



RallyCross: Zero to Dirty

A Guide to Hosting Sports Car Club of America RallyCross

RallyCross is an unpaved race against the clock that combines stage rally moves with Solo accessibility. If you're curious about what it takes to host an event in your area, this guide will help you with the major pieces. Combine a suitable venue with a few dedicated volunteers and the resources of your local SCCA region, and you can make it happen.



Looks like fun? This could be your region.

Intended Audience

The bend of this document is towards those with a basic understanding of how a SCCA event works. The club's model of self-organized motorsports is repeated nationwide, and offers a framework for safety and consistency that can be applied to your neck of the woods. At minimum, you have probably attended a Solo or RallyCross and appreciate the effort necessary to convert an open space into a functional competition. If you're new to the organizational side of things, you can gain a lot of perspective from shadowing the volunteers at a nearby SCCA event. More than arranging a bundle of cones in a field, a successful RallyCross comes from the planning in the weeks and months prior.







SCCA events are hosted by competitors, for competitors. The best way to start a RallyCross program is to jump and help.

Learning Curve

The SCCA RallyCross Knowledge Base

Organizing a RallyCross requires learning from those with experience running events of their own. Since the SCCA is a club, most administrative roles are staffed by people who volunteer their time and experience. Whatever your skill level, your first point of contact should be your Divisional RallyCross Steward. The SCCA is divided into scores of individual chapters, and those regions fall into one of nine geographical divisions such as the Northeast or Southwest. Each division has a volunteer “Steward” who helps promote RallyCross in that area and ensures safe operations. This

person will talk you through organizing an event and can often put you in contact with experienced resources near your region.

Hands-on experience is the next step in planning a successful future event. Visit neighboring RallyCrosses to build perspective as both a competitor and organizer, and pick the brain of locals. If that is not an option, area SCCA Solo events offer additional opportunities to learn the ropes, as autocross logistics are reasonably similar when it comes to successfully managing helpers, equipment, and competition. They are not identical sports, but autocross organizational smarts are readily incorporated into your RallyCross IQ. Take note of successes and weaknesses in how these events are run, and you will begin to grasp what goes into pulling off a quality event.

Know the RallyCross rule book, especially the obligations concerning safety. It's a reasonably thin document available online at SCCA.com. Every RallyCross is required to have an endorsed RallyCross Safety Steward (RXSS) on site, preferably two or more. The specifics are discussed in a later section. Just know that finding a few locals to ultimately complete this training is essential, and that the Divisional RallyCross Steward can help you begin.

SCCA ***RallyCross***

RULES

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RALLYCROSS**General Downloads**[2015 RX Audit Form.doc](#)[2015 RX SanctionForm.pdf](#)[2015 RX Audit form.pdf](#)[2015 RX Sanction App.doc](#)[Safety Plan](#)[Steward License Application](#)**RallyCross Rules**[2015 RallyCross Rulebook](#)[Disclosure Form](#)[Lightning Safety Plan](#)[RX Audit Instructions](#)

Left: the RallyCross Rules are available free online. Right: some of the essential documents available at SCCA.com/Downloads.

Every RallyCross is sanctioned and insured by the SCCA, and there are some forms online that have to be filled out and turned into the club's main office. In exchange for providing this sanction and insurance, the SCCA will want a modest fee after the event based on the competitor turnout. There are also costs such as towing club equipment to the event site, renting porta-potties, providing water, and any fees the site owner may want. Early on, you will want to be familiar with rough overall costs and human resources need to host a RallyCross. This document is roughly ordered in the way that you will encounter each step. Again, don't be afraid to reach out to the Divisional Steward and experienced event organizers to help fill in the gaps.

Approaching the Host SCCA Region: Why to RallyCross

As mentioned before, the SCCA is divided into relatively autonomous regions governed by local SCCA members. They all elect a board of directors from their own membership to oversee the behind-the-scenes work of organizing and funding events. Regions are non-profit entities, relying on unpaid volunteers rather than deep pockets to serve area competitors. The BOD will need to be convinced that a potential RallyCross program is worth

the time and effort of committing the region's finite money and equipment. If you have a core of interested volunteers and demonstrate a grasp of event organization, most regions will be excited to expand their club to new areas. However, each region varies in size and political complexion, so visit few monthly club meetings to get a feel for how they operate.

