

Rotorua Dog Training Club



JUNE
JULY
2022

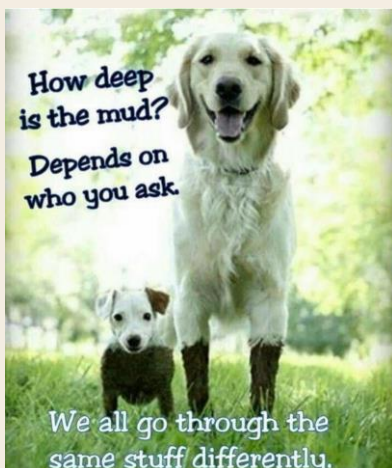
Promoting responsible, enjoyable canine companionship through positive training from pets to competition

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Dates to Diary

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Dear Members,

The AGM took place on 30th April outside at the Club grounds. Our thanks to those who attended and to those who have made themselves available for the committee. Without people willing to give time to give time to run the club, the wheels would not turn, so thank you. We welcome two new committee members, Terri Robson and Kimberlea Lemon and thank the two who stood down, Dawn Williams and Sue Williams. List of Officers and committee at the end of this newsletter. The great thing is we now have a committee representing all the codes in our club – Obedience, Agility, Rally-O, Scentwork, CGC and Fly-ball.

If you would like a copy of the draft AGM minutes, please email the club.

If there is something you would like to see in the newsletter, please email me. It is great to have snippets from all angles, and stories of experiences – good and bad 😊 So don't be shy, send in your ideas and articles.

Kim Poynter,
Editor and President

Note to all club members using club grounds – it is essential that all dogs in the carpark area are on a lead please, to avoid accidents, near misses and fear episodes.



- Subs are due for those who belonged to the club last year. \$70 to have access to great training opportunities cheaply and support your club

RIBBON TRIAL SUMMARY

The Rotorua Dog Training Club Agility and Jumpers Ribbon Trial was held on Saturday 14 May. The weather was mostly dry which gave us excellent running conditions.



There was a good turnout, with over 70 handlers entered, including a number of our newer handlers with their dogs. To encourage newer handlers RDTC ran two elementary courses, which are a fantastic introduction into competitions. Two of our senior agility members stepped up to judge these. We also allowed non-competitive runs so that everyone who turned up could have a go running their dogs.

RDTC Members had some exceptional results, with Jess and Obi getting a 2nd in Elementary B, Jumpers C, Danielle

winning both Elementary C events, Pam and Dara flew around place and Wendy and Willow managed to win Novice.

We had catering and a sausage sizzle to keep everyone fed and encouraged a few locals to stop by and see what agility is all about.



Thanks to the support of RDTC was a huge great to see the members helping and awesome agility members out and have fun with their dogs. I think it's safe to say some of those members are now completely hooked on the sport and are keen to enter more competitions.



and a 2nd in and Willow Jumpers C for 3rd

happy, this

dedication and members the day success. It was experienced out the newbies, that so many turned up to help

Obedience Placings at Taupo Dog Show

The small contingent from our Rotorua Dog Training Club did really well on 14th and 15th May, with everyone being placed.

Congratulations to Terri Robson, Life Member with Gamble achieved two 2nds in Novice.

Dawn Williams with Peppia, a 5th in Novice.

Eunice Brothers, Life Member with OB CH Palladium Ranger at Longroyd TCQ CDX a 5th in Test C.

Dianne Western, Life Member with Harkness Golden Hot King CDXS RN OB CGCG A 2ND IN Test B.

Check out the clubs Facebook page for some great photos.

HUGE ACHIEVEMENT- First time for the club

Congratulations to Ann McSweeney and Katy on gaining their Rally-O Grand Champion title in 2021. Katy, now aged 11 years, was just the second North Island dog to gain this title, and the first German Shorthaired Pointer in the country to do so. Ann has been involved in Rally-O since its introduction to New Zealand (from the USA) in 2009; initially only three titles were recognised (for Novice, Advanced, Excellent), and the titles for Champion and then Grand Champion were introduced more recently. The club is fortunate to have Ann as the instructor for the Rally-O competition class.



Scent Work

Scentwork is calming for a dog, they love it, they can all do it and its fun. Its also a great way to exercise your dogs brain on those wet and stormy days. Thanks Kimberlea for sending in this challenge.

Your Scentwork Challenge

Search behaviour

Goal: teach your dog to search an area

Setup: room, smelly treats or a favourite toy.

