RallyCross Participant

Novice Guide

Version 1.0

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WHAT IS RALLYCROSS
RallyCross is a skilled driving event that emphasizes the driver's ability and car agility through a course designated by traffic cones. Courses are typically held on a low hazard location, such as gravel lots or open fields. While speeds are no greater than those normally encountered in legal highway driving, the combination of concentration and car feedback creates a rush like nothing you've experienced.

FINDING AN EVENT
Check out the SCCA website for a local region or find a local sports car club. They'll have a calendar of events and you can make arrangements to attend one of their events. First timers are more than welcome. Make it known that it is your first time, and someone will be glad to show you the ropes.
Nebraska Region Website: nrscca.com.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOUR FIRST EVENT

Listed below are some general guidelines for novice rallycrossers. For your first event, you don't necessarily need to adhere to all of our suggestions below. Heck, for your first event, just make sure your car is in good working order, and if it is, just go and have some fun. Ask a lot of questions, and try to hook up with some experienced competitors. If you have fun and want to continue honing your RallyCross skills, come back to this guide, study it some more, and you'll probably find some ideas that will make you a better rallycrosser.

STUDY THE RULEBOOK
If you are going to attend an SCCA RallyCross event, study their Solo rulebook and try to find out what class your car is in. You can find an online copy of the current rules as the SCCA website, visit scca.com. If you are unsure what class your car falls under, please ask someone at the event. People in registration and tech inspection are usually the most knowledgeable about where your car belongs, or at least know whom you should speak with.

WHAT HAPPENS AT A RALLYCROSS

Vehicle Prep
Upon arrival to the event site, get your vehicle prepped for the upcoming tech inspection. Remove all the loose items from the interior and trunk including front driver and passenger floor mats. If you have hubcaps or lug nut covers on your wheels, remove them as well. This might be a good time to make sure your tire pressures are where you want them. For street tires, you will want to over inflate them as much as five to ten psi. If it's easier, air them up prior to getting to the event site a little over where you want to run them, then when you arrive at the site you can adjust your pressures down to where you want them. If you are fortunate enough to be competition tires, get changed over to them first thing upon arrival to the event, or put them on prior to the event if your drive is short. As for pressures, get advice from someone using the same tire on a vehicle similar to yours.

Registration
Registering for an RallyCross event requires a valid driver's license and an entry fee (usually around $20 to $30). Knowing your class and vehicle number ahead of time will also make things run smoother. You will also be asked to sign an insurance waiver.

Tech Inspection
Your vehicle must pass a tech inspection before you can compete. They will check to make sure your vehicle is safe to compete by checking over various items on your vehicle (tires, wheels, battery, brakes, etc). They will also require that any loose items in your vehicle be removed (jack, floor mats, spare change, etc). Once completed, the tech inspector will sign you off if you pass, or recommend changes to make the vehicle pass.

Course Walk
After the tech inspection, it is imperative that you walk the course. This is especially important for first timers, but it is a must for any rallycrosser. Without a course walk, you will be lost once you get out there in your vehicle. Most events will also have a novice course walk just before the drivers meeting. Try to have the course memorized before you go on the guided walk, and definitely before its time to run. It can take up to four or five course walks to begin to get the layout down. You should walk as if coming from paddock, to the start and on through the finish. Walking with others is beneficial, however the later walks you take, try going alone for better focus. If course maps are not provided, we recommend a pen and paper be used to draw the course out. This will be handy later if you are having trouble remembering something from your course walk.

Parade Lap
Some regions employ the use of a parade lap. This is a guided low-speed non-competitive lap for competitors to familiarize themselves with the course. This is not a substitute for walking the course.

Tips : Walking the course is one of the most important things you can do come event day. The better you know the course, the faster you'll be. Here are some suggestions...

- Walk the course as many times as possible, at least four or five times.
- Walk with others the first few times to discuss prospective lines
- Walk alone during your last couple trips to obtain better focus
- For longer courses, draw the course on a notepad for review later in the day.
- Take your time while studying the course, paying special attention to "the line".
- Try to pick out a few "key cones" along the course and make note (usually only 10-20 per course)
- You will find that most people will NOT recommend downshifting at all. However certain courses may require that you downshift to 1st gear at some time during your run - try to figure that out ahead of time.

Driver's Meeting
The drivers' meeting is mandatory for all drivers. The event chair will hold the meeting approximately one half hour before the first vehicle starts. Be sure to attend. This is where you will find out information you'll need to know about the course conditions, number of runs, particular safety concerns, how penalties are assessed, and how work assignments will be handled.

Driving on Course
This is what you've been waiting for! Most RallyCross events will have between 3-6 runs per event. This means that you will get between 3 and 6 laps around the course you walked earlier. It doesn't seem like much, but once you

finish your first run, we guarantee you will be hooked. vehicles are typically be organized by class in the run groups also known as heats. Sometimes competitors are run numerically regardless of class. How the event will be run should be announced during the drivers meetings. Depending on the size of the event, you may get a couple runs in the morning, and then maybe a few more in the afternoon, with your rest and work sessions somewhere in between. Or you may be running and working throughout the day.

