

NZKC Agility Committee Proposal

Providing new pathways for Agility and Grand Agility Champion Titles

Proposal

To add a new criteria for attaining Agility Champion and Grand Agility Champion titles

Agility champion can be achieved either through:

- 6 challenges, one of which is a first place, 10 championship senior clear rounds and ADX (current criteria), or;
- 8 challenges, of which two are first places

Grand Agility champion can be achieved either through:

- 20 challenges, of which ten are first places and ADX Gold (current criteria); or;
- 25 challenges, of which 10 are first places.

Intention

To provide an alternative pathway for dogs to achieve their Agility Champion and Grand Agility Champion titles. The new requirement will sit alongside current requirements, not replace them entirely.

The proposal provides an option for dogs to gain their Agility Champion and Grand Agility Champion titles without requiring ADX or ADX Gold, but when the dog has achieved a higher benchmark of success in Senior. Current criteria still remains, but for those who have been able to claim a number of challenges but not ADX or ADX Gold, their high level of achievement through challenges replaces the need for this as part of a championship title.

Rationale

Gaining ADX has been a standard requirement for achieving Agility Champion since the inception of the title in 1998. It was seen as important for a dog to have ADX before being considered an agility champion. ADX was generally achieved well in advance of gaining six challenge certificates and most agility champions achieved their title at the time of gaining their sixth and final challenge. AD trials were held almost exclusively at championship events

In the intervening years, the New Zealand agility landscape has changed dramatically. A large increase in competitor numbers and events, alongside a sharp upturn in overall dog and handler skill has meant many competitors attain their six challenges well in advance of achieving ADX. In fact it is not uncommon for some competitors to have ten or more challenges but still lacking their ADX title, due to the scarcity of AD trials.

Event numbers in the upper North Island have forced clubs to run AD and ADX Advanced trials at ribbon trials for the most part as there simply isn't time to fit them into championship schedules without dropping other events. Holding an AD or ADX advanced trial at a ribbon trial also draws competitors to these events, making them more profitable (or at least reducing the financial loss).

Although ADX is still a valued title amongst competitors, anecdotally it appears to be of more value to those who wish to add the title to their dog's name, but are not at agility champion level. In many parts of the country, the "test" of AD is no longer an ability to complete a course under pressure but the willingness to travel to remote venues in search of AD trials.

The number of challenges required for Agility Champion would match those required for Jumpers Champion, which does not have any extra requirements above 8 challenges and 10 clear rounds.

Possible consequences

- Some dogs could already meet the requirement under the new regulation, and therefore retroactively be made champions, which is not desirable or the intent of the change. Therefore, the proposed new regulation would require at least one of the challenges to be achieved after the date of implementation.
- It may be viewed as a devaluing of the Agility Champion title. However, with the popularity of jumpers events, the number of challenges available has not increased and in some areas may even have decreased. By requiring a greater threshold of challenges, there will be no devaluing. For many competitors, gaining champion titles through ADX will still be the easiest method.
- A reduction in entries at North Island ribbon trials as those seeking ADX will no longer need to travel. This seems unlikely as the ADX title will still be in place and most competitors will still travel for it, even though it is not as closely linked to attaining champion status.

Feedback

The Agility Committee welcomes feedback on the proposal. If you agree with the intention of the change but not the way it is proposed, please feel free to provide alternatives.

Feedback on this proposal is to be sent to

nzkcac.feedback@gmail.com

by the 17th January 2014.

*The proposal also applies to ADX Gold as part of the Grand Agility Champion title. In the interests of clarity, the document discusses ADX and Agility champion only, but all arguments apply to ADX Advanced and Grand Agility Champion as well.