*While setting up this activity allow your dog to watch, however your don't want to restrain your dog by tying them to something, ideally you would put them into a crate or have a second person hold the dog.

1. With your dog watching, go around the room and hide treats in small bunches. Start with easy to find locations.
2. On a lead encourage your dog to move around the room and find the treats. When they find the treats make sure to use praise.
3. Once your dog is eagerly searching the area for treats increase the challenge.
 - With the dog watching pretend to put several treats around the room, however only put treats in one location.
 - Put the treats in increasingly harder places – make sure it is still accessible to your dog.
 - Try with a favourite toy, allow your dog to watch up hid the toy.
4. Try this game inside, outside and around a vehicle.



"It's your choice" game –by Susan Garrett

1. Hold the hide in one hand and treats in the other.
2. If your dog goes to the treat hand, close your hand around the treats.
3. If your dog goes to the hide hand – treat your dog in that hand using treats from the treat hand.

Susan Garrett has a number of You Tube videos worth looking at.

The members of our club are to be able to join into the Tokoroa club scentwork training which is often held in Te Teko, just this side of Whakatane. There are a few club members who travel there on Sunday training session dates.

Upcoming dates:

May 29th, Odour Recognition Trial

June 12th, Above novice fun day

June 26th, training day

July 10th, Come if You Dare day

July 24th training day

All the days are suitable for all levels as we set aside time and give help to newer people and they can learn a lot from watching others.

If someone has done no introductory work to odour, then we are happy to do some one-on-one training before the day begins, and then they can join in.

Any questions to Maree at tokoroascent2021@gmail.com.

Check out the facebook page Tokoroascent2021 for more information

Memory Wins When Dogs Sleep

EEG study suggests sleep enhances learning

- By [Julie Hecht](#) on February 7, 2017
- Reproduced from Scientific American web site.



A Harvard Medical School professor recently rocked the Internet: “Since dogs are generally extremely attached to their human owners, it’s likely your dog is dreaming of your face, your smell and of pleasing or annoying you,” psychologist Deirdre Barrett told *People magazine*.

And then hearts everywhere exploded.

Barrett’s sleep research focuses on humans, while an interest in evolutionary psychology helps her consider the sleep of non-human mammals. Both have similar sleep cycles, she notes, which could suggest parallels in sleep quality or experience.

But an open access study in *Scientific Reports* out yesterday moves away from extrapolation and toward hard data. Researchers in Hungary have devised a way to non-invasively peer into the sleeping dog’s brain to explore the content and function of their sleep.

Sleep in dogs is good for a number of things, including, but not limited to cuteness, cuteness, and more cuteness. But you’ve also probably heard that sleep is good for memory. Before a big test we’re often told, “Get a good night’s rest,” which is actually shorthand for—give memory consolidation a

chance. “Memory consolidation” is the process where your brain pulls together pieces of information and packages them into memories that can be used in the future.

Memory is also important for dogs. Working dogs need to learn—and retain—a wide variety of job-specific skills, and companion dogs often learn basic skills to successfully live alongside humans. When a dog learns something new, can sleep help the dog perform those skills better? Should training sessions incorporate naptime?

Anna Kis of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and colleagues—including members of the well-known [Family Dog Project](#)—set out to explore the relationship between sleep and memory in companion dogs. Their study involved two experiments: the first gave dogs a learning task and then peered into their sleep via non-invasive electroencephalogram (EEG)—a test that detects brain electrical activity using small electrodes attached to the scalp. The second experiment explored whether different type of post-learning activities (such as sleep) affect memory consolidation, both in the short- and long-term. All experiments were performed with consenting companion dogs and their helpful owners.

First up, the sleep study, also known as polysomnography if you want to be fancy about it. Fifteen companion dogs participated in both a learning and a non-learning condition. The experimenters taught the dogs the commands for “sit” and “lie down” in a foreign language (English). As you’d expect, no learning took place in the non-learning condition—dogs simply practiced the “sit” and “lie down” commands that they already knew in Hungarian. Nothing new. Old hat. (Most dogs don’t wear hats. Old collar?)

For the critical phase of the experiment, dogs went to sleep (gosh I love science). Dog snoozing-related brain activity was then monitored over the next three hours. Afterwards, dogs in the learning condition were retested on “sit” and “lie down” in English to determine whether sleep helped the dogs process what they had learned.



Credit: Anna Kis

Not only did the sleep affect dogs' learning, the learning affected dogs' sleep. Dogs did better responding to "sit" and "lie down" in English after taking a snooze. But even before the dogs in the learning condition were retested, two notable wave patterns stood out in the EEG spectrum in the non-REM phase (the dreamless part of sleep). There was an increase of delta power, similar to what is found in humans, and a decrease in alpha activity, which could suggest "an increase in sleep depth after learning."

