

Rally Obedience

Rally Obedience (or Rally O for short) is a new titling sport in Australia from January 2012. Rally O was first conceived in the USA in 1999 and became official there in 2005. It has since gone from strength to strength and there are now many countries around the world involved in this sport.



While Rally O is its own sport, it has its roots in Obedience and will remain hand in hand with Obedience in Queensland. The same basic skills are required so the two sports will work well together. Hopefully the less formal atmosphere of Rally Obedience will appeal to more people and encourage them to get into competition and then go onto competing in other dog sport events.

But not only the Obedience people should find Rally O interesting. Agility handlers will be familiar with the concept of following a course with no guidance from the judge, and DWD teams have trained for manoeuvrability and positioning which will also help in Rally O.

The judging in Rally Obedience isn't "easier" than in traditional obedience! But other aspects of Rally O make it more competitor friendly.

Competitors are encouraged to talk to their dogs through the run, they are allowed to tell dogs to sit and stay etc where they wouldn't be allowed in Obedience, they are allowed to Retry stations if they goof (2 retries per course), and the Novice level is all on lead. A Rally O run out is also only about 2 minutes whereas an Obedience heeling program can be longer than that.



While there are concessions allowed in Rally O eg perfect heel position isn't required, multiple commands are allowed etc, the dog that performs its run out without these extras will score better than a dog that needs a little more help. But even if a team does a station incorrectly they should still be able to earn a qualifying score.



There are 3 levels of competition in Rally Obedience. Novice Class is all on lead and consists of between 10 and 15 stations. Advanced has between 12 and 17 stations with one jump and is judged off

lead. Excellent is also off lead with between 15 and 20 stations, 2 jumps and the “Honour” (stay) station. Then once you’ve earned your Rally Excellent title you can then shoot for your RAE where you have to qualify ten times in both Advanced and Excellent in the same trial.

Rally O moves a lot faster than traditional Obedience so dogs (and handlers) who get bored easily will always be moving and thinking in Rally O. Plus with up to 50 stations to choose from, no two courses will ever be the same. There are lots of new exercises to learn and the big bonus is that Rally Obedience is lower impact than Obedience and Agility so dogs can stay competing for longer or can come out of retirement and back into competition again.



We expect Rally O is going to be hugely popular so don’t miss out. Talk to your local Obedience club to find out more about Rally training.

Qld Rally O Working Party