Instructions for the the Start Control

Overview

The Start Control is the second checkpoint on a racing stage. The competitors will start racing on either 30 second increments or minute increments. Usually only events with many motorcycles will use 30 second intervals, and then it will be for the bikes only. You will record the actual start time of racing and count down the vehicles to begin racing. A amateur radio operator (ham) will be assigned with you to communicate with the rally's centralized net control. Net control is our communications network and is managed by a single individual who communicates directly with the Clerk of the Course and the Steward. Net control is crucial because it manages all our safety communications.

Before The Rally Vehicles Arrive

Synchronize your digital wristwatch with the official rally time before the clock is taken to the Finish Control.

You need to **place the control signs**. You will assist the Arrival Control in this task. The control location will be marked for you and your Stage Captain with either a stake, surveyor's ribbon, or a painted mark on the tarmac. This will correspond to the location description in your Stage Captain's book. Your Stage Captain will help you determine the exact locations for the control signs. Generally they are aligned with marked stakes in the ground or marked ribbons on the trees. The order is:

1. Yellow Clock (vehicles will wait to enter the control here)
2. Red Clock (vehicles check into the control here)
3. Red solid black flag (vehicles will actually start racing here)

Prepare your log sheets by filling in your name and the handwriting sample. This will help us read the log and contact you if there is a scoring issue.

When The Rally Vehicles Arrive

Your primary responsibilities are **to record the time of day that a competition vehicle actually starts racing** the stage and **verbally count down the start** for the competitor.

You will be asked to complete a time card for the Zero Car. This is necessary for us to test all timing systems and insure that all volunteers fully understand the instructions for their volunteer position.

When the start area is clear of all other vehicles, wave the rally vehicle up to you. Use your arm to make a distinct waving motion. Stop the vehicle anywhere within several feet behind the start sign. The vehicles don't have to be positioned with their nose exactly on the start line. Some cars, particularly the two wheel drive cars, will not want to start in the ruts and may position themselves around the ruts. This is fine.

Motorcycles will start on 30 second intervals so you and your co-volunteer will both start motorcycles in a rotation. Be sure to set up as a "double barrel" start: one starter with a watch and a log sheet on each side of the road. You will alternate starting so each of you will start one motorcycle every minute.

The navigator or rider will hand you the time card. Some riders will require assistance getting their time card in and out of their pocket. Please provide assistance to them. Unless otherwise instructed by net control, you will:

1. Record the vehicle number and next available time (hour, minute, seconds) to start on your log sheet, and
2. Record the vehicle sequence number (the Zero Car is sequence number 1, the first motorcycle is sequence number 2, etc.) Record sequence numbers for the Combo Car and the competition cars (do not start over).
3. Record the next available time (hour, minutes, seconds) to start on the time card.

The next available time for a motorcycle checking in at 12:30:28 is 12:31:00. The next available time for a motorcycle checking in at 12:31:10 is 12:31:30. The next available time for a car checking in at 12:32:15 is 12:33:00. Return the time card to the navigator or rider and begin the count down for the vehicle. You will begin with "30… 15… 10… 5 4 3 2 1 GO!" You may also want to indicate with your hand the last five numbers.

Sometimes a navigator or rider may complain about an error on the time card. If it is your error, correct it and initial next to the correction. If it was an error made at another control, make a note on the log sheet regarding the error and reassure the competitor that scoring will sort it out later. You can also remind him/her to file an inquiry to ask scoring to investigate the error.

Occasionally, net control will instruct you to "hold the start." This means that you do not allow any vehicles to start racing the stage. When net control starts the rally again, just start the next vehicle at the next available time and record that time on your log and on the time card.

You may encounter a navigator or rider who attempts to cause some kind of delay to make it "impossible" for you to start them at the next available time. If he/she is successful, the competitor will have to start on the **next** time, which gives him/her a greater time gap. This is advantageous for the competitor but delays the rally, which we do not want to happen. Some delay tactics may include:

➤ Debating an error/issue that you have already noted on your log sheet,
➤ Dropping, fumbling, or "losing" the time card before handing it to you,
➤ Saying, "Oh, we forgot to put our belts on! We need another minute to get ready."

Simply respond by beginning the countdown and reminding the competitor, firmly, that he/she has only a certain number of seconds before starting. You may also tell the competitor that Regulations section 2.22 indicates a five minute penalty for anyone delaying a start and a ten minute penalty for disobeying a rally official. If you notice anything unusual or the issue persists, simply note the situation on the log sheet and let the scoring officials sort it out later.

After the last rally car

Once all the racing vehicles have left, you need to call the times in to the scoring network via cell phone. If there is a large delay between the motorcycles and the cars, you could do this after the bikes then again after the cars. A sheet with a list of numbers to call will be provided. It is important that these be called in promptly after the stage is over. If no one at your location has cell service, give the logs to sweep with to transfer to the next control and tell net control that you are doing this.

When the Rally Vehicles Leave

A Combo Car will follow the motorcycles. Make a note in your log when it checks into your control. The last vehicles to check into your control will be the Sweep vehicles. Make a note in your log when these vehicles check in with you. You will not complete a time card for the Combo Car or the Sweep vehicles. Be sure to give your logs to the Sweep vehicle when they come through to close the stage.

You will not leave your position until you have been informed by your Stage Captain to leave. When you prepare to leave, collect the stage signs, any equipment, and any trash that you see. You will **follow your Stage Captain's instructions for leaving** the stage.