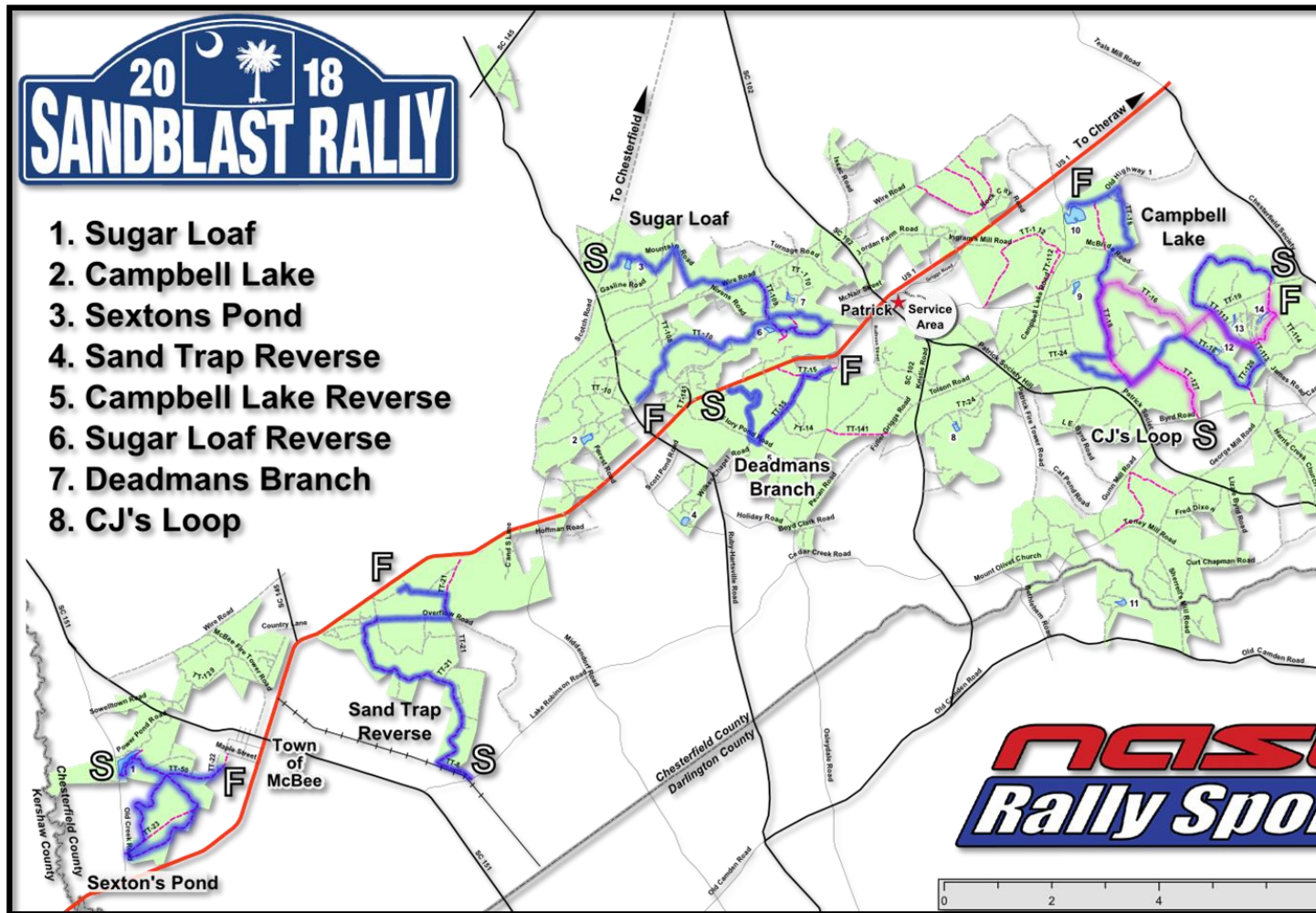


The Sandblast Rally Is a Motorcycle and Car Race over primarily non paved roads. This year the race consisted of 8 mini races, called stages, that varied in length from 5 miles to 16 miles.

These are timed events as vehicles leave the start at specific intervals (1 minute for motorcycles and cars).

Here is a map of the area showing the 8 stages.



As you can see some of the stages are repeated in the reverse direction. This was the case where I was assigned (Campbell Lake). , The S an F indicate Start and Finish for each stage.

There are radio operators at the start and finish of each stage, Net Control is located in Patrick SC (right next to the Service Area in the Town Hall) and keep track of all operations.

There is a predefined schedule that they work hard to keep.

Starts	Stage	Miles
08:31	Rally Start	
09:01	SS1-	10.94
09:54	SS2-	14.47
10:28	30 Minute Service	
11:46	SS3-	7.31
12:13	SS4-	7.62
12:43	10 Minute Service	
13:36	SS5-	14.15
14:21	60 Minute Service	
15:55	SS6-	10.95
16:28	SS7-	4.19
17:06	SS8-	9.42

At a certain time before the Stage, an official car (CAR 000, callsign car Triple Zero) runs the stage insuring it is set up properly and there are no public vehicles on the roads. This is followed by car 00 several minutes later and finally another official car 0. To be sure all marshals are in place and intersecting roads are taped off. These guys run the stage as fast as they can. The drivers are usually experienced rally drivers. A Ham operator is in the right seat of each car, the cars have APRS so their progress can be tracked by race control. No competitors can start a stage without approval from 0 and 00.

The motorcycles run first, we had about 35 this year, As they start, 1 min apart, their numbers are recorded, and passed via radio to net control in groups of 5. As a marshal I record them as well so I can be sure they all pass by me. (some don't make it) and many times they are passed by other riders so the sequence is off. Finish also records numbers and passes them to net control. This way they can tell which ones broke down and can move them after all are finished.

They clear the course after all the motorcycles are done with "sweep" vehicles (usually 4 wheel drive trucks) which tow the brake-downs to the finish or service area. After the course is deemed clear the cars are able to start(this year about 30).with the numbers being passed as they start and finish, You can see that for short stages, vehicles are starting and finishing at the same time, keeping the airwaves full.

As soon as vehicles finish they head off to the start of the next stage, They are not given a Lot of time except there is a long Service brake over lunch and the process repeats.

So I was assigned to Campbell Lake and at 0615 I met Matt, the stage leader, at Cheraw High School as well as the other team members (Hams and non-Hams). We were given lunch and at 0630 we followed him in a caravan to our assigned locations.

I got to my intersection and parked off the road. Some time later Matt drove up and told me to block one road with my truck. I then took out my chair and set it up on a sand bank near the intersection. Set up my radio and begin to listen, I could hear the progression of stage 1. And when car 000, 00 and 0 left stage 2 (my stage) start. It took them about 14 mins to get to me, 14 miles down the sand roads following the course. Then the motorcycles started, followed by the cars,

Here are some links to videos of the morning action at my intersection

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/mca1.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/mca2.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/mca3.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/ccca1.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/cca2.MOV>

Now there was a break for me to get lunch since the competitors ran stages, 3, 4 and their lunch. Not much of break since the Motorcycles were running stage 3 while cars did stage 2. So it was not long before cars 000, 00 and 0 were coming by in the opposite direction for stage 5.

Here are some links to videos of the afternoon action at my intersection note the opposite direction.

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/mcp1.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/mcp2.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/ccp1.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/ccp2.MOV>

<http://www.creativecomputersolutions.com/sandblast/ccp3.MOV>