Tips : The driver is the most important piece of the puzzle when it comes to rallycrossing. A fast vehicle helps, but without a competent driver, that fast vehicle, will end up having slow times around the course. Here are a few tips...

- Look ahead! Look at where you want to go, not what you want to miss (ie. the cones)
- Be smooth on the gas, on the brakes, and with the steering wheel
- Go slow to go fast. Don't take the tight sections too fast.
- Do not be afraid to really use your brakes to slow the vehicle down.
- Launch at higher RPM's than you're used to, but try to minimize wheel spin.
- Limit gear changes. On most courses, get it into 2nd gear and leave it there. Some courses, and some vehicles, will require downshifting, but if you're new to the sport, get it into 2nd and leave it there so you can concentrate on other things - you're going to be busy in the vehicle!

Working the Course
You thought that all you would be doing is driving? Everyone who competes in a RallyCross event must also work. Work assignments vary. Most people will work somewhere out on the course, helping pick up downed cones, etc. However there are various other work assignments that exist (timing & scoring, announcer, starter, safety, etc). Report for your work assignment as soon as you hear your group announced. This will make for a speedy transition from group to group.

The Awards
Well, if you did well, you will definitely want to attend the awards ceremony after the event. Most clubs give out small prizes for each class, and also usually for Fast Time of the Day (FTD). This is also a good time to cheer on your fellow competitors and check out your competition.

Fun Runs
Many events will run fun runs after the competition runs have been completed. This is a great time to work on your driving and try different things. These fun runs usually cost $1 per run.

Course Cleanup
This is a must. Please stick around and help clean up after the event is over. Many people have worked their tails off so that you could compete, now its your turn to return the favor and help collect cones and so on.

EQUIPMENT GUIDE FOR RALLYCROSSERS
RallyCross is one of the most affordable forms of Motorsport. Basically all you need is your vehicle and a helmet...however there are several other products we recommend to enhance your experience and have put together a comprehensive guide to help you out.

Helmet
A helmet is your most important piece of safety equipment. All rallycrossers will need at least an eligible Snell rated helmet, see the rule book for further details. Most event organizers will provide a few loaner helmets for first-timers, but we recommend getting a helmet of your own once you decide to continue with the sport.

Vehicle Number and Class Magnets or Decals
vehicles that participate in an RallyCross will need to have numbers and class markings displayed prominently somewhere on the vehicle. Shoe polish is O.K. for the novice to use, but it makes a mess and just doesn't look good.

Tire Gauge
A tire gauge is very important since accurate tire pressure is key to good grip.

Air Bubble/Air Pump
An air tank or air pump is necessary to raise air pressure in your tires at events where compressed air usually isn't available.

Racing Seat
The factory seats in most vehicles offer very little lateral support. Without a race seat, you will involuntarily use the steering wheel or other stationary objects in the vehicle for support. This results in an interruption of driver concentration, diminished control of the steering wheel, and body fatigue. A quality seat will hold the driver in a fixed position in the vehicle, thus allowing maximum concentration and feedback through the steering wheel. Always make sure that upgrades are legal for the class you compete in.

Tires and Suspension
Tires and Suspension are perhaps the most critical components for your vehicle when it comes to rallycrossing. Always make sure that upgrades are allowed for the class you compete in.

Mud Flaps
These are handy to keep paint damage on the sides of your vehicle to a minimum. They also help to keep you from spraying the course workers with dirt and gravel.

WHAT TO BRING TO AN EVENT
Bring along the things you would if you are going to be outside all day, because you are. If it is 100 degrees you will need a great deal of water. If it is 30 degrees you may need coffee or hot chocolate and a winter coat and stocking cap.

- Valid drivers license
- SCCA or club membership card (to get a discount on entry fees)
- A pad and pencil (to draw course map and write down advice)

- A valid legal helmet
- Optional neck support
- Optional driving shoes
- Vehicle numbers and class markings (magnets or decals)

- Tire pressure gauge
- Portable jack
- Torque wrench
- Tools in case you need to repair something
- Portable air tank or compressor
- Glass cleaner and paper towels
- Optional work gloves
- Racer tape (duct tape)

- Clean towels
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Bandanna or dust mask
- Extra clothes, hat, rain gear, umbrella (even for sunny days)
- Garbage bags (to cover things if it rains)
- Folding chair
- Drink containers filled with cold non-alcoholic beverages.
- Cooler with lunch and/or snacks

THINGS TO REMEMBER ON EVENT DAY
Here are a FEW general things to do or remember on event day...

- Walk the course as many times as you can
- Visualize the course as you sit on the grid waiting for each run
- Use your first run to study the course, go slow if you have to
- Monitor your tire pressures as time allows
- If you get a chance, ride with one of the local hot shoes
- Have fun!!! If you are not having fun, you are doing it wrong!