

Obedience Festival Report – Dawn Cox, Bev Smith and Sheilagh Hyde

30/10/23

Remit for the Midland Reps – source a suitable venue and possible dates in the Midlands, during the Summer months '24, for the Obedience Festival.

Either in conjunction with other shows or as a standalone event.

A Summary from previous discussions – this is what the Obedience Festival may look like/may need in terms of space and facilities

Duration - 2 days/3 days - both are mentioned, plus an extra day for set up and possibly for take down - so 3 or 4 days in total.

Competition Obedience classes

Day 1 - 2 Obedience classes each level 1st day -14 rings, plus splits dependent on numbers.

Day 2 - 1 class of each level (Pre B - C) 2nd day – 7 rings, plus splits dependent on numbers.

Finals on 2nd day in the evening – one for each level (7), percentage of competitors taken from heats to qualify for the final - based on points. 20 for 1st and down to 10 for 10th

All classes will be progression classes. Is the final also planned as a progression class?

Competitors may enter up to 3 classes - lowest level applies.

In addition - Special Obedience Classes - ABC heats both days, or possibly the ABC final?, a GCDTS Pre beg stakes heat, YKC classes, Obreedience heat, All -Breedience heat.

Plus fun classes/ have a go rings - Agility, Rally, FCI, 'have a go newcomers', 'have a go overseas obedience class', 'pairs class', etc.

So - 14 classes, with possible splits, heats - possibly 4 have a go rings - 25 - 30 rings on day 1?

Facilities/equipment required:-

Large venue with room for 150 - 200 caravan pitches and with the addition of Toilet (and shower blocks).

Indoor area or marquee for evening demos - HWTM, yoga - Kat Farrants, massage, plus social programme - quiz, music.

Rosettes, prize cards, trophies? ring ropes/stakes/tables/chairs/secs tent/signs/First Aid equipment/fire extinguishers/sand buckets/scoresheets.

Catering for judging teams and helpers, and perhaps a catering can/canteen available for competitors.

Picket fencing was mentioned - not sure what for. Podiums for finals. Decorative bunting.

Question

If we didn't dovetail in with other shows, ie ran festival as a stand-alone event - where would the ring ropes/stakes/tables/chairs/secs tent/signs/First Aid equipment/fire extinguishers/sand buckets/scoresheets etc come from? - would scoresheets need to be specially designed for some classes? How would they be transported to the venue? Where will the manpower come from to put up/take down and transport?

How would it be financed?

To pay venue costs etc in advance, there is potentially a £5k grant available from the KC. This would need a robust business plan in order to apply for it – There was a suggestion at one of the Midlands Regional OLC meetings, that Janel Fone may be able to help with this.

Income from entry fees.

Sponsorship – both small type sponsorship ie paying for the rosettes for a class, but also large scale sponsorship from pet food companies and the like. A skilful sales person/negotiator would be needed.

Concerns

Concerns have been raised via regional OLC meetings, that this is far too ambitious, and that we should instead start small and grow - like the Agility Festival did.

A suggestion has been made - could we not start as a rehash of the Obedience Class Finals – possibly approaching Rhiannon Mulrennon and co. Then we wouldn't need to run heats for the normal classes we could use the points system that was used for the NCF's. We could potentially trial the heats for some fun competition classes instead?

Timing

Requires information on show dates, from the KC.

Not all dates are published on Obedienceuk.net

Show diary not out yet either – tho is due out imminently

Summer has been suggested – June, July, Aug, Sept

June - is not traditional holiday time if thinking about during the week, however a good proportion of the Obedience Competitors must be of retirement age.

July /Aug – may be easier to source venues

- end of football/rugby seasons.

- colleges/universities will have broken up - Rodbaston, Harper Adams Uni, Moreton Morrell.

- other venues considered - County show grounds and similar – Malvern, Stafford, Catton Hall, Stoneleigh – previously dismissed because of HS2 works?

Price/facilities comparison for a recent weekend show

Not the midlands - but **Winterton Showground** is a starting point for prices/facilities - Information from Wendy Nottingham - it has toilet blocks, Elsan, 28 acres. Office for use. Catering - Wendy Nottingham's club - are using the Lions. On edge of Winterton. Small market town with shops, pubs, chippy and various takeaways. Drawback - Water and electricity is on meter and has to be added to the cost of £800 for weekend. So allow £1000 for a weekend - Fri to Sunday - and there should be change.

