



Kennel Club approves rally regulation amendments as result of large scale review

The Rally working party undertook a full review of the Rally regulations to identify changes that would help build on the success Kennel Club Rally has had in its first six years and continue this success in the future.

The Kennel Club Board has now approved the amendments proposed as a result of this review.

Throughout the review, the working party was committed to ensuring the discipline's future as an activity for all dogs and handlers, which is reflected in the changes.

The opinions of the Rally community were sought in a formal six-month consultation period, which ended in April 2018. Responses were received from all regions and from a wide range of competitors of all levels of competition. The resulting feedback was collated and the findings were incorporated in the final proposals which were approved by the Activities Committee and the Kennel Club Board.

The regulation changes will come into effect on 1st January 2019.

The approved regulation amendments span a number of sections of the Rally regulations, so the following summary has been provided to aid competitors in understanding the changes:

Rally levels

Six distinct levels of competition have been created, each with its own set of exercises added as the levels progress. This includes the Bonus Exercises, with new exercises added at each level.

Rally signs and exercises

During the review, the existing exercises were appraised as to their relevance. It was felt that to encourage improvement and ensure variety there should be a clear increase in complexity throughout the levels; foundation skills should provide building blocks for the higher levels with new challenges at each level. It was decided that some exercises did not fit with this approach and these have been removed.

The remaining exercises were redistributed throughout the levels with new exercises introduced where required. Additionally, the exercise descriptions have been simplified to improve understanding and consistency.

The signs were redesigned for clarity at A4 size. Symbols have been introduced to indicate 'sit', 'down' or 'stand'. All signs have been standardised.

In recognition of the extent of the changes to the Rally exercises and the expense for clubs to replace their exercise signs, a 5-year moratorium on changes has been imposed.

Course design

In order to improve the flow within Rally rounds to ensure all breeds and sizes of dog are able to complete a course with ease, clearer criteria have been set to assist judges.

The changes to the regulations state the increase in the number of exercises per level as well as the mix of signs a judge may use.

Judges' qualifications

To ensure that judges have the experience necessary to judge, increased requirements for new judges and for those judging higher levels for the first time have been introduced.

New judges must now scribe for two complete classes under two different judges. All existing judges will retain their current qualifications; however, any existing judges who have not previously judged a higher level will be required to fulfil the new criteria.

In addition to the above, new judges will be required to judge their first three appointments at Levels 1 or 2. To progress to higher levels, aspiring judges must scribe for a complete class at that level before judging, and must fulfil two appointments at that level before progressing to the next level.

Point scoring

As a result of the review, it was felt that the level of point deductions for some errors did not consistently reflect the severity of the error. This has been amended to be more consistent and fair throughout. Penalties have also been clarified for some errors, which were previously implied but did not have a specific point allocation.

The number of errors which mean a Non Qualifying score have been reduced in the hope that more dogs will achieve a score on completion of their round. For this same reason, the Non Qualifying error of having 10 or more point deductions in a round has been removed in order that judges may give credit for an overall good round despite one or two more expensive errors.

Event management

Minor changes were approved to the minimum ring size and demarcation of rings. The information to be sent out to competitors and judges by Rally organisers has been amended along with some other minor changes to reflect current custom and practice.

A full list of the approved changes is available to view on the Kennel Club website by [clicking here](#).

The new signs will be available to download from the website by the end of September 2018 once the design has been finalised by the printers.