

MASTER EARTHDOG

The Master test is designed to come as close as possible to a natural hunting situation. The dog works with a brace mate (two at a time). Braces are drawn at random. The starting point is not < than 100 yds. or > than 300 yds. The dogs are expected to work together without interference or aggression.

Part 1: **The Hunt to the Den** (Walk-up)- judge and handlers proceed to the direction of the den entrance. The dog must reach the inhabited den area before the judge reaches the scent line. Dogs are judged on searching ability, obedience to commands, endurance, patience, adaptability, independence and cooperation.

Part 2: **Den area**—the first dog to indicate the entrance to the den, is the first to go to ground. The leash and collar are removed. The dog must reach the quarry within 90 seconds, begin work within 15 seconds. The second dog is staked approximately 10 ft. from the entrance. At the end of the first dog's working portion, this dog assumes the honor position and the 2nd dog takes their portion of the test.

Den Design: Same as senior with the insertion of a "constriction point" to narrow the tunnel opening, and an obstruction (6" PVC pipe loosely mounted.)

GLOSSARY:

Den - constructed of wood liners , 9" by 9", thirty feet in length, obstacles vary for each class. Den area for IQ and JE are fenced.

Release point - handler places the dog at this place on direction of the judge.

Quarry - located behind a barrier, securely caged at all times. Usually two adult rats . Food and water are provided for the rats.

Working the Quarry - continuous barking, digging, growling, lunging, any combination. Engaging the quarry.

Scent trail - prepared rat scent or commercial wildlife scent is sprayed the entire length of the den no more than one hour before the test.



Purpose:

The purpose of the AKC Earthdog test is to offer the owners of small Terriers and Dachshunds, a way to measure their dogs natural ability and trained hunting, and working skills. The dog wants to pursue a "quarry" into burrows in the ground, whereas the dog "goes to ground" to drive out the quarry.

This activity dates back to times when man needed more control over vermin to improve the environment and reduce the risk of disease carried by these creatures.

The term "terrier" is derived from the Latin word "terra" meaning earth.

For a complete list of breeds that AKC allows to participate in the Earthdog test visit the AKC's web page:
<http://www.akc.org/events/earthdog/>.



A Brief Guide to Earthdog Tests:



Schnauzer enters the earth.

Introduction to Quarry

This test is a simple instinct test requiring no training or previous experience in going to ground. It is often the first experience for the dog.

The judge instructs the handler to remove the collar and lead. The handler steps up to the release point (10' directly in front of the entrance to the den). The handler gives one short command on release. The dog is given time to find the entrance on his own, but if he is unsure, the handler may walk to the side of the scent trail and encourage, but not touch, the dog. Once the dog enters the den, the handler **MUST** remain silent. The dog is allowed 2 minutes from the time it first enters the earth, to begin working. It must work the quarry continuously for 30 seconds.

Den Design: a tunnel, approximately 10 feet in length, and 9 inches by 9 inches, has one 90 degree turn.

Dogs that begin working the quarry within 2 minutes and work continuously for 30 seconds shall pass and are eligible to enter the Junior class.

Junior Earthdog Test

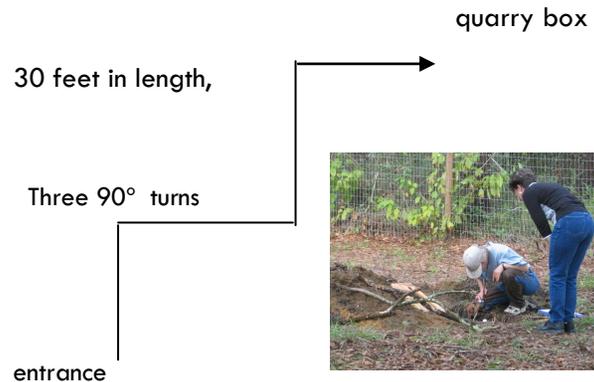
The dog is brought to the test area on a 4 to 6' leash. The collar and leash is then removed and given to the leash steward. The handler is instructed by the judge to go to the release point. At the time of the release the handler may give one command. The dog should be released no higher than waist level and may be placed on the ground prior to release. Throwing or pushing the dog toward the den is not permitted. The handler shall quietly stand at the release point and shall not move unless instructed by the judge.

Part 1 of test: The dog has 30 seconds to reach the quarry to begin working.

Part 2: The dog shall remain with the quarry and work continuously for 60 seconds until the test is completed. Working is defined as barking, growling, digging, or any other form of activity that indicates the dog is willing to engage the quarry.

Upon completion of the test, the judge allows the handler to remove the dog, by way of the top opening at the quarry end of the earth..

Den Design:



Senior Earthdog Test

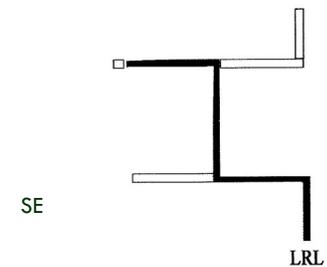
There are 3 parts to the Senior test:

Part 1: The dog has 90 seconds to approach the quarry. The release point is 20 feet from the entrance to the earth.

Part 2: Upon reaching the quarry, the dog has 15 seconds to begin working and should work continuously for 90 seconds.

Part 3: Requires the dog to leave the den on command. The judge removes the quarry cage and the handler goes to the entrance and calls the dog either by voice or whistle. The handler has 90 seconds to retrieve the dog.

Den Design: the tunnel is approximately 30 feet in length with three 90 degree turns, one false exit, and a false den. The main entrance and the false exit is marked by a mound of dirt 4" higher than the tunnel. There is a 45 degree incline at the entrance to the earth.



- YouTube videos: *Earthdog - Set up - Practice Trial - May 2009*
- *AKC Meet the Breeds-Earthdog*