



HOW TO RUN A CAR RALLY

HOLY WRIT

Let it be written – let it be run!

thoughts by Geoff Moor

HOW TO RUN A CAR RALLY

(or “The Gospel according to Moor”)

These notes were prepared at the request of the Club Management Committee for inclusion in a future Policies and Procedures Manual and are published separately in the interim. They are presented as a guide to help those willing volunteers in the Veteran Car Club of WA Inc who put their hand up to run an event for their friends.

A car rally can take on many forms. Before starting out it is a good idea to contemplate the type of rally you want to have. To get this process going it is a good idea to follow some simple planning processes.

1. Plan your event.

Work out what type of rally you are going to have.

- Will it be a competitive one or just a social run? Are those taking part used to being in a car rally and will they know the terminology you use?
- Is it a half day, full day, weekend or longer event?
- Does it clash with school holidays, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, public holiday, grand final?
- Who is it for – members, other car clubs, guests?
- What do you want to get out of the event?
- Do you have the resources to run the event – people, cash, time?
- What will you call the event?
- How much planning time will you need to get everything organised?
- How much will it cost to run – how much income can be generated to cover these costs?
- Plan where you will start – is there enough room for all the vehicles to assemble?
- Consider the vehicles which will be taking part – steep hills, etc
- Plan your stops – are there the facilities at the stops you need? Toilets, shops, food outlets, accommodation, undercover area in case of rain, shade if it is hot, power points for the urn or whatever you need for your stop. Will the park be open on the day you want to attend?
- Consider the time behind the wheel – sometimes driving older vehicles can be tiring.
- Plan your route bearing the above in mind.
- Plan your finish point – is there plenty of room for everyone to gather at the end and have a chat or whatever?
- Consider whether you need any sort of approvals. Do you need to have a road closed, a parking area reserved, permission to park on the grass in a park and so on.
- In other words make sure that your rally is practical.

Remember that every rally does not have to be bigger and better and grander or whatever than the last one. You don't need special events for every rally – the whole idea of a rally for our Club is for the members to enjoy themselves and the vehicles they drive. Don't make the rally a hassle!

2. Prepare for the event

Once you have decided the above, get on with the arrangements.

- Make sure you have approval from the management committee or appropriate committee of the Club. At the end of the day anything done in the name of the Club makes the Club liable. Remember that although the Club is an incorporated body, this does not cover any organiser from negligent acts. If something untoward happens and it is proven that you as the rally organiser have been negligent, then you personally can be held liable. If something untoward happens and you have taken all the correct steps and not been negligent, then the Club is liable. That's what we have public liability insurance for – but it won't cover you if you don't take the proper steps.
- Book the date and get it into the club calendar.
- Prepare your entry form and get it into Early Auto. Have spare copies available at club or section meetings.
- Work out your closing date for entries, taking into mind any preparation that have to be made with will be affected by the number of entries or the number of people on the run.
- Work out an entry fee taking into account what is needed to run the rally. Remember that rallies are not

meant to be fundraising events from the rallyists – keep the fundraising to sponsorship. Rally fees should cover expenses incurred to run the rally only (or may be even less if you have a generous sponsor). This does not stop you running fund raising activities on the rally – ie lucky \$50 note, raffle, or whatever.

- Prepare your route. Drive over the route several times. Check out the road conditions, note any potential hazards
- stop signs which require a steep hill start etc.
- Right hand turns into heavy traffic – is there an alternative with traffic lights.
- Is there room on open roads for other road users to safely pass rally vehicles which may be travelling at slower speeds?
- Always check the route during the week before – just in case someone has dug the road up.
- If possible drive over the route in a vehicle which is eligible to take part in the rally – often hills become a lot steeper when tackled in an older vehicle.
- Apply for any road closures, parking reservations or permission to enter parks etc. Remember that these sometimes take a while particularly if your application has to go to a committee and then onto a number of government departments. Road closure will certainly entail these procedures and may also incur a cost. Be prepared to put up any bonds that may be required – parking on a sports field may require a bond being lodged with the local council.
- Work with your sponsor if you have one. What requirements do they have? Do they want their name displayed in some form? Offer to take them on the run – get them a seat in a competitive vehicle. Do they want signage at the start/rally stops/finish? Do they want publicity – involvement of television or newspapers – either before, during or after the event?
- Check out your morning tea/lunch or other stops. Will the toilets be open when you get there? Will the shop be able to cater for the influx of potential customers? Is there enough room for all the vehicles to park without causing traffic hazards.
- Check out your Check Points. Can the vehicles pull off the road far enough to hand in their rally card (if you are using one) without causing a traffic hazard? Can you fit more than one vehicle into the check point – rallyists have habit of banking up.
- Arrange the people you need to help run the event. People to issue rally sheets/packs etc, people to staff the checkpoint, someone to provide and drive the back-up trailer, people to help check the rally cards at the end or wherever, people to marshal vehicles at appropriate points if needed.
- Take into consideration where the public can or cannot go. Inevitably someone will be trying to take photos or wanting to stand just where you want the vehicles to enter or leave.

