**2025 NOTC MTG – ATTACHMENT 7e – DOGS SA**

**DOGS SA**

**OBEDIENCE & RALLY RULES**

**REVIEW SUBMISSION**

By way of introduction to this submission it is premised on the broad view that there is little reason to change the fundamentals of the Obedience and Rally rules.

With regard to the CCD and Novice classes there was a view among competitors and judges that CCD has not achieved its purpose of attracting competitors with an “easier” introduction to trialling. Nor, has the removal of heel on lead in Novice led to an improvement in the standard of competition in that class.

Neil MacDonald

Chair

Obedience Advisory Committee

OBEDIENCE

**EXHIBITORS AND HANDLERS - Pg 4.**

**COMMANDS:**

There is a move towards the left arm being used as a constant guide (normal position) with hand outside of the dog’s head. This revision should avoid the IPO style of guiding the dog while heeling.

RULE -

A voice command and a signal may be given, but must be used simultaneously. A signal should be a single gesture of the arms and hands only. Signals must be inaudible and must not touch the dog. The arms and hands may be returned to a different position but, once there may not be moved again during that portion of the exercise.

Any unusual noise, prolonged or extended signal or movement of the Handler may be considered by the Judge as a 'signal', or extra command.

PROPOSED RULE: ADD

During heeling exercises the Handler’s left arm should be held as near as practical to the left hand side of the Handler’s body when not giving a physical signal.

**JUDGING PROCEDURES**

**CHANGE OF POSITION – Pg 6**

Competitor requiring aids (such as wheelchairs or other mobility devices) should be assisted in order not to reduce their ability to compete in a safe and appropriate manner for them and their dog. To ensure there is no impediment to the handler and dog nor a risk to any adjacent dog and holder during the execution of the exercise, particularly when returning around the dog.

PROPOSED RULE - ADD

Except when making provision for a handler who has a dispensation due to a disability, including an approved mobility aid, will be placed on the end of the stay group.

**SCORING – Pg 8**

This should ensure greater consistency across judges in different member bodies. There are reports of judge in other States using half point scoring.

PROPOSED RULE -ADD:

When determining a score for any exercise the Judge must only score using whole points and may not make assessments based on part of a point.

**GROUP EXERCISES – Pg 7**

This should provide for an alternative a handler where a handler has multiple dogs in the same class and stay group otherwise requiring a replacement handler for stays.

PROPOSED RULE - ADD:

A judge may separate entries in to multiple stay exercises where a handler has two or more dogs which have passed all individual exercises.

**EQUIPMENT – Pg 9**

**CALCULATION OF THE HEIGHT AND WIDTH OF JUMPS**

There is some confusion with regard to thew height required when using different “on-line” entry systems. This clarifies what height the competitor must place on their entry form.

PROPOSED RULE - ADD:

After the first sentence – The height of the dog shall be determined by the Affiliate issuing a height card to verify the measuring of the dog by judges under the provisions of their Member Body. Where are dog is under 2 years of age when measured it must be re-measured on reaching 2 years of age.

**COLLARS AND LEADS – Pg 11**

Retain the current Covid Rule re handler retaining the lead.

RULE –

In exercises that require a dog to be off-lead , the lead will be taken off and handed to the Steward at the start peg.

PROPOSED RULE –

In exercises that require a dog to be off-lead , the lead will be taken off and retained out of sight by the handler at the start peg.

**EQUIPMENT – Pg 11**

Gloves:

Some Handlers are presenting ”gloves” which consist of two gloves with one inside the other, sometimes sown together. Presumably this is an attempt to make the gloves larger in profile so they are easier for the dogs to see.

RULE –

The Handler will provide three predominantly white, wrist length, cotton gloves which must be open and must be approved by the Judge. The size of the gloves may be in proportion to the size of the dog.

PROPOSED RULE

The Handler will provide three single, predominantly white, wrist length, cotton gloves which must be open and must be approved by the Judge. The size of the gloves may be in proportion to the size of the dog.

**UD – SCENT DISCRIMINATION – Pg 31**

**ORDERS FROM JUDGES**

The “order” does not make sense, it is irrelevant to the procedures required. Replace with an instruction to surrender the article to the steward.

PROPOSED RULE

Replace “Thank you” with “surrender”

**UDX – SEEK BACK WITH DECOY ARTICLE - Pg 37**

Current rule is complex particularly for inexperienced stewards and the exercise requires multiple tongs used to manage the 2 articles creating a risk of “contamination”. Clarify that –

1. Handler’s scented articles must be placed by tongs by the judge or steward
2. The “decoy” article is to be placed by hand by the steward

NEW RULE –ADD AFTER FIRST SENTENCE IN 3RD PARA

The Handler’s scented articles must be placed by the judge or steward using tongs. The “decoy” article is to be placed by hand by the Steward no closer than five (5) metres from the Handler’s scented article.

RALLY

**TITLES:**

**RALLY GRAND CHAMPION – Pg 6**

To give competitors a purpose to continue competing in Rally after the dog has achieved its Championship. Clubs need as many entries as possible to try and cover the costs of running trials and this would create an encouragement to do so. It would also bring Rally into line with Obedience where the Grand Obedience Title already exists.

PROPOSED RULE - ADD

R GR CH: The Member Body will receive applications for the title of RALLY GRAND CHAMPION (R GR CH) in connection with each dog, which has gained its ~~Obedience~~  Rally Champion title (R Ch) and thereafter gains a further ten (10) scores of 95 or above in the Rally masters ring under at least 3 different judges.

**EXHIBITORS AND HANDLERS**

**PRAISE, FOOD AND PATTING - Pg 9**

There is no definition of a ‘training aid” in the rally rules. This proposed change picks up the wording from the current Obedience rules and inserts it into the Rally rules.

