

Sandblast rally review by Bill Heybruck, W4EDN

On February 27 I left Mint Hill and went to Cheraw State Park, to volunteer for the 2020 Sandblast Rally.

I dragged along my “new to me” camper with more comforts of home than my pop up.

I set up on site 5 including my G5RV (note yellow mast at back of camper for the center).



Inside I set up my ic7100, AT 180 and SS30 on my table as usual. Checked the tune and all was fine. At 1730 joined the NC Evening prenet, then went into town to register for the event. I got back in time to check into the

NC Evening net at 1830 local. And Carolinas Net Early at 1900.

Since I was here early I was setup to volunteer for the practice session on Friday afternoon. They call this the Shakedown. Runs from 3-6pm. So we met on location at 230. Since I was familiar with NASA(National Auto Sport Association) technical inspection (from my HPDE driving schools) I was asked to check tech stickers and control starting. I had 3-5 others helping. At 6 pm we closed the course and I headed back to camp. Made the NCEN at 630 and CNE at 7.

At 8 pm we had a radio operators meeting at a local church so at 715 I headed off to there. I got back in time for CNL at 10 and went to bed.

Up at 0530 to meet the other operators at 0620 at the local high school. I was teamed up with other MARS members, Al Meeker, Steve Nosko and Sean ?...

We would work the first, fifth and seventh stages. Steve and Sean ran the start of stage 1, while Al and I ran the finish. Then for stages 5 and 7 it was reversed.

Here is how a stage is run....RIGHT. As vehicles come to the start, they are set off at precise intervals, 30 secs for motorcycles and 1 min for cars. As they cross the start line the radio op records their number. As he gathers 5 or more numbers he contacts Net Control and passes the numbers 5 at a time. While doing so, we at finish copy the numbers so we can verify they all make it thru.

Then as the vehicles finish we pass the numbers of those who cross the finish line to Net Control.

Here is a picture of our check sheet from stage 1. It is helpful to have two people getting the numbers since one

could be missed while sending them to net control. Al and I made a great team, as did Steve and Sean.

Vehicle On Stage Tracking Sheet

Rally Sport

Stage Number: 1

First race vehicle official start time: 901 / 939

| | Vehicle Numbers Entering Stage | OK | Numbers in order of finishing | | Vehicle Numbers Entering Stage | OK | Numbers in order of finishing |
|----|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 701 | | 102 | 26 | 207 | | 207 ← |
| 2 | 702 | | 101 | 27 | 41 | | 41 |
| 3 | 101 | | 104 | 28 | 47 | | 47 |
| 4 | 104 | | 137 | 29 | 28 | | 28 |
| 5 | 137 | | 105 ← | 30 | 1 | | 1 |
| 6 | 134 | | 135 - | 31 | 33 off ok | | 16 ← |
| 7 | 105 | | 104 | 32 | 42 | | 44 |
| 8 | 135 | | 112 | 33 | 16 | | 42 |
| 9 | 112 | | 124 | 34 | 24 | | 13 |
| 10 | 124 | | 114 ← | 35 | 906 off ok | | 46 |
| 11 | 138 | | 119 | 36 | 13 | | 38 ← |
| 12 | 114 | | 117 | 37 | 46 | | 34 |
| 13 | 119 | | 118 | 38 | 38 | | 19 |
| 14 | 117 | | 126 | 39 | 34 | | 45 |
| 15 | 118 | | 132 ← | 40 | 19 | | 37 |
| 16 | 120 | | 120 | 41 | stuck | | 39 ← |
| 17 | 126 | | 136 | 42 | 902 | | 23 |
| 18 | 136 | | 138 | 43 | 903 stuck | | 30 |
| 19 | 133 | | 133 | 44 | 31 | | 27 |
| 20 | 132 | | | 45 | Swamp | | 902 |
| 21 | COMBO | | COMBO | 46 | | | 31 |
| 22 | 48 | | 48 | 47 | | | 906 ← |
| 23 | 35 | | 35 | 48 | | | Swamp |
| 24 | 43 | | 43 52 | 49 | | | Swamp 1004 |
| 25 | 49 | | 49 | 50 | | | 903 |
| | | | | | | | Swamp 1037 |

List any vehicles stuck on stage.