Well, having attended the Broughton and Brigg shows, at Winterton Showground, just outside Scunthorpe. it is a super venue.

It's huge, apparently generally under utilised, crying out for bookings and relatively cheap.

It has a great exercise/walking area for the dogs.

Wendy Nottingham, I bet, would love to get involved - she is a doer - a mover and shaker, and she's got good vision about creating things. She'd got all sorts of fun classes going on alongside her open show this year, in a large enclosed paddock area.

There is an office type temp building - like an industrial mobile home - great for all the secretarial stuff. No large hall, so it would need a marquee. Wendy would be prepared to lend her ring equipment.

Venues considered:-

1. Rodbaston is 7.7 hectares and has water points and some toilets, but would def. need more. Approx cost 3.5k to hire. Marquee is going to be 1k plus, then toilets, elsan, servicing of toilets. Setting up could be covered by attending OLC members and asking for help with free camping like at shows.

2. Harper Adams:- [Conference Hire](#)

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Get in touch

Contact the Conference Team:

01952 815324

01952 815300

scco@harper-adams.ac.uk

Not approached

4. A newly advertised venue in **Cheshire** – Bev tried contacting but no phone number and not answering emails.

5. **Catton Hall** - without knowing dates, It's hard to give a price but it would probably be between £2500-£3000, pretty booked up for '24. Updated late Oct – venue is available in May and June – '24.

Midlands Obedience show dates and current venues:-

Limited knowledge on dates for shows next year, so looked at this years Midland shows, those in red we've considered but ditched:-

Coseley April - nice new venue - not big enough.

Leicester Champ - end of April this year, usually beg May - possibly big enough - but is unlikely to be a popular suggestion with the current hirers

Rugby Champ - beg May - ? Big enough, but not the right time to be speaking with Mary – ruled out – because it can only be hired out by people living in Rugby.

Nuneaton - too small.

Loughborough Open and Champ - mid May - same ground as Leicester, and same concerns re ground.

Lichfield 8th and 9th June – Open and Champ – Stafford County Showground - great Showground - but booked the week before Lichfield's w/e, and thought to clash with other shows the weekend afterwards. Steph enquiring about availability and costs for during the week immediately after Lichfield, and is coming back to Bev. We maybe able to use Lichfield's equipment but would have to ask.

Update – Stafford County Showground – Monday to Friday during the week following Lichfield is currently available for '24, though there will be restrictions on traffic movement and limited pedestrian access on to the venue, on the evening of the 12th due to a running race, cost for this year's Fri to Mon was £2500 plus VAT with a likely 8% increase for next year's costs. Would need to ask Lichfield if we could borrow their equipment. Elson already there, would need Portaloos, plus a marquee – although there are buildings on site that may also be available at an additional cost?

Food is provided by on site caterers and a room comes with that, which was used for judges' lunches this year and would be an additional cost – whether or not that room would be available for 'talks' in the evenings, we are not sure – no dogs allowed tho. Bringing outside caterers in is not permitted

Forest Oak mid June - possibly big enough if they were prepared to close to the public, unlikely.

Chalfield – 23rd June - usually confined to a relatively small area of a huge site. Not a Ticket show. Declining attendance. Clashes with Preston and Fylde. No.

Coventry - Champ - Barker's Butt - ? Big enough - but problems re parking this year. And unlikely to take caravans

MOS - beg July - not big enough.

HB and Solihull - both Champ, early Aug - venue not big enough for these shows to be run in conjunction with the festival. May be big enough as a standalone event – but only for just over 100 caravans. Maybe able to use HB/Solihull's equipment.

Cost of hiring the Bees Rugby ground this year:-

Friday set up, Sat and Sun - £1000

Monday, Tuesday (Wednesday), Thursday, with caravans moving off Friday morning - £1250

Limit to - 100 caravans plus helpers. Loos were £1400 for the week - 4 + disabled + Elson + midweek empty.

Cheltenham - end August - large venue - now a 2 day show incl champ - could this be a possibility?

Worcester – Open and Champ - large venue, but not a good venue in terms of underfoot.

Coventry - beg Sept - Coundon Park - no.

The series of B&GSDA shows at Walsall Arboretum - venue was untested when this report was 1 st started, and it was/is not the right time to consider involving Kathy Hood as she is poorly.

Updated after 1st w/e of shows - Potentially suitable but with caravans limited to only 100 plus helpers.

Bev speaking to Bryan about costs and/or seeing Kathy herself.