This is the most important part of running any rally. Effort put into the preparation stage will pay off on the event. Make sure you have covered all the details.

3. Run the Rally

Now that you have done all the hard work, it is time to run the event. Make sure that you have contingency plans in place in case something comes unstuck at the last minute. Sometimes you can plan for these things, other times you just have to grin and bear it.

4. Evaluation

Go back over the event afterwards and see how it ran. Compile any information from participants that will help you or someone else run the next rally.

Make a list of:

- What went wrong?
- What went right?
- Thoughts on what to do for next time.
- Did you and the entrants enjoy it?

5. Veteran Car Club rallies

The following gives some specific information relating to rallies for the Veteran Car Club of W.A. Inc. Remem-

ber that our rallies, because of the breadth of age of our club eligible vehicles, can be somewhat different from the work social club run.

5.1 Timing.

Our timing procedures were laid down many years ago. They are based on set speed categories, nominated by the rally organiser and chosen by the entrant. Because of our affiliation with the national and international motoring movements, we technically run tours. The speed of entrants, in those sections of the run where timing takes place, is not to exceed 60 km/h. Generally rallies are conducted with speed limit choices of 40, 50 and 60km/h.

If you want vehicles of all ages to take part then make allowance for older vehicles. Veterans generally cannot maintain their nominated speed up or down steep hills. Some vintage vehicles also have problems in this area.

Timing is worked on the minute early, nothing late basis. This means that if a vehicle is due into a checkpoint at, say 10:05 and arrives just after 10:04 but before 10:05, they are counted as being on time. No points lost. In other words 10:04:01 to 10:05:00 is on time. 10:05:01 is a minute late and 10:04:00 is a minute early.

This applies to all check points and it doesn't matter if it is a check point that requires a vehicle to stop or whether it is a rolling point where the time the entrant drives through is merely noted by the official.

Master sheet timing is best as it allows entrants to make up time. Let's take a "for instance" at this stage where an entrant is due at the first checkpoint at 10:05 and the second checkpoint at 10:40. They arrived at the first checkpoint at 10:06:10 (in other words lost points for two minutes late). They can then make up time for the next stage by driving a bit faster and getting to the next checkpoint on time (for instance at 10:39:30 - and in this case lose no points for the second checkpoint as they arrived on time. The master sheet would have shown:

Entrant No	1st Check Due	1st Check Time Arrived	Points Lost	2nd Check Due	2nd Check Time Arrived	Points Lost	Total points lost
1	10:05	10:07	2	10:40	10:40	0	2

As you can see the check point person has allowed for the minute early and written the actual time down as the next minute (10:39:30 became 10:40)

Naturally the more entrants and the more checkpoints the larger the piece of paper needed to record this (unless of course, you are using a spreadsheet in your lap top computer).

5.2 Entry Forms

Don't forget to include the date of the rally, the entry fee required, the closing date and an address for the return of entry forms.

A typical entry form would include:

- Name and date of rally.
- Entry fee (and who payable to) and return address for lodging of entries.
- Entry closing date
- Name and address of entrant including section belonged to if applicable. Some rallies may have special sections for drivers and for navigators. Ask for their names if this applies to your rally.
- Year, make and model of vehicle entered
- Speed category (give choices) and class (veteran, vintage, post vintage, commercial, military or any other categories which you consider applicable for your rally) Remember to add in the event of long rallies whether or not the entire event is under timed conditions or not.
- Any other requirements such as numbers for morning tea, meals, accommodation.
- Club indemnity

5.3 Route Sheet

Make sure route sheets are double checked. The voice of experience will tell you that you cannot check your route sheet too thoroughly. Run over the route with the route sheet, preferably with someone driving the vehicle who has not been involved with setting the route. You will soon find the mistakes.

