

## **SCORING GUIDELINES**

As in traditional obedience, the dog and handler team enters the ring with a perfect score of 200 points. The judge follows the team as they proceed through the Rally course following the instructions spelled out on each of the course signs. The judge indicates point deductions on the score sheet as faults occur on the course. Minor faults that would be scored as a 1/2-point deduction in traditional obedience are not scored as faults in APDT Rally. For example, a slightly crooked sit is not to be deducted from the team's score, while a significantly crooked sit would be scored one point or higher, depending on the degree of the fault. Minimum deduction in Rally is one point, and higher deductions are to be made in one-point increments.

The leash should be held so that there is no tension on the dog's collar when in heel position. It can be held in one or both hands, and leash and hand position may change during the course. Hand and body position should be relaxed and natural. While heeling, the handler may not appear to be luring the dog.

**START:** When a dog and handler team is ready at the Start Line, the judge shall give permission for them to start the course. Judging and timing of the performance begins when the team crosses the start line. The dog does not have to be sitting in heel position to begin the course. Teams may not run across the Start Line.

**FINISH:** Judging of the performance concludes as the team crosses the Finish Line. The Bonus Exercise is not included in course time.

### **SCORING:**

1. Minimum deduction is one point.
2. Dogs who are unmanageable and/or bark excessively will receive deductions based on the severity of the behavior. The judge may excuse a dog from the ring for unmanageable behavior.
3. Unless otherwise noted in judging/scoring guidelines, retries are allowed, provided the team has not completed the exercise. Retries are not allowed in situations where the team has performed an error that requires the judge to score their performance as non-qualifying. Re-tries shall be scored as a 3 point deduction and shall "erase" any deductions for errors previously made unless those errors require the judge to immediately score the performance as non-qualifying. It is also considered a re-try if a team passes an exercise sign without performing the exercise, and returns to it before performing the next exercise.
4. If the handler uses physical or harsh verbal corrections, the judge shall note "NQ - P/VC" on the score sheet for that team. The judge may excuse the team from the ring. A harsh verbal correction shall be defined as one that offends the sensibilities of the judge or that causes an obvious adverse

reaction in the dog. Any handler who has been excused from the ring for physical or harsh verbal corrections on two separate occasions shall be prohibited from competing in future APDT Rally Events for a period of two years.

5. If a dog leaves the Rally ring the judge shall score that team's performance as NQ - LR, and make a notation of such on the score sheet.
6. If a team goes off course (performs one or more exercises out of order) the team shall receive a non-qualifying score and the judge shall make a notation of NQ - OC on the score sheet.
7. Food and touch rewards are allowed when the team has completed a stationary exercise. An exercise is considered complete when the team has performed all the features of the exercise. Food may not be given once the team has begun to heel forward to the next exercise station.
8. Any petting, touching or food rewards that significantly interrupt the flow of the performance shall be scored accordingly. "Significantly interrupts" shall be defined as impeding the natural forward flow of movement of the team and deductions of 1 point or more may be made for any instances that significantly interrupt the flow of the performance.
9. Any dogs exhibiting signs of aggression that threaten the safety of other dogs or humans shall be excused from the competition at the discretion of either the judge or the APDT Rally Representative. Refusal by the handler to comply shall result in permanent removal of that dog and that handler's APDT Rally eligibility.
10. In Rally, the dog is considered in heel position when both dog and handler are facing the same direction and the handler can reach out and touch the dog's head.
11. . Handlers who appear to be luring and/or lure their dog will receive a non-qualifying score. Handlers using food as a reward may not enter the ring with the food in their hands – it must be hidden in their pockets. Entering the ring with food in hand shall be considered luring the dog and will result in a non-qualifying score. Food must be concealed in the handler's pocket. Bait pouches, fanny packs, etc are not allowed in the ring.

### **1 point**

- tight leash, each occurrence
- ticking a jump
- performing an exercise with the sign on the wrong side

### **1+ points depending on the severity of the error**

- Heeling faults – lagging, forging, bumping, wide
- Substantially out of position sits/downs/fronts/stands
- Overly large circles/270's
- Slight movement during Stand exercises / "1 point per paw"
- Failure to maintain pace change
- Barking, jumping on handler

### **3 points**

- re-try of an exercise or any portion of an exercise (where allowed)
- additional cues (given to prompt the dog to perform the exercise)
- dropping the leash (Level 1)
- dropping food
- failure of the dog to move with handler as specified in exercise description
- handler steps inside 6 ft line when sending dog over jump – Level 2 (this deduction becomes a five point deduction as listed below)
- Sniffing a food bowl

### **5 points**

- Handler is in front of jump/uprights when sending dog over – Level 2
- Failure to sit (with the exception of the Halt-Sit)
- Failure to down
- Failure to stand
- Failure of handler to pivot
- Incorrect finish
- Knocking over a cone or exercise sign
- Performing an obstacle exercise backwards or in the wrong direction

### **1-10 points**

- Failure to perform all the elements of an exercise properly.

