

2022 Barn Hunt® National Competition Rules



This document updated June 30, 2022 6:27 PM

Overview

The Barn Hunt National is a special, non-regular event. Dogs and handlers are tested on a series of unique courses over three days to determine which are the “Best of the Best” based on each dog’s cumulative score. Qualifying scores at the National do not count toward any regular Barn Hunt title. Gold medalists are awarded Grand National Champion, Games Champion, and Versatility Champion titles. Gold medalists in Grand National, Games, and Versatility get byes for the following year’s National.

Class Types

The Barn Hunt National consists of two major categories of classes:

- **Grand National**
- **Games (Team and Hurdles)**

Dogs may enter Grand National and/or Team Competition, Hurdles Competition, or both Games. To be eligible for the Versatility Champion title, dogs must be entered in both Games plus the Grand National.

Entry Criteria, Limits, Opening and Closing Dates

Dogs must have a Master title earned prior to May 31, 2022 to be eligible for entry into the Barn Hunt National Grand National or Hurdles competition. At least one Team member in Team competition must have a RATM or above. A second team member may have a Senior title or above. **The title held on May 31, 2022 is the title level used to determine the opening dates below.** Attaining a higher level title after May 31 does not qualify the dog for an earlier entry date, or qualify dogs who do not have an Master title on May 31 for entry.

Opening and Closing Dates

Entries will first be accepted on the following Opening dates based on the dog’s title:

- Gold medalists from from the 2021 National and dogs with a 2022 Regional Bye (for their eligible class): July 1, 2022
- Dogs with RATCHX and above titles: July 15, 2022
- Dogs with RATCH titles: August 1, 2022
- Dogs with RATM titles: August 15, 2022
- Entries Close August 31
- No more than 6 different dog entries per envelope
- No hand delivery of entry forms allowed
- **Early entries will be shredded.**

If entries for that the required title level exceed the total allowed entry for the Class (Grand National, Hurdles, Team), a Random Draw will be held and a wait list will be established. For example: If the Grand National fills with RATCH-titled dogs, a livestream random draw will be held for all Grand National RATCH entries. RATCH dogs not getting in on the random draw will be put on a wait list, and all RATM entries will also be put on a wait list. RATCH wait listed dogs will be placed before RATM wait listed dogs.

Entry Limits

- **Grand National:** 200 entries
- **Team:** 100 entries
- **Hurdles:** 150 entries

Entry Details

- There are no guaranteed entries for dogs with lower level titles other than dogs who have earned a Bye. Bye dogs are only eligible for entry in the Class type they earned a Bye in (a Games Bye does not earn a Bye entry into the Grand National). Bye dogs who miss their deadline of July 15 are no longer guaranteed an entry and must enter the correct main group accordingly (RATCHX+, RATCH, RATM). In the Event a RATS dog gets in on a Bye, if they miss their deadline, they are only allowed entry if the National does not fill with higher titled dogs.
- There is a separate entry form for Games. All entries for the same dog (Grand National plus any Games) must be in the same envelope.

Special Team Entry Information

- If entering Team, all entries (Team, Hurdles, Grand National) for both dogs must be in the same envelope.
- Team dogs may have different level titles (e.g., one dog has a Master title and one a Senior title).
- Team entries are accepted during the open date period for the dog with the highest title competing in the Team. If one dog is entering on a Bye, the other dog is also entered in Team.
- For dogs entered in Team, the Grand National and/or Hurdles entry for the dog with the lower level title will be set aside until the opening date for that level and randomly sorted with other entries at that level (they do not get first priority).
- Substitutions may be made for dogs competing in Team at any time before September 30. After September 30 and before the close of Check In on Thursday October 27, substitutions may be made only for legitimate reasons (e.g. illness, injury, etc), only with dogs already entered in the National, and only with the approval of the trial committee. No substitutions will be made after this time.
- No dog can be a member of more than one Team.

Cancellation/withdrawals

- Cancellations/Withdrawals prior to the closing date of September 30 will be refunded in their entirety. No refunds are given after that date.

Conflicts

- Because of the growth of the Barn Hunt National, Barn Hunt will not be able to move dogs based on a NADD conflict, either before or during the event.

