**SCENT WORK GAMES**

Scent Work Games will be introduced for the first time in Canberra at the 2018 EPIC Advance Dog Sports Extravaganza.

Scent Work is an emerging dog sport in Australia and rapidly becoming very popular for the dog sport enthusiast as well as the pet dog trainer. It is based on the work of professional detection dogs (such as drug dogs), employed by humans to detect a wide variety of scents and substances.

In Scent Work dogs search for cotton buds that have absorbed essential oil scents – most commonly Birch, Anise and Cloves. The cotton buds are hidden out of sight in a predetermined search area for the dog to find. Teamwork is necessary as when the dog finds the scent he has to communicate the find to the handler who calls it out to the judge.

A dogs’ sense of smell is much more acute than humans. Scent Work celebrates the joy of sniffing and asks a dog to sniff to their hearts content, turning your dog’s favourite activity into a rewarding game. It is a terrific sport for all kinds of dogs and it is a wonderful way to build confidence in a dog.

In so many dog sports the handler is in control but in Scent Work, the handler must handover control to the dog as neither of them know where the target odour is hidden. The handler has to rely on the dog and follow the dog’s nose to achieve success. In Scent Work it is the dog who is the star of the show.

Scent Work searches at the Extravaganza will be completed in a variety of environments, known as “Elements” as follows:

* **Container:** The target odour is concealed within a container (ie a cardboard box) and the dog must indicate in which container the scent is hidden.
* **Interior:** The target odour is concealed on or in an object in an indoor search area.
* **Exterior:** The target odour is concealed on or in an object in an outdoor search area requiring the dog to locate the scent despite changing airflow patterns, weather conditions and natural distractions.
* **Vehicle**: The target odour is concealed within a small container on a wheeled vehicle.

Scent Works is open to all sorts of dogs – shy, lacking in confidence, reactive (dog and human), over-exuberant. We therefore take special precautions to ensure that these dogs are able to work in a safe, protected environment.

Usually the novice level Scent Works is conducted without spectator involvement, however as this is an exhibition sport at the Extravaganza, spectators will be allowed to watch element searches under strictly controlled conditions. In particular no dogs other than those entered in the games will be allowed in the search area.