

## EARTHDOG TESTS

The Greater Portland Dachshund Club (Oregon) was privileged to hold the first-ever AKC licensed earthdog tests on October 1st and 2nd, 1994. Earthdog tests are open to AKC-registered or ILP (listed) Dachshunds and several terrier breeds. Out of an entry of 155 dogs, only 13 dogs qualified for the Junior Earthdog title that weekend and one dog for a leg on its Senior Earthdog title. Of the 13 dogs qualifying to their Junior Earthdog title, nine were DACHSHUNDS. The first Miniature Dachshund ever to earn the title was Nomala's Skoshi Scotta ms, owned by Noma R. Moore. Our own Karla Deithorn was one of the judges on Sunday.

There are four classes of earthdog tests, requiring increasing levels of skill and training:

INTRODUCTION TO QUARRY-- is kind of a practice class, with no title awarded and can be bypassed to go on to the Junior earthdog class if you think your dog is ready. The tunnel is 10 feet long with one 90-degree turn and a cage with (laboratory) rats in a cage at the end of it. The dog has two minutes to enter the tunnel and must "work" it continuously for 30 seconds (by barking, digging, etc.).

JUNIOR EARTHDOG-- The dog must be AKC registered and qualify at two licensed tests under two different judges to earn a J.E. title. The tunnel is 30 feet long for this class with three 90-degree turns. The dog must reach the quarry within 30 seconds and work it continuously for 60 seconds.

SENIOR EARTHDOG-- The dog must have earned his J.E. title to enter this class. The release point is 15 feet from the tunnel opening, which is steeper and less visible than in the J.E. class. A false den and false exit are added for possible confusion. The dog must reach the quarry within 90 seconds and work it for 90 seconds. The Judge then removes the quarry and the handler calls the dog which must come within 90 seconds.

A dog must qualify at three tests under two different judges to earn the S.E. title.

MASTER EARTHDOG-- The dog must have the S.E. title to enter this class. The tunnel or den entrance is not easily visible, is 100 feet from where the handler releases the dog, and is temporarily blocked. There is also a false entrance between the real entrance and the release point. The dog must reach and indicate the right entrance before the judge gets there to unblock the entrance. If the dog barks at the false entrance, he does not qualify.

There is a narrow place and an obstruction in the tunnel. The dog must reach the quarry in 90 seconds and work it for 90 seconds. The judge will make digging sounds during this time, but the dog must not be distracted by this. The handler recalls the dog. These tests are run on two dogs at the same time.

A dog must qualify at four tests under two different judges to earn the M.E. title.

Does this sound like a challenge or what? And sounds like you would have to have some rats to practice with at home. Ugh! But if this sounds like your cup of tea, go for it!

If you are interested, write to the AKC for exact rules, and/or contact Karla Deithorn or Gordon Heldebrant to find out where the next tests will be held. A.M.

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TO EARN THE NEW TITLE, U.D.X., a dog must earn a qualifying score in both Open B and Utility at ten different shows. Do we have anyone who qualifies for the U.D.X.? A.M.