

History of Obedience in NSW

~ J. Goldstein 1971

Going back over the years Obedience Trials were fixtures that were attached generally to Conformation Shows which included a Trial on the day, and quite often under five dogs constituted the whole entry. Usually these clubs consisted of the Gundog Clubs, the Shepherd League and as was known early as the Utility Alsatian Cattle and Kelpie Club.

Not many people were interested as it appeared very difficult to teach dogs the exercises and only one Club, the German Shepherd Dog League, ran classes on a regular weekly basis.

From time to time various Gundog enthusiasts ran a class here and there but generally it was felt the interest was lacking and so for many years Obedience in NSW was practically at a standstill.

In the early 40's a set of rules were drawn up and became our regulations for the time being. These rules were changed from time to time until about the mid- 50s when we seemed to acquired a reasonably stable outlook on Obedience and the rules stayed in operation for a few years.

At this time the Shepherd League seemed to get a shot in the arm on training classes and in the latter part of the 1950's quite large All Breeds training sessions were in operation. And people were becoming interested in not only competing in Trials but training their dogs to be generally obedient in the normal way of life, so much so that in 1958 a Specialist Obedience Club was formed called all Breeds Dog Training Club. It held its first All Breed Obedience Trial on the 3rd July, 1960.

Also at this Trial consideration was given to change the rules again so we may be able to compete, interstate with our dogs and handlers and dogs were invited from another State to give a demonstration at our Trial of our work done interstate. As a result our rules were changed and about three of the seven Sates were competing under the same rules.

However, at home in NSW Obedience was growing, another Specialist Obedience Club was formed—Hornsby Dog Training – and Sydney All Breeds had three branches.

People were beginning to realize the fulfillment of having a well –trained dog so much that in 1961 Sydney All Breeds had in excess of 1,000 members.

Demonstrations were given by members of the affiliated Clubs in various country towns-fetes-school pet shows- television-church organizations-Chambers of Commerce, and wherever the opportunity arose where it could be shown that this type of training was beneficial to the average dog owner.

Also affiliated Obedience Clubs were growing and growing. Breed Clubs came to realize the advantage of holding an Obedience Trial in conjunction with their Show, and in 1962 a special meeting was convened in Melbourne by the ANKC for the purpose of seeing if it was possible to have uniform rules throughout Australia, and as a result a second

meeting was held in 1963, and in 1964 saw for the first time in dogdom in Australia uniform rules for every State on one section of our dog world.

During this period the individual Clubs were not idle. They were making House rules-conducting training courses for more instructors and Judges. More and more groups were forming Clubs in country areas as far as north as Tamworth, Inverell, etc and south to Albury and west to Wagga, Orange, Broken Hill, etc, until at this present day we have no less than twenty-four Clubs, some as many as six branches throughout the State, and it could be said that thousands of people are training their dogs weekly at these classes.

So it can be seen that Obedience Training if done properly is bringing dog owners together assisting each other in a common cause and field of education and certainly playing their part in promoting the owning, breeding and training of pedigree stock in Australia.

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