



RALLY OBEDIENCE

NORDIC CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

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1. NORDIC RALLY OBEDIENCE CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

The regulations have been compiled by the Nordic Kennel Union (NKU) Committee for Rally Obedience with representatives from DKK, FKK, NKK and SKK.

The regulations have been approved by NKU/AU at a Web meeting 02.06.2021.

For Nordic Championships to be a championship competition, at least three (3) Nordic countries must participate.

2. NORDIC CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

The Nordic Championship consists of a team championship and an individual championship. The length of the competition is two (2) days. On the first day, there are two rounds for all participants. These rounds define the team results and are the first two results for the individual championship. On the second day, there is one round for all the participants which is the individual final.

Each country can enter one team. A team consist of five (5) competitors and two named reserves in ranking order. A reserve can replace a team member if the dog or handler is taken ill before the competition begins. Once the competition is under way, a replacement can be made only if a veterinarian or doctor verifies the illness of dog or handler. Once the team has started its first course, the reserve can under no circumstances take its place.

Should a country enter less than five (5) competitors, the team will be able to compete, but will receive zero points for the empty spaces in the team competition.

The Nordic Rally Obedience Championship Competition is organized by the Nordic country's kennel club or by an equivalent party in a rotating order as follows: Denmark – Sweden – Norway – Finland. The order may be changed due to special circumstances.

2.1 Nordic Team Champion and Nordic Individual Champion

2.1.1 Nordic Team Champion

The first two rounds of the competition define the team results. Nordic Team Champion is the team that has the highest score after two rounds. The top three (3) scores for each team from each round count for the total. The total score is the final score for the team.

Example. The top scores from the two rounds for a team are 99, 96, 95, 85, 90 and 100. Thus, the final score for the team is 565.

2.1.2 Nordic Individual Champion

Nordic Individual Champion is the team (handler and dog) that has the best combined result of three rounds.

Example. The individual competitor has received the following scores from three rounds: 99, 86 and 95. Thus, the final score for the individual is 280.

The Nordic Individual Champion is entitled to the title of Nordic Champion of Rally Obedience, NORDRLW, for example, NORDRLW-20.

2.2 Running order

The host country is responsible for arranging the draws. For the team competition the running order is decided at the briefing by a random draw for each round.

The running order for the individual finals will be decided by a random draw, which will be executed on the first day after the team rounds.

If a handler has more than one dog in the competition, there must be at least 20 minutes between the dogs. This time gap should be created by changing the running order. In this case the new running order will be decided by the head judge, with as minor changes as possible.

2.3 Invitation

The invitation including date, place, entry fee and other necessary information regarding the competition should be sent to the respective kennel clubs no later than six (6) months before the date of the competition.

The invitation must clearly indicate the national regulations or restrictions of the host country regarding participation or entering the country. The detailed information should be unambiguous and available.

The invitation shall include the last date for entry, but the organizer must accept changes on already entered teams up till three (3) weeks prior the competition.

The practical details of the competition must be sent to the respective kennel clubs three (3) months before the competition.

If the host country has a rule that is not covered in the Nordic Championship regulations but will apply to the Nordic Championship held in that country, it must be mentioned in the invitation.

2.4 Entry fee

The country organizing the competition defines an entry fee, that will cover about 50 % of the total cost of the Championship - limited to maximum 100 Euro per entry.

No dinner or similar for participants is to be paid for by the host country

2.5 Participants' traveling costs

The participants must cover all their own costs.

3. JUDGES AND SECRETARIES

3.1 Judges and judging

The judging team at Nordic Championships consists of four (4) judges, one from each country: Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The judges are appointed by the NKU Committee for Rally Obedience. These judges will judge all the rounds.

Judges for Nordic Championships should have sufficient training and must have a broad experience in judging Rally Obedience and be licensed by the kennel club of their own country.

Judges must understand and speak English. All commands and instructions at Nordic Championships must be given in English.

The host country's judge is the chief judge of the competition.

The chief judge is the chairperson of the judging team and acts as chairperson for the judges' meeting and for any meetings arranged with the team leaders or competitors. The chief judge is the contact person between the judges and the organizing committee of the competition. The chief judge is responsible for the arrangements of the competition.

The chief judge, after consulting the other judges, approves the practical arrangements for the competition and decides whether it is necessary to repeat or terminate an exercise e.g., due to technical problems, excessive disturbance, or if a dog is not functioning.