The vehicles may not finish in the same order they start, so the numbers may not line up. That's ok. But don't leave gaps in the finishing order. Mark each car ok with a check when it is reported at the finish.

On stage 1, I did the radio work as “finish of stage 1” then Al did it for 5 and 7 as “start of stage 5”. While doing the start, we would listen and record the finish numbers to see

if any vehicles broke down (there are always some). The last vehicles through a stage are called sweep. The last one is a tow truck called heavy sweep. We tell them the car numbers of those that did not finish so they can look for them along the course.

Notice that 138 started 1st and finished 10th. He was a first time slow rider. We watch for that so that if a vehicle goes off course we can stop the event and send medical.

Stage Number:
5

1256 / 1341

| | Vehicle Numbers Entering Stage | OK | Numbers in order of finishing |
|----|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 138 | ✓ | 101 |
| 2 | 101 | ✓ | 104 |
| 3 | 102 | ✓ | 135 |
| 4 | 104 | ✓ | 105 |
| 5 | 135 | ✓ | 112 |
| 6 | 105 | ✓ | 117 |
| 7 | 112 | ✓ | 137 |
| 8 | 117 | ✓ | 132 |
| 9 | 137 | ✓ | 118 |
| 10 | 132 | ✓ | 138 |
| 11 | 118 | ✓ | 119 |
| 12 | 119 | ✓ | 134 |
| 13 | 134 | ✓ | 114 |
| 14 | 114 | ✓ | 124 |
| 15 | 124 | ✓ | 126 |
| 16 | 126 | ✓ | 136 |
| 17 | 136 | ✓ | 133 |
| 18 | 133 | ✓ | 102 |
| 19 | Combo | ✓ | Combo |
| 20 | | | 48 |
| 21 | 48 | | 35 |
| 22 | 35 | | 49 |
| 23 | 49 | | 43 |
| 24 | 43 | | 207 |
| 25 | 207 | | |

| | Vehicle Numbers Entering Stage | OK | Numbers in order of finishing |
|----|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 26 | 44 | ✓ | 47 |
| 27 | 41 | ✓ | 41 |
| 28 | 44 | ✓ | 44 |
| 29 | 28 | ✓ | 28 |
| 30 | 1 | ✓ | 1 |
| 31 | 16 | ✓ | 16 |
| 32 | 38 | ✓ | 38 |
| 33 | 45 | ✓ | 45 |
| 34 | 902 | ✓ | 902 |
| 35 | 46 | ✓ | 46 |
| 36 | 34 | ✓ | 34 |
| 37 | 13 | ✓ | 13 |
| 38 | 27 | ✓ | 27 |
| 39 | 39 | ✓ | 39 |
| 40 | 906 | ✓ | 906 |
| 41 | 42 | ✓ | 42 |
| 42 | 31 | ✓ | 31 |
| 43 | 903 | ✓ | 903 |
| 44 | 23 | ✓ | 23 |
| 45 | 30 | ? | Forward / Tow |
| 46 | | | |
| 47 | | | |
| 48 | | | |
| 49 | | | |
| 50 | | | |

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When we were done starting the last vehicles on stage 7 we were done. I went back to camp, then met Al , Sean and Steve at the awards dinner. After dinner and awards it was time to head back to get a shower, get on CNL and go to bed.

I got up at 0730 to make the Morning Net at 0745. Then pack up and head home. I arrived home at Noon.

Had a Great Time.

Did you know that one on the Net Control ops was Mary Hunt N4MH!

Ready for next year. I'll get my camping spot on Black Friday when it may be 1/2 price!

Sent from m