

# SANDBLAST RALLY 2023

This years Rally was held March 4<sup>th</sup>. I pulled my camper to Cheraw on Thursday afternoon the 2<sup>nd</sup>, by 1630 I was all set up with my G5RV and Icom 7100. I was in site 10 at H Cooper Black campground.



I checked into the NCEN, CNE and CSN nets. I was NCS for CNL. The next morning I was NCS for the North Carolina Morning Net at 0745. After the net I made my breakfast and cleaned up a bit before leaving to assist in the setup of net control at the Patrick Town Hall. Mary N4MH and Tom KA3VVJ were Net Control operators.

I had volunteered to work the Rally practice run on Friday called “SHAKEDOWN” and we were to meet in downtown Cheraw at 1400. I arrived there on time and met the other SHAKEDOWN radio operators. At 1430 we left Cheraw for the SHAKEDOWN course start which was 11 miles South of Chesterfield SC, about a 35 min drive from Cheraw. SHAKEDOWN starts at 1530 and ends at 1800. Vehicles are not timed and they use this run to

checkout their vehicle, both cars and motorcycles run the approximately 3 mile course. They may run the same course as many times as they can get in. We arrived at the start at 1505. One radio operator headed to the finish, another to a halfway point, another to the start line and the fourth to organize the queue of vehicles preparing to make the run.

SHAKEDOWN runs like this, vehicles leave in one minute intervals, the start radio op calls out their number. Finish and halfway record the number and check it off when they go by, no times are recorded. Non radio volunteers handle the actual start and pre-start activity. First we ran motorcycles; we waited until the last motorcycle cleared finish then verified that all who started finished, then we ran cars. After the last car, we again verified all had finished before running the motorcycles that had circled around to restart. This continued until 1800, toward the end only cars were left and some would pull up to the line only to start 30 seconds later the repeat.



Car at start line , 2 non radio volunteers check for helmets, seatbelts and wristbands indicating they are part of the Rally..

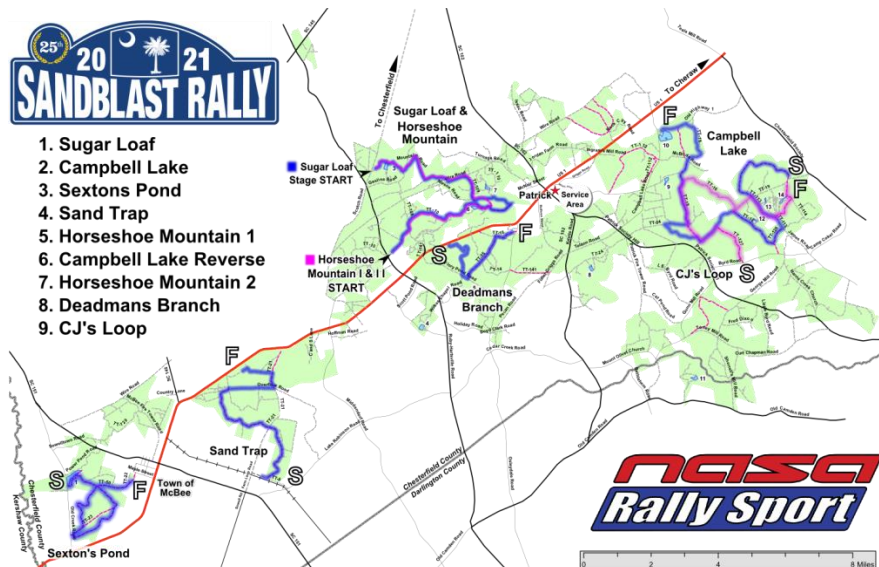


Start Radio OP, Eddie, KO4EVE from Tennessee ,is right on the line calling numbers.

At finish was Tom , KG5FS of myrtle beach, half way Bill KO4IF of Duncan SC, and organizing the start line was AMY, KJ4DNH of Cary, NC. [HERE](#) is a link to a short video of a car leaving the start.

The next day is Race day and all volunteers meet at Cheraw High School parking lot at 0600. There they meet their stage captain (person in charge of placing volunteers and making sure the course is ready). At 0630 everyone leaves for their assignments.

Here is a map of the stages.