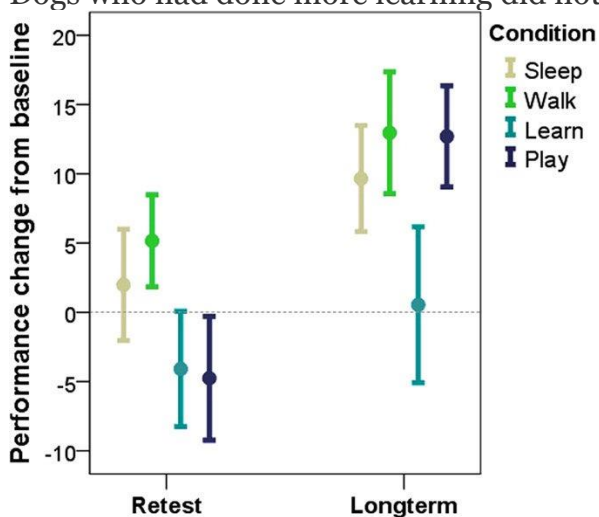
These two findings are related. Dogs learned a task, which alters their brain activity during sleep, then they performed better on the task. "This suggests that the newly acquired information is re-processed and consolidated during sleep," Kis explained over email. More specifically, the correlation between the post-sleep improvement in performance and certain EEG patterns "is the strongest indicator that the changes in sleep EEG we see after learning are functionally related to memory consolidation," added Kis.

Neat. Taking a snooze can improve subsequent performance (at least for this type of command learning task). But how do we make things stick? Is sleep more or less effective than other strategies for retaining information? A second behavioral experiment investigated the effect of different post-learning activities (including sleep) on subsequent memory.

Fifty-three new companion dogs learned "sit" and "lie down" to new words (again, English). Dogs were then put in one of four different post-learning groups, spending the next hour either sleeping, walking, learning more (learning new behaviors via the [luring training method](#)), or eating from and playing with a [Kong dog toy](#). When the hour was up, dogs were retested on the English commands they'd just learned.*

The type of post-learning activity seemed to affect dog performance in the short term, but not exactly as the researchers had expected. In the short term, both sleeping and walking improved subsequent performance, while more learning and Kong play did not.

On the other hand, when dogs came back a week later, presumably after many sleeps, dogs in the sleep, walk, and Kong play conditions showed marked improvement with the English commands. Dogs who had done more learning did not improve.



Values >0 indicate a performance improvement at the given occasion, while values <0 indicate a decreased performance. Figure 3 [Credit: Kis et al. 2017](#)

Dog lovers often think about learning and obedience in terms of dogs doing it “right” or “wrong.” Factors surrounding learning, this study reminds, can affect memory consolidation and later performance.

Kis recommends: “Learning a new command should be followed by an activity that does not interfere with this new memory trace (e.g. sleeping, walking, playing—but not learning other things) in order to achieve the highest subsequent performance in the long run.”

At the same time, Kis noted that dogs in the sleeping condition might have performed even better if the nap extended beyond an hour (possibly for memory consolidation to fully take place), or if, after waking up, the dogs had a few more minutes to shake off their sleepiness before performing the tasks again. Human-sleep scientists refer to this latter phenomenon of decreased cognitive performance in the few minutes after waking up as “sleep inertia.” Don’t pretend you’ve never woken up, walked to the bathroom, and tried to brush your teeth with your comb. Since no sleep inertia interval has been established for dogs, Kis says, they can’t rule out the possibility that the dogs were still sleep zombies when they were retested.

Non-invasive studies of dogs and sleep are new. We haven’t yet studied whether your dog is dreaming of your face or your glorious smell, but if you care about learning in dogs, this study suggests you give sleep a chance.

-- -- -- * Maybe you’re wondering why there wasn’t a condition after learning where dogs simply rested—rather than slept—and then had their memory tested. This ‘resting’ awake condition is typically found in human memory consolidation studies because it’s the closest match to the ‘sleep’ condition. But this condition was not included for dogs, the researchers explain, “as preventing dogs from falling asleep while requested to stay in a laying position for one hour would presumably induce stress in the animals. Stress is known to have an impact on memory, and also raises animal welfare issues, thus we decided to avoid such a condition.”