The chief judge gives the press permission to take pictures or films and decides where the press can stand without causing disturbance to the dogs. The press is not allowed in the ring.

Judges are not permitted to judge family members as handlers or dogs owned by themselves, family members or relatives such as children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters or in-laws. Neither are they allowed to judge members or residents of their household.

If a dog, which has been bred by a judge or has been living in the judge's household within one year prior to the competition, has been registered in the competition, the judge cannot act as a judge in this specific competition.

It is recommended that the competitor has the priority and another judge should be invited if ineligibility to judge has arisen. It is usually a unique opportunity to compete for a Nordic Championship and this should thus be promoted.

3.1.1 Disputes and protests

If incidents occur that are not dealt within these regulations and guidelines, the judge (or team of judges lead by the chief judge) decides how to proceed or how to evaluate the incident.

The judging group makes decisions on minor dispute cases. In case of a possible complaint against judging during Nordic Championships, any decision made by the judges is final and undisputable.

In the event of a protest, the NKU Committee for Rally Obedience will make the final decision.

A protest must be in writing and handed to the organizer no later than 30 minutes after the competition ends. Protests cannot be submitted against judging, only if technical errors have been committed.

3.1.2 Judges' meeting

The chief judge must organize a meeting for the judges the day before the competition to run through the schedule and practical details of and any other matters regarding the competition.

3.2 Secretaries

Each judge must be accompanied by a secretary. The secretary must be an experienced Rally Obedience judge from the same country as the judge. The secretaries are appointed by the NKU Committee for Rally Obedience.

The secretaries are the reserve judges of the competition. If a judge is unable to judge due to, for example, illness, the secretary from her or his country will replace the judge. The host country must have an additional reserve secretary for such an occasion.

3.3 Costs of judges and secretaries

All costs (transportation, accommodation, meals, fees, etc.) of the invited judge and secretary are paid by the host country.

4. ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE AND REPRESENT A COUNTRY

All competitors must follow the regulations of the hosting country regarding, for example, cropped and docked dogs, antidoping, vaccinations, aggressiveness, bitches in season or in breeding. In addition, the national vaccination regulations and antidoping regulations must be followed according to the dog's home country.

4.1 Dog's eligibility

Eligibility to participate in the competition is defined by the regulations of the dog's home country and those of the country where the competition takes place.

The dog must be at least 18 months old on the first day of the championship.

Only dogs with an ID marking and registered with the studbooks/appendix recognized by the FCI can take part.

The dog must have been registered with the studbook or appendix of the country for which it will compete for a minimum of 12 months.

Barbed or electric collars and other constraining devices or means, such as muzzles are forbidden. This restriction begins from the veterinary check prior to the competition and is valid until the end of the competition.

4.1.1 Health

Dogs that are ill or injured (includes blind, taped, stitched or bandaged) are not allowed to participate, as well as dogs that are aggressive.

4.1.2 Aggressiveness/disqualification

Aggressive dogs are not allowed to enter the competition premises.

A dog that at any time during the competition (before, during or after its own performance) bites, tries to bite, attacks or tries to attack people or other dogs, is disqualified from the competition. All points are lost even if the performance has already been completed. If the length of the event is more than a day, the disqualification is valid also for the other days and thus the dog cannot compete.

The incident must be reported to the kennel club represented by the dog and the kennel club of the host country.

4.1.3 Neutered male dogs/bitches

Neutered dogs can compete, except for the chemically neutered male dogs.

4.1.4 Bitches in season and in breeding

Bitches in season may participate.

Bitches expected to give birth within 30 days and bitches that have given birth less than 75 days before the competition date must be excluded from the competition.

4.2 Handler's and owner's eligibility

The handler must be a member of a national organization of the country he/she represents that is recognized by the FCI.

The handler must have the nationality of the country or must have his/her legal residence for a minimum of 12 months in the country for which the dog will compete.

The owner must have the nationality of the country or must have his/her legal residence for a minimum of 12 months in the country for which his/her dog will compete.

4.3 Handler's obligations

Handlers must follow the regulations and directions as instructed.

A handler's obligations as a competitor start when the handler enters the competition premises and end after the final prize-giving ceremony when the handler exits the competition premises.

It is forbidden to punish the dog.

The judge may disqualify a handler from the competition if he or she does not abide by the regulations or behaves in an unseemly way. The judge's decision is final, and no competitor shall impugn the decisions of the judge.

Handlers should report their presence at the competition premises 90 minutes before the competition begins.