Money is often a leading concern. Know that the SCCA offers sanction and insurance discounts for regions that have not hosted a RallyCross in the last three years (or ever). The insurance fee for your first two events is only \$3.50 per entrant with no minimum, and sanction fees are waived. For existing programs trying a new site, there are also lower fees. This incentive plan can be requested through the divisional steward, who will arrange it with the Rally-Solo department. Minimizing the financial risk to the region is an ideal method to kickstart your program.



Magazines like SportsCar and Grassroots Motorsports whet the appetite for RallyCross.

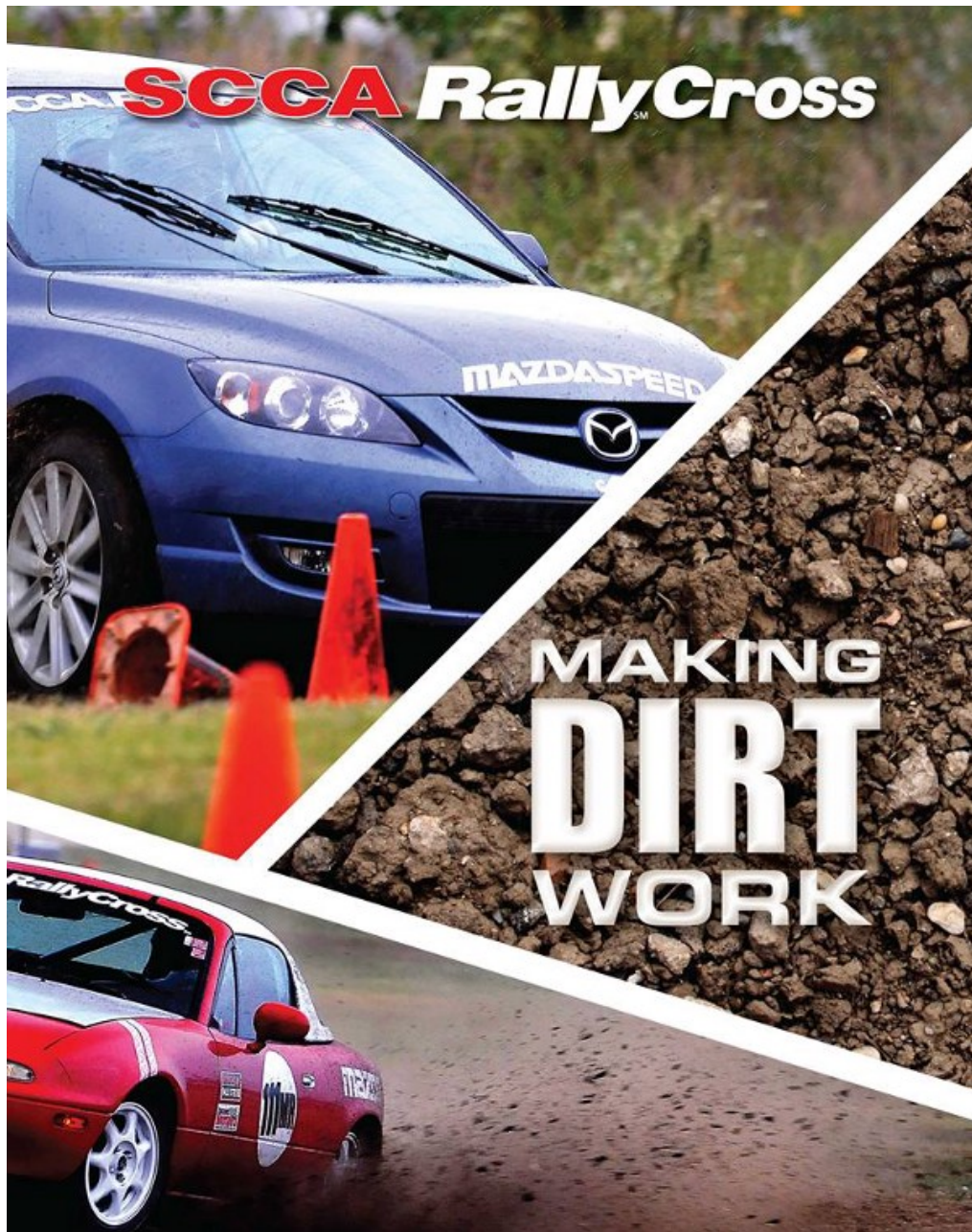
RallyCross has some key advantages for any region not currently involved. It's a new experience for the local membership already served, and it also reaches out to untapped interest perhaps not as enthused about autocross

and road racing. The RallyCross demographic is the youngest in the SCCA, and it serves as a gateway to get more enthusiasts active in the region. It is also the fastest growing program in the SCCA, which points to its ability to attract and retain unique interest. Sanction fees have typically been a little lower than Solo, and the sites fees are often more affordable than many urban tarmacs and parking lots. The financial risk to a region is typically low in exchange for a bundle of new excitement.