References

[Kis et al. \(2017\). The interrelated effect of sleep and learning in dogs \(*Canis familiaris*\); an EEG and behavioural study. *Scientific Reports* 7, 41873.](#)

[Kis et al. \(2014\). Development of a non-invasive polysomnography technique for dogs \(*Canis familiaris*\). *Physiology & Behavior*, 130, 149–156.](#)

[Affenzeller et al. \(2017\). Playful activity post-learning improves training performance in Labrador Retriever dogs \(*Canis lupus familiaris*\). *Physiology & Behavior*, 168, 62–73.](#)

The views expressed are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily those of Scientific American.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR(S)

Julie Hecht is a Ph.D. student studying dog behavior and writes the Dog Spies blog at ScientificAmerican.com. [Follow Julie Hecht on Twitter](#)

THE BEGINNERS EXPERIENCE

Article submitted by Kim Poynter - Rotorua Rally-O Show March 2022

With some encouragement to enter and in appreciation of our loyal instructor, Ann McSweeney, I entered the Rally-o Novice A which is the class for those who have not been in the Rally-O ring before.

The entering process is on line and was not difficult once I found the right location on the DogsNZ web site. Ricco and I were still practicing with some food luring until 3 weeks before the show, then dropped down to just one treat in the middle of the practice runs then to only at the end of the run. So I was still working on keeping his focus without food, as no food or toys are allowed in the ring.

The day came, we had a walk around the environment for an hour because he is very environmentally affected – other dogs are much more interesting to look at and air scent than focusing on me. Then it was walk through the course time, as it was important not to let him down by me interpreting the meaning of the signs incorrectly. I had a friendly helper from the club who helped me make sure I understood them for that first walk through. Walk around it at least 3 times they said. I did it 4.

Next Minute, the Judge is saying, Are You Ready? I think so, I reply with a mouth as dry as a bone so I can hardly speak. Off we went, we made it through without any huge disasters but my nerves had me holding the lead up by my neck for some weird reason, something I was completely unaware I was doing.

Relief! We had not made a total embarrassment of ourselves after all. One down, 2 more to go.

The next one had lots of extra stimuli with dogs walking close by, cars back firing and sirens. Again, we made it through.

With huge surprise we got well over 90 points, giving us a qualifying certificate along with a second and a third placing. What a clever boy he is.

The next day, I am feeling much more relaxed and a little more confident that we can do this. The courses are quite a challenge with a big dog, so I am trying to remember to give him the room and to keep my lead hand away from my neck! But my brain wasn't functioning properly and I am giving him weird and inconsistent verbal cues. Where did that all come from? Regardless, thankfully Ricco read my body language before listening to the confused drivel coming from my mouth, and he did what he was supposed to – blow me down, 98 points and a pretty sash with 1st written on it.

Reflection – like most things that we think are a bit scary, they are worse in our head than reality. I am glad I went outside my comfort zone to have a go. Ricco enjoyed it and I learnt heaps, not just about Rally-O, the process of the show but also about the weakness in our partnership. That sits firmly in my lap and I now have a much clearer picture of what I need to improve. I can now be a better handler for my young man who is just out there having a fun time and looking gorgeous.



Ricco and Rufus

TEACH YOUR DOG THE VALUE OF DOING NOTHING.



We are busy people, and sometimes that means our dogs have to do nothing. Teaching dogs how to relax, and simply wait, is invaluable to both their ability to settle and ultimately disengage from stimuli, as well as our management of them when we can't give them our full attention.



TEACHING RELAXATION THROUGH MAT WORK IS A WONDERFUL WAY TO ENCOURAGE DOGS TO DO NOTHING.



The club has some great books in the library which you can find upstairs in the club rooms. No charge for this members only service.

PRESIDENT: Kim Poynter	021 926 937
VICE: Ann McSweeney	0272846128
SECRETARY: Louise Sandford	0274154572
TREASURER: Peter Franz	0211109304

COMMITTEE: Jamie Savage (Training Co-ordinator), Jo Klein, Julie Cowell, Wendy Statham, Terri Robson and Kimberlea Lemon.

SCHEDULE OF FEES

Obedience and Agility Introductory Classes - \$100 (this includes free membership for the balance of the current financial year and does not apply to the agility only beginner obedience classes)

Membership renewal: \$70.00

Family Membership: \$95.00

Fees for all financial members attending classes each term is \$25.00

Check out our facebook page under '**Rotorua Dog Training Club**'

And take a look around our website which has lots of information for those starting out with their dog along with copies of newsletters.

www.rotoruvadogobedience.org.nz

Email for training:

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