Handlers are expected to be on their best behavior and appropriately dressed. The handler may wear a training vest or similar during the course.

When the competition ring is being built and after it has been built for the competition, a handler is not allowed to enter the competition ring unless an authorized person has given permission. Unauthorized entering leads to a disqualification from the competition.

If there is a physical disability, the competitor or team leader must state this in the registration form. The host country must inform all judges concerned within one week after the registration deadline. The effect this has on evaluating the performances must be agreed on if there are several judges involved. Any exceptional arrangements should be justified and should not cause disturbance to other dogs and competitors.

5. GENERAL REGULATIONS ABOUT THE COMPETITION

5.1 Veterinary inspection

All dogs must be inspected by a licensed veterinarian prior to the competition. The ID marking of the dog will be checked during the inspection. The inspection is organized by the competition organizer and must be held either on the Friday or Saturday before the competition.

If the dog does not pass the veterinary inspection, it cannot compete.

5.2 The competition ring

The ring must be at least 400 square meters in size without obstacles. The ring must be clearly marked with low fences or with ring tape. The indoor ring should be entirely covered with a non-slip surface.

5.3 Dog's equipment in the competition ring

Only ordinary collars (buckled, non-slip collars) are permitted in the competition ring, thus, for example, retriever leashes are not permitted. The dog must wear a collar inside the competition ring.

Blankets, mantles, harnesses, raincoats, shoes, stockings, bandages, tapes, etc., on the dog are forbidden during the performance.

Small bows or bands can be used on dog's fur to keep the fur away from the dog's eyes. These accessories can only be used on dog's head or ears.

5.4 Bitches in season

Bitches in season may compete but must be kept outside the competition area and nearby surroundings until other competitors have completed the round. Bitches in season compete last, at the end of each round. After the bitch in season has completed the round, it must be taken outside the competition area and nearby surroundings immediately. If the competition is held indoors, the dog must wear hygiene pants. The organizer must be notified of a bitch in season before the competition starts.

5.5 White dog

A white dog is used in each competition round. The white dog will perform each round before the official competitors according to the regulations and guidelines of the Nordic Championship competition. The white dog is healthy, non-aggressive, and follows the same vaccination and antidoping regulations as the competing dogs. The dog must be in the highest Rally Obedience class and is chosen by the competition organizer and is from the organizing country.

6. NORDIC CLASS

The Rally Obedience exercises in the Nordic Championship competition are based on a combination of exercises used in the highest competition class, for example, in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The exercises have been divided into different categories depending on their level of difficulty: 1 point, 2 points,

3 points and 4 points. A Nordic Championship course must consist of 18-20 exercises, of which at least five are from level 3 and seven from level 4.

This exercise set with its regulations, guidelines, exercise descriptions, deduction and judging guidelines forms a Rally Obedience Nordic Class which applies to the Nordic Championship competition.

The method how an exercise is performed may differ from national rules.

6.1 Performing the course

The Nordic Class exercises are described in detail in the competition guidelines.

All exercises can be performed with the dog on the left or the right side of the handler. It is indicated in the course layout whether the dog should be on the left or the right at the start. The dog must enter the ring on the correct side. The team walks together to the start exercise. After the dog is directed to sit by the handler, the team can start the course.

The team performs the exercises in the given order. The dog must remain in handler's control while in the ring and during the course.

All errors made during an exercise are deducted. If there are errors made between, the deductions are marked as part of the following exercise.

The handler and the dog are under judging from the moment they enter the ring until the moment they leave the ring together.

6.2 List of general deductions

The team starts with 100 points. Deductions are made based on the judge's assessment of the team's performance.

During the course and when the team is performing exercises, the judge must take into account the dog's breed and specific temperament while judging.

The team cannot get less than 0 points.

The deduction points used are -1, -3, -5 and -10.

6.2.1 Overall impression

When judging the overall impression of the cooperation between the dog and the handler both at exercises and between the exercises must be considered.

1-10 points can be deducted based on the overall impression. Deductions may only take place based on behavior that has not been deducted separately. It can be, for example,

- Barking/sound during the course, not at specific exercise
- Dog bouncing between exercises and in this way disturbing the flow or the handler
- Dog sniffing excessively between exercises
- Dog performing the whole course reluctantly in a very slow tempo.

6.2.2 Disqualification

A disqualification from one judge leads to zero points from that judge in the judging protocol. If two or more judges disqualify the team, it leads to a full disqualification (DQ). In serious cases, such as mistreatment of a dog, aggressive behavior of a dog, the judge team can make disqualifying decision based on a disqualification from only one judge.

