

RALLY O - HINTS & TIPS

Distraction Training and the Offset Figure 8 (#39)

Distraction Training is useful in all disciplines – there is always something or someone that might catch a dog's attention while they are supposed to be working. Rally O is full of in built distractions because there are signs flapping and cones and metal holders that make up the course. And as well there is the Offset Figure 8 (#39) with its own distractions –toys and/or food.

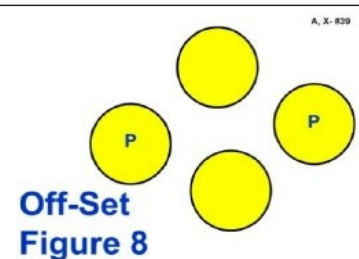
Use distractions in your regular training. Litter the training field with toys or anything that the dog isn't used to seeing there eg chairs. Get dogs used to having "foreign" objects in their work space. This can be used as a good focus exercise and also as an extension of your Leave training.

When Rally first started, most of the dogs showed interest in the signs and holders but are now so used to seeing them, they rarely react.

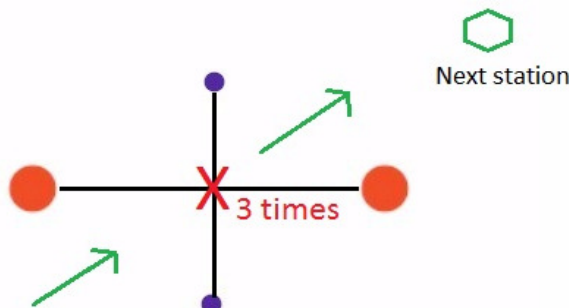
Now that more people are up in the Advanced and Excellent levels, the Offset Figure 8 will come more into play. Practice with distractions, that way when the dogs meet the distractions on the course they will be less likely to react.

39 OFFSET FIGURE 8

39. Offset Figure 8 - This exercise requires two pylons or posts placed about 2.45 – 3.00 metres apart, around which the team will perform a complete Figure 8, crossing the centre line three times. Two distractions will be arranged to the sides of the Figure 8 about 1.55 – 1.85 metres apart. Entry may be between the pylons or posts and the distraction on either side. The distractions will consist of two securely covered containers with tempting dog treats; however, dog toys may replace one or both containers, or may be placed next to the containers. The exercise sign may be placed on or near the cone where entry is made into the Offset Figure 8.



- Handlers must cross the centre line 3 times only – if you cross more or less than that it will be an IP. If confused then count out loud.



- There will generally be one best path depending on the course. The obvious entrance and exit will depend on the stations before and after. Your first cross of the centre line will be in the same direction as your last cross, so look where your next station is (ie your exit) and your entrance will be in the same direction. However if you take a different path, there is no penalty – as long as you only cross 3 times – you will have to take a more circuitous path to get to the next station which will take slightly longer but will get you through the course. You may want to take a different path if there is a particularly tempting distraction, so your dog only passes closest to it once rather than twice.