### **NQ**

- Dog's failure to hold position during walk-around exercises
- Touching the dog to prompt an exercise unless specifically allowed in exercise description
- Dog refuses jump
- Dog uses jump as aid in going over
- Dog knocks jump over
- Failure to change pace
- Dog and handler pass on opposite sides of a cone
- Nipping, biting, attempting to turn over food bowls in Offset Fig. 8
- Failure of the dog to sit in Halt Sit
- Failure of the dog to down in Moving Down
- Dog aborts turn in Left About Turn
- Dog anticipates / moves forward on recall exercises before being called
- Failure of the dog to down during Halt Leave Dog Down on Recall
- Deductions totaling ten or more points on any exercise
- Exceeding course time (unless an exercise modification for time has been approved)
- Dog leaves the ring
- Dog exhibits aggression in the Stand for Exam exercise
- Appearance of luring

- Food reward given before exercise is completed
- Food reward is given while moving towards an exercise sign.\
- Consistently tight leash
- Handler performs exercises out of sequence (off course)
- Handler misses an exercise
- Dogs who eliminate or become ill in the ring will be excused from the ring and receive a non-qualifying score

### **Excusal from the ring and/or grounds**

- Any dogs exhibiting signs of aggression that threaten the safety of other dogs or humans shall be excused from the competition at the discretion of either the judge or the APDT Rally Representative. If the trial official believes that it is necessary in order to ensure the safety of others, he/she shall request that the dog be removed from the trial site or confined in such a manner as to remove the threat to others. Refusal by the handler to comply shall result in permanent removal of that dog and that handler's APDT Rally eligibility.
- Judges may excuse any handler who delivers a harsh correction while in the ring.
- Representatives may excuse any person who delivers a harsh correction while outside the ring.
- Judges, Representatives and/or the Trial Secretary are required to file a report with the APDT Rally office of any incidents as described above.
- Two complaints filed against an individual will result in that individual being unable to participate in or attend APDT Rally events for a period of two years.

Complaints filed against a dog for aggressive behavior may result in permanent removal of that dog's APDT Rally registration number.

### **Multiple Sign Exercises:**

When an exercise requires more than one sign to complete, each exercise sign should be listed on the judge's scoresheet. Each sign should be scored separately.

### **Sign placement**

Signs must be placed so that they are on the handler's right with the following exceptions:

- Turns/180 pivots may be placed directly in the handler's path.
- Straight figure 8, Offset Fig. 8, Spiral Left, Serpentine, Send Over Jump signs are placed so that they are on the handler's left.
- When halts and pivots are combined, it may be necessary to place a sign so that it is on the handler's left. Judges should make handlers aware of this during the judge's briefing.

In the event a team performs an exercise not listed above with the sign(s) on their left, a one point deduction shall be taken.

### **Bonus Exercises**

The Bonus Exercise is an optional exercise. Exhibitors are not required to perform the Bonus Exercise, but must advise the judge at the Start Line if they wish to do so. Each level has several bonus exercises. The Judge will choose the Bonus Exercise to be offered. Judges may only use one Bonus Exercise on a course. The Judge will choose the Bonus Exercise and it will be clearly identified on the course map.

The Bonus Exercise has a total point value of ten points. If no deductions are taken, ten points are added to the team's score. If errors are made in the performance deductions are taken off the total exercise value of ten and the final number for the exercise is added onto the score. If the handler chooses not to perform this exercise, this exercise has no impact on the team's score. A score of zero on this exercise does not impact the team's final score. However, if during the Bonus Exercise, the dog leaves the ring, eliminates in the ring, becomes ill, attacks/attempts to attack the judge or other situations occur that would require the judge to excuse the dog and score the run as an NQ, the team will receive a non-qualifying score on their performance. This exercise is performed after the team crosses the finish line and the timer has stopped timing.