Entry Fees

Grand National:

- \$70 per dog (guarantees competition on at least Course 1 and Course 2)

Games:

- \$50 per Team (\$25 per dog)
- \$40 per dog for Hurdles

General Rules

All general Barn Hunt Regulations apply at the National with the exceptions and differences detailed in the sections below.

All dogs must have an official measurement to compete in the National. Dogs who have a height card from another organization (AKC, UKC, NADAC, ASCA, USDAA, CPE, etc.) can use that as their measurement. **Please include a copy of the height card with the entry form.** Dogs who do not have a height card will be measured at check in. Dogs who were measured at any previous National do not need to be remeasured.

Grand National

Description

The Grand National is a series of four Courses over three days of competition. Dogs entered in the Grand National will compete on Course 1 on Friday and Course 2 on Saturday (1 course per day). The combined scores from Courses 1 and 2 of the top 75 dogs, regardless of size, advance to Sunday's competition. All dogs who advance will compete on both Course 3 and Course 4 to determine the Grand National Champion.

Friday Course 1

- **Course time (SCT):** 2:30.
- **Ring size:** 24' x 24' ring (approximate).
- **Tunnel(s):** Tunnel length will be 10' to 15'. A minimum of one turn and a maximum of two turns. There may be more than one tunnel and/or a combination of unofficial and official tunnels.
- **Distance Challenge:** none
- **Bale height:** There will be at least 2 places with bales two-high.
- **Rats:** There will be three live rat tubes and three litter tubes on the course. All tubes may be elevated, on ground level, or any combination of elevated and ground level. Tubes may be placed as close as 12" apart.
- **Scoring:** 100 points for a qualifying score, plus 1 bonus point for every second under SCT, rounded down to the nearest second.

Saturday Course 2

- **Course time (SCT):** 3 minutes.
- **Ring Size:** 24' x 24' ring (approximate).
- **Tunnel(s):** Tunnel length will be 12' to 20'. A minimum of two turns and a maximum of 3 turns. May have multiple portals (see Competitor Rulebook for rules on multi-portal tunnels). There may be more than one tunnel and/or a combination of unofficial and official tunnels.
- **Distance Challenge:** There may be a Distance Challenge of up to 25% of the course. If there is a Distance Challenge, one portal of an official tunnel may be inside the DC, but one portal must be outside the DC.
- **Bale Heights:** There will be at least one place where the bales are stacked 3-high.
- **Rats:** There will be four live rat tubes and four litter tubes on the course. All tubes may be elevated, on ground level, or any combination of elevated and ground level. Tubes may be placed as close as 6" apart.
- **Scoring:** 100 points for a qualifying score, plus 1 bonus point for every second under SCT, rounded down to the nearest second.

Sunday Course 3

- **Course time (SCT):** 4 minutes.
- **Ring size:** 32' x 32' ring (approximate).
- **Tunnel(s):** Tunnel length will be 14' to 22'. A minimum of two turns and a maximum of three turns. May have multiple portals (see Competitor Rulebook for rules on multi-portal tunnels). There may be more than one tunnel and/or a combination of unofficial and official tunnels.
- **Distance Challenge:** There may be a Distance Challenge of up to 50% of the course. All entry portals to any official tunnel(s) may be inside the DC. If all entry portals are inside the DC, one entry must be no more than 2' from a boundary.
- **Bale heights:** There will be at least two places at 3-high.
- **Rats:** There will be a total of eight tubes on the course, one to five live rat tubes with the remainder being litter tubes. The competitor must declare the course "Clear" when all rats have been found, but may complete the tunnel and/or climb after calling the course clear as long as time remains on the clock. All tubes may be elevated, on ground level, or any combination of elevated and ground level. There are no restrictions on how close tubes are placed, except that a rat tube cannot be blocked in or impeded by a litter tube or second rat tube. An example of a disallowed placement would be a rat tube on the floor between two bales, with a litter tube in front of it so that the dog would have to go over/through the litter tube to get to the rat tube.
- **Scoring:** All qualifying scores get 120 points.