Here is what the overall schedule looks like:

TC/SS Name	Bike									Car									
	Start	000 Early	Bogey	Start	00 Early	Bogey	Start	0 Early	Bogey	First Bike	Start	Combo Bogey	Clear	First Car	Med Sweep Start	Bogey	Heavy Sweep Start	Bogey	Clear
0 Start (Patrick)	6:26			7:37			8:20				8:56			10:05			10:07		
1 Sugar Loaf	6:43	2:06	0:40	7:54	0:55	0:25	8:38	0:11	0:16	8:49	9:14	0:20	9:34	9:43	10:21	0:20	10:23	0:20	10:43
2 Campbell Lake	7:57	1:45	0:52	8:53	0:49	0:31	9:30	0:12	0:20	9:42	10:07	0:26	10:33	10:36	11:14	0:26	11:16	0:26	11:42
2B Reseed (Patrick) (out)	8:53	2:06	0:15	9:54	1:05	0:15	10:34	0:25	0:15	10:59	11:09	0:15	11:24	11:38	12:17	0:15	12:19	0:15	12:34
Start Transit to Stages	9:08			10:09			10:49				11:24			12:32			12:34		
3 Sextons Pond	9:41	1:51	0:28	10:42	0:50	0:19	11:23	0:09	0:11	11:32	11:57	0:14	12:11	12:26	13:04	0:14	13:06	0:14	13:20
4 Sand Trap	10:29	1:35	0:30	11:21	0:43	0:20	11:54	0:10	0:11	12:04	12:29	0:15	12:44	12:58	13:36	0:15	13:38	0:15	13:53
5 Horseshoe Mountain I	11:16	1:18	0:40	11:58	0:36	0:25	12:23	0:11	0:15	12:34	12:59	0:20	13:19	13:28	14:06	0:20	14:08	0:20	14:28
5B Regroup (Patrick) (out)	11:52	1:57	0:10	12:54	0:55	0:10	13:24	0:25	0:10	13:49	14:04	0:10	14:14	14:33	15:09	0:10	15:11	0:10	15:21
Start Transit to Stages	12:02			13:04			13:34				14:14			15:19			15:21		
6 Campbell Lake Reverse	12:27	1:35	0:52	13:19	0:43	0:31	13:50	0:12	0:20	14:02	14:27	0:26	14:53	14:56	15:34	0:26	15:36	0:26	16:02
6B Regroup (Patrick) (out)	14:00	1:58	0:10	14:57	1:01	0:10	15:35	0:23	0:10	15:58	16:13	0:10	16:23	16:42	17:18	0:10	17:20	0:10	17:30
Start Transit to Stages	14:10			15:07			15:45				16:23			17:28			17:30		
7 Horseshoe Mountain II	14:25	1:46	0:40	15:22	0:49	0:25	16:01	0:10	0:14	16:11	16:36	0:20	16:56	17:05	17:43	0:20	17:45	0:20	18:05
8 Deadman's Branch	15:20	1:23	0:18	16:02	0:41	0:14	16:33	0:10	0:07	16:43	17:08	0:09	17:17	17:37	18:15	0:09	18:17	0:09	18:26
9 C.J.'s Loop	15:58	1:12	0:38	16:36	0:34	0:24	17:00	0:10	0:14	17:10	17:35	0:19	17:54	18:04	18:42	0:19	18:44	0:19	19:03

This year I was again assigned to assist radio ops when needed, so I stayed at a central location, called the service area awaiting calls for radio malfunction. At 0800 I received a call that a course car, 000, had a radio that could not hear, they were getting by with using a handheld for receive and the mobile radio for transmit. I met them at the start of Stage 2 with a spare radio. They swapped it out and all was well. Here are 2 pictures of the service area.





This is where competitors can work on their cars, There are 3 planned service periods where they can refuel or perform other service. As you can see the weather was great.

Stages are run like this, about an hour before the first motorcycle, car 000 runs the course checking for marshals and radio ops in the correct places, about 30 minutes before the first competitor car 00 runs, checking the same, about 5 minutes before the first competitor car 0 does a high speed run checking the condition of the course. The motorcycles then run the course on one minute intervals. After the last bike finishes a course car called COMBO runs the course looking for stragglers or any breakdowns, once the course is clear the cars may start on their assigned minute. After the last car a course vehicle called FAST SWEEP runs the course looking for stuck cars, it is followed by HEAVY SWEEP who looks for cars off course or stuck. Once HEAVY SWEEP completes the course the volunteers take the course markings down if the course is not run again.

Toward the end of the event I went to a corner of the last stage. Click [HERE](#) for a video of a car on course.