Still, the host region does need to recognize the need to keep having RallyCross events at least several times a year. Without the promise of future activity, there is little impetus for participants to invest their time or money in the sport. A young program will see attendance that ebbs and flows. Everyone must enter with the expectation that turnouts will not equal an established Solo program without time and work. Building a fresh base of participants and volunteers is an ongoing task.

Field of Dreams

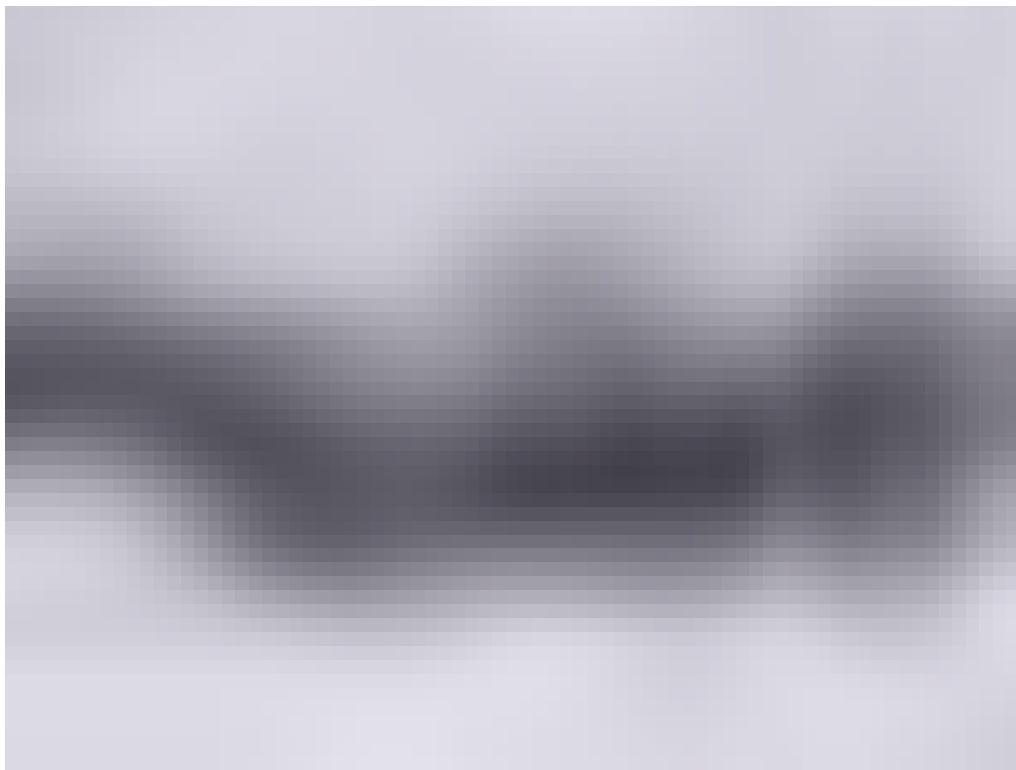
Site acquisition



Securing sites is the pass-or-fail for a RallyCross program, but help is out there. The SCCA has a RallyCross site acquisition packet, *Making Dirt Work*, that can be ordered from the SCCA and shared with site owners to educate them and earn their confidence. Work with your regional board of directors and RallyCross Steward on the best method to approach land owners who aren't familiar with the SCCA. Some individuals will be excited to join the fun, while others may be confused or suspicious. Automobile racing means a great number of things to different people, and not all land owners possess

the nuanced understanding of our club's programs. Contact potential venues with appropriate diligence, patience, illustration, and tact.

The most willing landowners are often motorsports participants themselves or managers of powersports facilities such as oval tracks, drag strips, road courses, and off-road parks. Fellow grassroots racing fans more readily grasp the concept of SCCA's healthy liability coverage and the safety mechanism provided by its rules and trained Safety Stewards. Ask through the grapevine if anyone in your club has an empty field or connections at a local racetrack, and hits may turn up.



Off-season at the road course: a winter RallyCross held during an idle weekend at Hallett Motor Racing Circuit.