Sunday Course 4

- **Course time (SCT):** 3 minutes.
- **Ring size:** 32' x 32' ring (approximate).
- **Tunnel(s):** Tunnel length will be 14' to 22' to the nearest exit. A minimum of two turns and a maximum of three turns. May have multiple portals (see Competitor Rulebook for rules on multi-portal tunnels).
- **Distance and Gamble Challenge:** Approximately 50-60% of the ring will be behind a Distance Challenge/Gamble line made up of bales and a 4' to 6' wide send line marked by mats. All portals of all official tunnel(s) will be inside the DC/Gamble area, with the nearest portal a minimum of 5' and a maximum of 8' from the send line.
 - Unless otherwise indicated regular DC/Master rules apply (see Competitor Rulebook).
 - **Send Gamble:** If a dog successfully completes the tunnel from behind the send line (voluntarily or on command), the DC is cancelled and the handler can enter and exit at will for the remainder of the course time. 10 regular tunnel points plus 10 bonus send points will be awarded.
 - The handler must be at send line to get the gamble bonus. The handler's feet (or accessibility aids) cannot step on/over any part of the send line mats, but handlers can gesture and verbally encourage their dog at will.
 - If the handler is at the send line and the dog enters the DC from another location (jumps over a side bale) and successfully completes the tunnel, the bonus is awarded and DC negated.
 - If a handler steps on/over the send line mats prior to calling rat or completing the send gamble, it's a fault and -20 points. A second unallowed step on the mats is an NQ.
 - **Prior to completing the send gamble:** the handler can only be in the DC for praise/restraint/removal of the rat and must exit without delay.
 - If the dog voluntarily completes the tunnel while the handler is exiting the DC, the dog gets 10 tunnel points but no bonus points and the DC remains in effect. The handler is free to continue to exit without delay.

- If the handler gestures/commands for the dog to tunnel or asks the dog to continue hunting the DC instead of exiting without delay, the handler is then stuck inside the DC until the dog finds another rat either inside or outside the DC. The dog gets 10 points for a completed tunnel but no bonus points.
- If the dog completes the tunnel from inside the DC, the handler may later attempt to get the 10 bonus points for a successful tunnel send from outside the DC.
- **Bale Height:** Maximum bale height is 2-high.
- **Rats:** There will be 8 rats and 4 litter tubes on the course. At least 1 rat will be inside the DC/Gamble. Tubes (either litter or rat) may be hidden as close as 6" apart.
- **Scoring:** Standard Crazy 8s scoring and faults are used with the following differences.
 - Clear runs of 8 rats, tunnel and climb receive 100 points plus an extra point for every second under time. (Bonus and Super Bonus are not awarded, see Tunnel send bonus below).
 - **Tunnel Send Bonus:** Handlers will get an extra 10 bonus points for successfully sending their dog to the tunnel from behind the send line of the DC/Gamble.
 - Maximum score is 110 points plus a bonus point for each second under time. The dog must find at least 1 rat and have a positive score to qualify.

Grand National Scoring

Scoring for the Grand National is as follows:

- **All Courses:** All elements must be successfully completed within course time and without disqualifying errors in order to receive a qualifying score. Scoring is cumulative from course to course, so a zero score on one course does not necessarily eliminate a dog from the overall competition.
- **Top 75:** The top 75 dogs from the cumulative scores of Courses 1 and 2 go on to Courses 3 and 4.
 - If there is a tie for 75th place after Courses 1 and 2, all dogs in the tie will advance to Sunday's Courses. Dogs must have at least one qualifying score on Course 1 or Course 2 to be eligible to advance to Courses 3 and 4. If fewer than 75 dogs are eligible, only those dogs advance.

Grand National Awards

- For each Course, first through fourth place ribbons will be awarded for each height category (small, medium, large). Ribbons will also be offered for each Qualifier. High Course awards will be awarded for each Course for the top score overall (all heights combined) for that course. Top 75 dogs will get a special award/medal.

Grand National Medals

- The single dog who completes all four courses with the highest score wins the gold medal and the title of Grand National Champion. The letters RGNC will be added as a prefix to that dog's name in the Barn Hunt Register, and that dog is awarded a bye for Grand National for the next year's National. Silver and Bronze medals will also be awarded for second highest and third highest scores.

Games: Hurdles

Hurdles Description

In Hurdles, The dog must jump over a series of five 4" tall hurdles made of PVC pipe or another safe material to reach 3 tubes openly secured on the ground in front of a hay bale "stop." One tube will be empty, one will have litter and one will have a live rat. The racing lane will be a completely fenced area that is 4 feet high by 4 feet wide by 80 feet long.

