

Training for either Obedience or Rally can be fun for both the handler and dog, special time that is spent together, and forge a stronger bond between the two. Additionally, the skills learned for the Novice level can serve as an excellent foundation for agility and for therapy work. The training can pay off in other ways such as passing the Canine Good Citizen test. This program is administered by the AKC and is currently used by some States and Insurers as a test of a dog's reliability.

These activities are appropriate for Shibas of all ages. Even the seniors can benefit in that learning new skills keeps them mentally and physically active.

OBEDIENCE

Obedience is one of the oldest AKC companion event competitions with the 1st licensed trial held in 1936.

A variety of skills requiring teamwork and communication between the dog and handler must be demonstrated. These include:

- * On- and off-leash heeling
- * Standing for exam
- * Maintaining a sit and a down with the handler at a distance or out of sight
- * Recall
- * Dropping on recall
- * Retrieving on flat and over a jump
- * Directed retrieval
- * Scent article discrimination and retrieval.

Each team starts with 200 points divided among the exercises and a score of 170 or better is needed to qualify. Three qualifying legs are needed for a title. Different exercises are used

for each of the 3 levels: Novice, Open, and Utility.



Additional classes that may be entered for titles or for fun and practice include

Optional Titling Classes	Non-Titling Classes
Beginner Novice	Pre-Novice
Graduate Novice	Wild Card Novice
Graduate Open	Wild Card Open
Versatility	Wild Card Utility
	Team 1
	Team 2
	Brace
	Veterans



RALLY

Rally is the newest of the AKC companion events, having become a titling event on January 1, 2005. It is intended to be a bridge between the Canine Good Citizen program and formal Obedience competition. It allows an inexperienced dog and/or handler to gain ring experience without the stress that can occur in the formal Obedience ring.



The course consists of a number of exercises at "stations", (the number and type of exercises depend on the level of the course), each marked with a sign telling the handler which exercise to do. The exercises are mostly based on "doodles" that trainers use to fine tune their dogs' understanding of the Obedience exercises. The dog/handler team goes through the course at its own speed, with the judge following. The only command the judge gives is the "forward" or start command. Although the team is timed, timing is only used to break a tie for class placement.

Each team starts out with 100 points; points are taken away for mistakes. One of the major differences between Rally and Obedience is that if the handler realizes an exercise was performed wrong, it can be attempted again, as long as no other exercises have been done since.

This incurs only a 3 point penalty, rather than a 10 point deduction for not doing the exercise correctly. Handlers are also encouraged to talk to their dogs, pat their legs (in Novice only) and do anything necessary to encourage the dogs through the course, short of treating and/or physically touching or correcting the dog.

A score of 70 or more is considered qualifying and is called a "leg". The team needs 3 legs, under at least 2 different judges, to earn a title. Rally Novice is worked on leash; all other classes are off leash. In addition, all classes, other than Rally Advanced Excellent, are divided into A and B classes. "A" is for dogs that don't have a title in that level, or an Obedience title; "B" is for those who are continuing in the same level after titling, or who may have an Obedience title. In Novice only, if the handler has put either a Rally or Obedience title on any dog, the team must compete in the "B" class, whether or not the dog has a title.

There are also several new non-regular classes: Rally Pairs, Rally T Challenge, Rally T Challenge Teams, Rally Teams, and Rally Plus.



While the intention behind Rally is to help ready dogs and handlers for formal Obedience, many handlers have been using Rally to keep their retired Obedience dogs active and competing without too much exertion on old bones and joints. The exercises aren't physically taxing and the

jumps are low. It's so heartwarming to watch the veterans happily working in the ring again.

For more specific information, check the American Kennel Club website:
<http://www.akc.org/events/obedience/index.cfm>
<http://www.akc.org/events/rally/index.cfm>

To order the combined Obedience and Rally rules and regulations brochure, contact the AKC order desk at 919-233-9767, (fax) 919-816-3627 or email orderdesk@akc.org.

You can also visit www.ShibaSports.com.

Shibas with AKC Obedience Titles (as of 12/31/09)	
CD	101
CDX	20
UD	5
UDX	1

AKC TITLES

- CD - Companion Dog
- CDX - Companion Dog Excellent
- UD - Utility Dog
- UDX - Utility Dog Excellent
- OTCH - Obedience Trial Champion

Shibas with AKC Rally Titles (as of 12/31/09)	
RN	81
RA	24
RE	13
RAE	7

AKC TITLES

- RN - Rally Novice
- RA - Rally Advanced
- RE - Rally Excellent
- RAE - Rally Advanced Excellent

OBEDIENCE

And

RALLY



Blue Loon Kuro Kido UDX