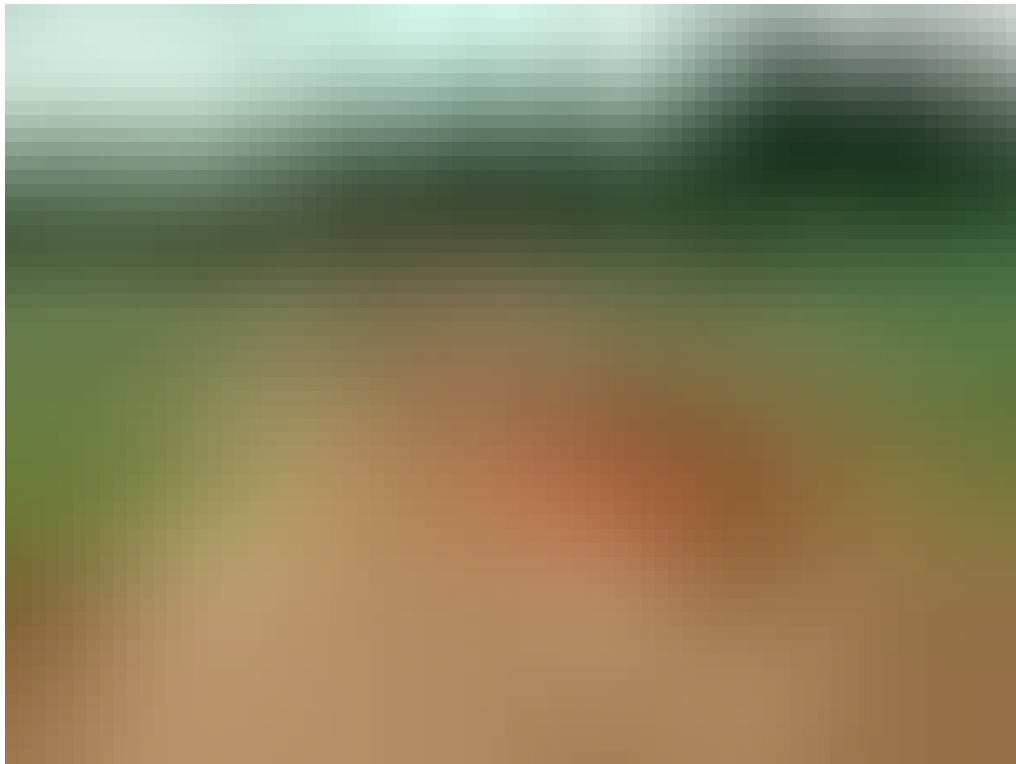
Also imagine any sizable overflow grass parking lots in your area. County fairgrounds, stadiums, and similar venues maintain and mow seldom-used fields ripe for RallyCross use. However, the entities in charge may be apathetic or hesitant to support non-profit motorsports activity. The SCCA sanction allows an annual charity RallyCross for a reduced fee, and that can be a great way to unlock opportunities with various institutions and government offices. The site manager's effort may be as low as unlocking the gate on RallyCross Sunday, but what do you bring to the table to make it worth the headache?

Surprisingly, America's abundant agricultural lands are not the easiest source of RallyCross sites. Farmers make a living from their land, and they are concerned with baling hay, livestock containment, and other activities rendered difficult by cars at speed. For example, the waist-high grass you would want mowed for a course might be seen as lost hay for cattle. Be sensitive to their potential needs before you ask.

RallyCross Site Parameters

An ideal RallyCross site tends to have a usable area larger than an average Solo tarmac. However, you do not need the biggest plot of land to jump start your program. The main goal is to get that first enjoyable, well-run event under your belt on a safe site. Simply getting active can generate the buzz that spark leads to more sites. Unpaved surfaces vary dramatically, so carefully surface scout the condition and terrain of any potential venue. Ditches, debris, off-camber slopes, and other traps have to be avoided. A sea of tall grass can obscure problems, so make sure you have a reliable knowledge of the site conditions before committing to a competition there. Also be aware that courses sometimes have to change mid-event due to a rutting issue, so there needs to be a large enough buffer area around obstacles to route cars if the course has to move.

