



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™

Performance Events Department



February 19, 2013

To: All Clubs Licensed to Hold Earthdog Tests

Subject: **The New Sport of Barn Hunt**

The Barn Hunt Association and the American Kennel Club are pleased to announce that the AKC will recognize titles earned in the new sport of Barn Hunt.

The sport of Barn Hunt is based on the hunting and teamwork skills historically used by “rat catchers” who traveled the countryside ridding farms of vermin. Dogs and handlers work as a team to locate and mark rats (safe in aerated tubes) hidden in a maze of straw or hay bales. The event is open to all dogs.

“Barn Hunt tests the nose, speed, agility and surefootedness of dogs that have a history of above-ground vermin hunting,” said Robin Nuttall, founder of the Barn Hunt Association. “We quickly found out that many breeds and mixed breeds enjoy the search and can excel at this sport.”

Barn Hunt events include a pass/fail Instinct class for owners who want to familiarize their dog with the test. The AKC will recognize titles at four testing levels above Instinct. Courses are made increasingly difficult by adding more obstacles, additional diversions and more rats to find. The BHA has developed the sport to be fun for all participants, plus easy and inexpensive to hold.

Legs, or qualifying scores, toward Barn Hunt titles are earned by the dog and handler team completing the course within maximum course time. Placements based on time are awarded, but Barn Hunt is a non-competitive event and teams do not have to beat other dogs to title.

“We are pleased to work with the Barn Hunt Association to recognize Barn Hunt titles on a dog’s AKC record,” said Doug Ljungren, VP for Companion and Performance Events. “Barn Hunt is another great way for dogs to test their instincts and for both owners and dogs to enjoy a fun activity together.”

If owners choose to apply, Barn Hunt titles will appear on their dog’s AKC pedigree. The Barn Hunt title application form and information regarding holding Barn Hunt in conjunction with AKC events can be found on the [AKC’s Title Recognition Program website](#).

The BHA has been holding practice events country-wide. The first sanctioned event is scheduled for April 13-14, 2013 in Columbia, MO. For more information, including the official rules and event application process, visit www.barnhunt.com.

Comments or questions can be e-mailed to PerformanceEvents@akc.org.