Use the club symbols or abbreviations for route sheets. A copy of these is attached.

Remember that the aim of the rally is for everyone to enjoy themselves and not to get lost. Make sure you put in the occasional clue such as a street name. Always make sure that people know where the morning tea/lunch/finish points are, even if you have to give them the location in a sealed envelope.

Try and keep the passengers in the vehicle interested. Include kids questions, navigators questions, things for people to collect. These items should be kept separate from the rally time requirements and not included in the calculation of points when working out the rally winner. They can be used for tiebreakers if necessary. Try and give separate acknowledgment to these ancillary requirements.

Normally check points are not marked on route sheets. Depending however on your rally, you may wish to show where they are. If you require people to stop at a checkpoint and get their route card signed then either tell them that no time has been allowed for stopping or that time has been allowed. (ie allow one minute for checkpoint stop). This should be noted at the start of the route sheet.

On occasion you may have the morning tea stop in between timed checkpoints. In these instances you should state something like "allow yourself 30 minutes for morning tea." Those people running late will take off again a little early or those running ahead of time will take a little longer over their cuppa.

If you require people to hand in their route sheet with answers to questions or the like, make sure you have a place for their name or rally number to be written as well as room for their answers.

5.4 Points System

These can be as varied as you like, as long as you tell people before hand what you are doing. The normal system of allocating points is as follows:

1 point lost for every minute early or late – see section on timing

50 points lost for entering a check point from the wrong direction

50 points lost for stopping in sight of a checkpoint – the wheels must keep turning (and it is surprising just how slow a vehicle can go)

50 points lost for not stopping at a stop sign (and this means that the wheels must stop turning and the vehicle becoming stationary). This is a good one if you want to sort people out – particularly if you can have a rally official out of sight but nearby!

You may care to impose other penalties. Infringement of traffic laws may carry a disqualification.

Best to make sure that the committee approves of them before you get too carried away. Make sure that penalties apply to the rally. For example it is not appropriate that you apply a penalty for someone not wearing apparel appropriate to the age of their entered vehicle. It is appropriate that you apply a penalty for someone not checking into the start on time – provided that you have advised them of the penalty before hand (either on the entry form or on the material sent out, if any, prior to the event).

6. Conclusion

Remember that the whole idea of the rally is enjoyment.

Some people will rally as though their life depends on it, and that is their right as they enjoy rallying that way. Other folk just want to go for a drive in their vehicle and enjoy the company of fellow enthusiasts. Try and cater for both groups of people. If you decide that your rally is only going to cater for one or the other, then say so and let everyone know that this is going to be a competitive rally with all sorts of challenges. Or that it is just a social run and the winners name will be drawn out of a hat. Either or neither is the correct one – it is really a case of personal preference. Just make sure you tell people beforehand.

If you are having problems with your rally, don't hesitate to ask for help and advice. I have made some glorious stuff-ups in the past and will no doubt make more in the future. I also have organised some of the largest rallies in the State and some of the smallest. It doesn't matter as long as you, the organiser, and they, the entrants, all

enjoy the run.

Organisers of the Club rallies are responsible for a report. The mandatory article is to include the successful participants, the recipients of any trophies and a social comment and be submitted to Early Auto. Delegation is quite acceptable. The secretary is to keep relevant notes for ease of compilation of presentations at the end of year function.

Indemnity

These notes are offered for advice and as a guide only. No responsibility is accepted by the author or by the Veteran Car Club of W.A. (Inc) for any actions taken by any person in response to these notes or the concepts or procedures outlined in them.

Geoff Moor
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References:

Constitution – Veteran Car Club of W.A. (Inc)

How to....Plan and present a well run program – Ministry of Sport & Recreation – undated

How to....Obtain an event permit for your activity – Ministry of Sport & Recreation – undated

Here endeth the lesson!