- Course time is 1 minute.
- Hurdles are placed evenly along the length of the track at 20', 30', 40', 50' and 60'.
- Dogs may run without a collar or may wear a flat buckle or snap collar. No chain, martingale, choke, or prong collars allowed.
- Two people are required for each dog – a handler and holding partner. The holding partner will restrain the dog behind the start line inside the fenced area/lane. The handler will be stationed behind the start line outside the fenced area.
 - All dogs entering Hurdles must be capable of being held by another person for release.
- The judge will call GO (or electronic timers signal GO), after which the holding partner releases the dog without bowling.
- Handlers may not cross the start line until the judge/timer says GO.
- Time starts when any part of the dog crosses the start line, and stops when the handler calls the rat and the judge stops the time.

- Handlers may run down the line with the dog to the end or send the dog ahead. Holding partners must stay behind the start line. There will be people on the grounds willing to help as holding partners in the event a handler does not have one.
- Handlers cannot call a rat tube until the dog has crossed all 5 hurdles. Dogs who do not cross all 5 hurdles do not receive a qualifying score.
- Knocking over a hurdle does not incur a penalty.
- Leaving the course (dog jumps out of the lane) will result in an NQ score.

Hurdles will have two rounds, one on Saturday and one on Sunday, with set open hours. Handlers may come to the hurdles course as time permits during those hours. Those hours will be announced prior to, or during, the event. Handlers who miss the open hours for the first Hurdles run may run in the second round but only once (cannot make up the first round) and are ineligible for High Hurdles, Games Medals or Versatility Medals.

Hurdles Scoring:

- 50 points for each Qualifying score plus one point for every second under time. The total score is the combined number of both rounds of Hurdles.

Hurdles Awards:

- First through Fourth place ribbons will be awarded for each height category (small, medium, large) for each round of Hurdles (Saturday and Sunday). Ribbons will also be offered for each Qualifier. High Round 1 Hurdles and High Round 2 Hurdles ribbons will be awarded. High Hurdles will be awarded to the single dog with the highest score over the two rounds out of all heights. In the event of a tie score for High Hurdles, dogs will be re-run for the fastest qualifying score.

Games: Team

Team Description

In Team, two dogs hunt for six rats hidden on a 32' x 32' Course, with no Distance Challenges. There are four litter tubes in addition to the six rat tubes. Team pairs are chosen by the owners/handlers; no forced pairings are allowed in Team. Dogs making up teams must be able to hunt together. Either dog in the team may find any or all of the rats but even if one dog finds most/all of the rats, both dogs must actively hunt. For example, it is acceptable for one dog to honor, or back, the other dog's finds or be actively hunting but miss the find when the other dog gets there first. The individual judge for each dog makes the call on whether the dog is actively hunting. To be said to be actively hunting, the dog must be searching for rats for the significant majority of its time in the ring (rather than being idle, wandering aimlessly, or attempting to constantly engage the other dog in play). Teams can consist of any height pairing (i.e., a large dog and a small dog, two medium dogs, a small and medium dog, etc.).

- **Course time (SCT):** 4 minutes.
- **Ring size:** 32' x 32' (approximate)
- **Start Box size and procedure:** The start box will be 4' x 8'. Each dog will have a handler, and each dog will have a judge, a scribe and a score sheet.
- **Tunnel:** There will be one official tunnel with a minimum of two turns and a maximum of three turns. Length is 15' to 25'.
- **Bale heights:** One to two places at 3-high.
- **Determining Climb or Tunnel:** The timer or another authorized worker will come to the blind after it is full and prior to the first team being called, and have each team pull for which dog will tunnel vs climb. That info will be written on each scribe sheet and conveyed to the Judges as the Team enters the ring. If assigned a climb, that dog must complete a climb within course time. If assigned a tunnel, the dog must complete a tunnel within course time. It is acceptable for each dog to complete both a tunnel and a climb, but each must complete their assigned task.
- **Starting the Course:** The Timer, stationed outside the ring with the stopwatch, releases the team. After the timer says "Go When Ready," any part of either dog or either team member exiting the box starts time.
- **Handling in the Ring:** Team handlers handle the dog they bring into the ring.
 - One team member cannot handle or command the other team member's dog. Some examples are:
 - A team member cannot tell the other team member's dog to tunnel or climb. If the dog does the tunnel/climb based on the command of the wrong team member, it will not count.
 - A team member may not call Rat for the other dog/handler. If both dogs are on a tube simultaneously, either handler may call Rat.
 - A Team member may not restrain the other Team member's dog.
 - After one Team member calls Rat, both team members may restrain their dogs if needed until the rat is safe.