The team will be disqualified and get a score of 0 in the following cases. The judging can continue even if the team is disqualified, but if needed, the chief judge can stop the team's performance.

- Handler walks into the ring with the dog still on leash
- Handler has treats, food, toys or other items visible in the ring
- Handler drops something when inside the ring
- Handler walks past a sign (the handler does not attempt to perform the exercise)
- Handler performing the course in wrong order
- The dog leaves the ring before the course is completed, four paws are outside the ring
- Uncontrolled barking
- Uncontrolled sniffing (dog not cooperating with handler)
- If the regulations or guidelines of Rally Obedience Nordic Championship competition are not followed
- The handler practices harsh handling of the dog in the ring or in the competition ground
- The dog is aggressive and bites or tries to bite a person or another dog
- The dog is unmanageable or out of control (does not respond to commands)
- Dog that urinates/defecates in the ring
- Inappropriate behavior
- Team leaves the ring before the Finish sign
- The dog is clearly reluctant to perform
- Wrong equipment (collar).

6.2.3 Deduction types

The deductions are divided into the following categories: lack of teamwork, handler's mistake, incorrectly performed exercise. The table below lists some examples related to the deduction types.

1-point deductions	Examples
Lack of teamwork (dog/handler)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sniffing the ground for less than three steps - Dog touches/sniffs a sign or cone (wagging tail excluded) - Short delay in response, quick hesitation - Askew position (more than 45°, less than 90°)
Handler's mistake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Handler touches sign or cone

3-point deductions	Examples
Lack of teamwork (dog/handler)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sniffing the ground for three steps or more - Delay in response - Dog on handler's path (for example, in a spiral) or preventing fluent movement - Dog knocks over a sign or a cone - Dog steps over a sign - Dog not moving fully aligned with the handler in sidestep exercises - Dog tries to change heeling side when not supposed to - Dog tries to change position when not supposed to - Dog on the wrong side of a sign or cone - Dog jumping against the handler - Dog stepping on handler's feet - Dog leaning against the handler while heeling - Dog deliberately touches the handler's hand with its nose - The dog and the handler run into each other - Out of position (more than ½ meter between dog and handler) - Dog moving in position (for example, the dog moves approximately 1-2 steps, the dog turns in place in sit/stand/down position less than 90 degrees)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dog is askew most of the exercise or during a whole exercise or when heeling between exercises - Dog and handler not turning at the same time in turn exercises, alignment not broken
Handler's mistake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extra step or sidestep to give room for dog or to guide or direct the dog (for example, side change or over a jump) - Handler moving in position (stepping on the spot, taking less than ½ step) when supposed to be still, handler does not straighten her/his back after guiding the dog to a position and before moving forward - Handler knocks over a sign or cone - Handler claps hands (together or against their body), snaps fingers, stomps feet to get or keep the dog's attention. - Handler significantly slowing down to help the dog to perform - Handler on the wrong side of a sign or cone - Quick hesitation

5-point deductions	Examples
Lack of teamwork (dog/handler)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer delay in response - Sniffing the ground the whole exercise - Dog is very slow in performing most of an exercise - Dog keeps jumping up and down during a whole exercise - Dog sniffing or touching temptation - Dog knocks down the jump - Excessive barking or sound (per exercise)
Handler's mistake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loud command or intimidating signal

10-point deductions	Examples
Lack of teamwork (dog/handler)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dog is out of control in the ring (for example, runs to check the temptations) - Refusal to jump or going past the jump (this includes refusal to jump when a jump has been knocked down) - Dog picking up anything inside the ring (for example, temptation or cone) - Dog making additional moves between signs (for example, a twist, a sit, scratching) - Exercise started outside (before or after) the exercise area - Dog is not aligned (more than 90 degrees) - Dog makes a false start, independent on the distance to the handler (for example, the dog starts before a recall) - Dog changes heeling side when not supposed to - Stop in heeling or in exercises in which stop is not a part of the exercise
Handler's mistake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The handler touches the dog - Performing exercise in wrong speed (independent of distance) - Visible leash - Retry of an exercise - Handler puts hand in pocket - Handler stops when not supposed to - Wrong speed between exercises (independent of distance) - Team on the wrong side of a sign or cone
Incorrectly performed exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exercise or part of the exercise performed incorrectly - Dog moving in position (more than 3 steps forward/backward) - Dog is very reluctant/unwilling to perform an exercise