PROPOSED RULE

REMOVE: A dog whose handler takes food or other training aids into the ring at any time during the walkthrough or competition must be disqualified from that class.

ADD **Training Aids** A dog whose handler takes food or other training aids into the ring at any time during the walkthrough or competition must be disqualified from that class. Training aids includes ball, bumbags, toys, dummies, tug leads etc.

**ENTERING AND LEAVING THE RING - Pg 10**

**THE LEAD**

Currently provides that the “lead will be taken off upon instruction from the judge, and handed to the Steward”. This proposal leaves it up to the judge to decide if they wish the steward to take the lead, or, have the handler retain it.

Retain the agreed “Covid” provision where the handler retains the lead once they enter the ring after the judge has order its removal.

PROPOSED RULE – AMEND

On the Steward's call of the dog's catalogue number, the Handler will enter the Ring and take up position at the "Start Station”. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on lead. In Exercises that require a dog to be off lead, the lead will be taken off upon instruction from the judge ~~and handed to the Steward~~ and secured as directed by the Judge.

**SCORING (ALL CLASSES) - Pg 11**

Rally is its own sport with its own rules. It makes no sense to be cross referencing “traditional obedience” in the rally rules. Some rally competitors will never step foot in an obedience ring, so referring to “traditional obedience” is just confusing and unnecessary. Further, the amount of points and the deduction for faults are clearly set out in the Rally rules so this sentence is unnecessary.

PROPOSED RULE - DELETE THE SENTENCE

Any faults in traditional Obedience that would be evaluated and scored as a one point deduction or more should be scored the same in Rally, unless otherwise mentioned in the Rally

**SCORES - Pg 11**

This rule makes no sense – not every team completes the course (they may be Disqualified or Withdraw during the course. Further, in SA we hand the competitor their individual score sheet which has their score, deductions and their time after the details are recorded by the Steward on the Judges Chart once they have left the ring, so they know their time for the course.

Currently the rules provide: Scores will be posted ringside after each dog and Handler team has completed the final exercise. Times will be recorded but not posted.

PROPOSED RULE

Delete this clause.

**TIMING - Pg 12**

The current rule refers to a “Finish Line”. We don’t have a Finish Line – we do have a Finish Sign and the Handler and dog must pass to the right of this sign for timing to stop.

PROPOSED RULE – AMEND

Timing will begin when the Judge gives the order, Forward and will end when both dog and handler ~~cross the finish line~~ pass to the left of the Finish Sign (sign No. 2).

**CHARTS – JUDGING - Pg 12**

The exclusion from posting of the time is not supported. Competitors have access to their individual score sheets as such there is no competitive advantage to not posting times.

Consequential on this is an amendment proposed below re Judge’s Charts.

PROPOSED RULE - Delete the sentence:

~~(Timing must not be posted).~~

**JUDGE’S CHARTS - Pg 12**

This change is to reflect what currently happens – judges don’t record a start time and finish time. Rather, we record the time taken to complete the course and it’s the steward who writes this on the judge’s chart taken from the Individual score sheet and the judge then signs it.

The rule currently states: “

PROPOSED RULE - AMEND TO READ

The Judge will verify the final scores on the Judges chart ~~and mark the time started and finished,~~ initial any corrections and sign the Chart.

**DISTANCE BETWEEN STATIONS - Pg 13**

The minimum distance of 4 metres between signs is insufficient space for the bigger dogs to gather themselves for the jump and to land safely and be ready for the next station. It may be fine for the working breeds but for non-working breed, large dogs they are on top of the next station before they can be at heel.

PROPOSED RULE - ADD

The distance from the station immediately before sign 53 (the jump) and the distance after sign 53 be a minimum of 5 metres.

**SIGNS – Pg 13**

Standardise the language used throughout the rules – sometimes the rules state “sign” sometimes its “station”.

Proposed Rule - Amend

The throughout the Rule Book use the word “Station”

**SIGN 51. LEAVE DOG – ABOUT TURN – RETURN TO DOG – Pg 24**

Makes no sense for this to be an Incorrectly Performed station because the handler briefly halts.

The arrow in the drawing for this sign, shows a right turn. As the dog is stationary in the sit, this can be interpreted as referring to the handler turning. I was recently told by an interstate judge that judges in that State have been told to IP if the handler does not turn in the direction of the arrow. I cannot see how it can possibly impact the performance whether the handler does a right or left turn, when turning to face their dog.

PROPOSED RULE - AMEND THE SIGN DESCRIPTION

**51. Leave Dog - About Turn – Return to Dog -** The Handler halts and dog sits. The Handler leaves dog and walks forward 5 meters to the marker. The Handler performs an about turn in either direction then, facing the dog and without pausing, walks back toward dog. The Handler will return around the back of the dog to heel position. The Handler must become stationary and then command/cue the dog to move forward from the sit position. The dog must not move from the sit position and must not change position. (Stationary exercise).

**Sign 68. Moving Stand – Leave Dog – Distance Down - Pg 28**

This sign is inconsistent with the general approach in other signs, which is that the handler must halt beside the dog. It seems to be a ‘trick’ sign to catch handlers out and not in the spirit of the sport. Amend the sign description so that the handler pauses after they return to the dog.

PROPOSED RULE - AMEND THE SIGN DESCRIPTION

**68. Moving Stand – Leave Dog - Distance Down –** Whilst heeling and without pausing, the Handler commands and/or signals the dog to stand and stay and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, performs an about turn and halts. The handler then commands and/or signals the dog to drop, then returns around the dog and~~, without~~ pauses~~ing~~, then continues on with the dog in the heel position. The dog must go directly from the stand position to the down position without sitting or moving forward. The maximum total movement forward from the dog will not exceed 1 body length of the dog from start to finish of the exercise (Stationary exercise)