing a unique tunnel + 1 point for each turn:
 - Straight tunnels = 1 pt
 - 1 turn tunnel = 2 pt
 - 2 turn tunnel = 3 pt.....

Faults: n/a; judge notifies & run continues

To Q: Complete at least one tunnel

Road Rage Rats



Object of Game:

- Show dog's ability to find rats in a wheeled toy vehicle, wagon, dolly, or cart where every item has a VISIBLE tube (all non-rat tubes are clean/empty, no litter tubes)

Key Facts:

- Level 1: 1 rat, 10-12 total items (3:00)
- Level 2: 2 rats, 12-15 total items (3:00)
- Level 3: 3 rats, 14-17 total items (3:30)
- Level 4: 4 rats, 17-20 total items (4:00)
- Level 5: 1-5 rats, 17-20 total items (4:30) - bonus points for calling "Clear" correctly
- 30 second warning before time expires (in all but Level 5)

Faults: two allowed in L1; 1 allowed in L2-L3; none allowed in L4-L5

Penalties: 10 point fault if tube rolled out of tie-down or container

To Q:

- Find at least one rat within time (and have positive score)

100 points available per run, divided by # of rats; subtract faults to determine total awarded towards Road Rage Rat title (300 pts to title)

CITY RAT GAME - WEEK 3

Earn A Rat



Time: 2:30

Rats: 3

Litter: 0

Object of Game:

- Show teamwork; dog's ability to do a Bridge or Burrow before/while finding rats

Key Facts:

- 3 rats (at least 10' apart); no litter tubes
- Multiple bridge and burrow options
- Performing B or B earns right to hunt a rat
- After rat found, must do another B or B to earn next rat, etc.
- Can move two objects w/ judge permission
- Handler may lead out from start box

Faults: two allowed, third ends game

- After false alert, must do *another* B or B to earn right to hunt again
- Two B/Bs in a row (handler directed) is fault

Penalties: rat found and called followed by rat found and called ends game - team keeps points

To Q:

- Find at least one rat within time (and have positive score)

34 points for each rat found awarded towards Earn A Rat title (300 pts to title)

Optional/Extra Game

COUNTRY RAT GAME - OPTIONAL

Madd Ratter



Time: 2:00

Rats: 8

Litter: 4

Object of the Game:

- Score as many points as possible

Key Facts:

- Points earned mostly by finding rats
- But tunneling also matters...
- And faults are costly!

How It Ends:

- Run out of time (no penalty) OR
- When all rats found & tunnel complete

Scoring:

- 2 points per rat found
- 1 point for tunnel
- Perfect run doubles score (find all rats + tunnel)!
- Max score: 17 (34 if doubled)

Faults:

- Two false alerts allowed: -1 point penalty each
- 3rd false alert: NQ (three strike rule)

Other Penalties:

- -2 points for not tunneling

To Q: Find at least one rat (and have positive score)