- If all rats are found and one Team member's dog has completed his climb/tunnel, he may (but is not required to) go back to the start box and be leashed as the other dog finishes the required task.
- Team members can freely communicate with each other verbally, and can verbally communicate even if they have faulted and are back in the start box.
- **Faults/NQs:** Any team member who faults/NQs (see scoring) must collect their dog and go back to the start box immediately. They will be given their leash and must put their dog on the leash and wait as the other team member tries to complete the task. NQs such as kneeling on the ground or touching a bale which would normally not be told to the handler until after the run are called immediately in Team.
 - Faults include elimination in the ring, calling litter, not hunting, interfering with the other dog, or any other action that would result in an NQ by Barn Hunt Rules.
 - If the fault is elimination in the ring, in most cases the dog who did not eliminate will be allowed to hunt without stopping the ring for cleanup. If the judge must stop the ring for cleaning, the judge tells the timer to STOP. The timer stops the watch. The dog who eliminated exits (NQ), and the other dog goes back to the box. After the ring is cleaned, the dog who did not eliminate is restarted by the timer and has the remaining time to finish all of the tasks of the run.
 - Aggression by either teammate results in a zero score for both dogs.
- **Staffing:** There will be two inside Rat Wranglers on the course and three to four Outside Rat Wranglers. One leash steward will be inside the course to aid in collecting and returning leashes. A timer/collator outside the ring will release the dogs and record time on both sheets received from the scribes.
- **Judges:** There are two Judges inside the ring, with one judging the dog who will tunnel, and the other judging the dog who will climb. The Timer may be a Judge or other authorized person.

Team Scoring

- In order to receive a full Team score, the team must actively hunt, find all rats, and complete their assigned climb/tunnel within course time. If the team is successful, 100 points are assigned to each dog, and each dog gets bonus points based on the total number of seconds under time accomplished by the team. For example, if the team finishes all required elements in 3 minutes 30 seconds, each dog receives a score of 130. The cumulative Team Score is 260. The cumulative Team score is only used for Team awards and High Team. For Games and Versatility awards, each dog's score is used (130 for each dog in this example).
- If all six rats are not found, and/or both dogs are eliminated (failure to hunt, failure to complete assigned element, elimination in the ring, etc.) the cumulative Team score is zero and both dogs' individual scores are zero.
- If one dog is eliminated (failure to hunt, eliminates in the ring, failure to complete assigned task, incorrect tube called) that dog is leashed and taken back to the start area while the other dog continues to hunt. If the other dog completes its part of the task and all six rats are found, the cumulative Team score will be 50 points plus one bonus point for seconds under time. The dog who was not eliminated will also get an individual score of 50 points plus seconds under time. The dog who was eliminated will get a zero score.
 - If the dog who faulted had not completed its required tunnel or climb prior to the fault, the remaining dog does not have to complete that part of the course. The remaining dog must find all remaining rats but only has to complete the element it was assigned when first entering the ring.

Team Awards

- First through Fourth place ribbons will be awarded to the top four Teams. Ribbons will also be offered for each Qualifying Team. First place is awarded High Team.

Games Medals

- The single dog with the highest combined score for Hurdles and Team regardless of height receives a Gold Medal for Games and the title of Games Champion. The letters RGC will be added as a prefix to that dog's name in the Barn Hunt Register and that dog is awarded a bye for Hurdles and Team for the following year's National. The bye is for that dog only and does not include a future teammate.
- Silver and Bronze medals are also awarded for second and third highest combined scores.

Versatility Medals

- The single dog with the highest score including Grand National and both Games receives a Gold Medal for Versatility and title of Versatility Champion. The letters RVC will be added as a prefix to that dog's name in the Barn Hunt Register awarded a bye for Grand national, Hurdles, and Team for the following year's National. The bye is for that dog only and does not include a future teammate.
- Silver and Bronze medals are also awarded for second and third highest combined scores.