When leaving room for course adjustments, be aware that you're more likely to expand a course outwards than pull it in. If you want to move a gate or turn inwards to avoid a worn-out section, the driving area has to be contract enough to prevent a sliding car from snagging the rut if it runs wide. Be wary of a site with pinch points that might paint your event into a corner. Avoid off-camber areas, as well. Not all fields are perfectly flat, and inclined areas must be approached carefully. A mild slope is not necessarily a deal-breaker, but you need to work with the course designer to keep cornering on-camber and avoid vehicle instability.

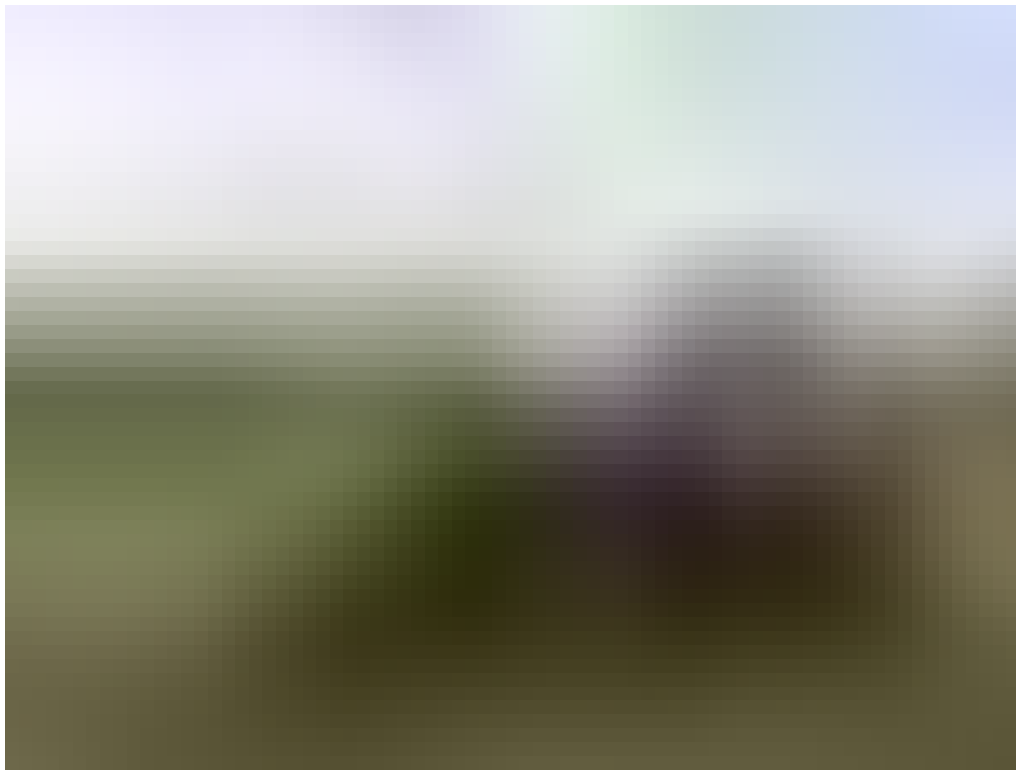


The outer radius of this corner was beginning to dig out from hard left turns, which could have turned into a potential hazard. An organizer should visualize site use that allows the course to move the course to be moved slightly without delaying the event. The pictured buffer between course and the tree line would have allowed this.

Rocks and stumps are another hazard. When large enough, they present a threat to cars and course workers. Some soils can “seep” surprises upward as runs are made, so check for that potential. Smaller gravel can “sandblast” cars and people as well. Plain old dirt is unlikely to do any harm, but rocks can be flung from spinning tires. Also, groomed gravel lots and gravel driveways can be rutted and disturbed in a way that makes the owner unhappy. Again, gravel or rocky soil isn’t a deal-breaker, and it can even add a new challenge to your courses. Just know the wishes of the parties involved.

As your program grows into offering a series of events, think about a land plot big enough to rotate course wear over new ground during the course of a season. Especially active regions may develop multiple sites to avoid rutting up the same sections of land repeatedly. Unless you have the equipment or resources to flatten the silt piles left at corners after an event, rain can convert it to hard dirt curbs over time. A small site with few course design options risks revisiting bad spots left by previous events.

On the chance that you have access to a tractor, it can be very handy for mowing tall grass and smoothing disturbed dirt. Just remember that hard, dry summer soil can be difficult to work, so plan your dirt moving weeks in advance. Similarly, loose and reworked soil needs watering or a good rain to “cement” before running cars on it. Consider the logistics of grass and surface maintenance for any new site.



A tractor with a box blade can be handy for pre-work and post-event smoothing.

Gear Up

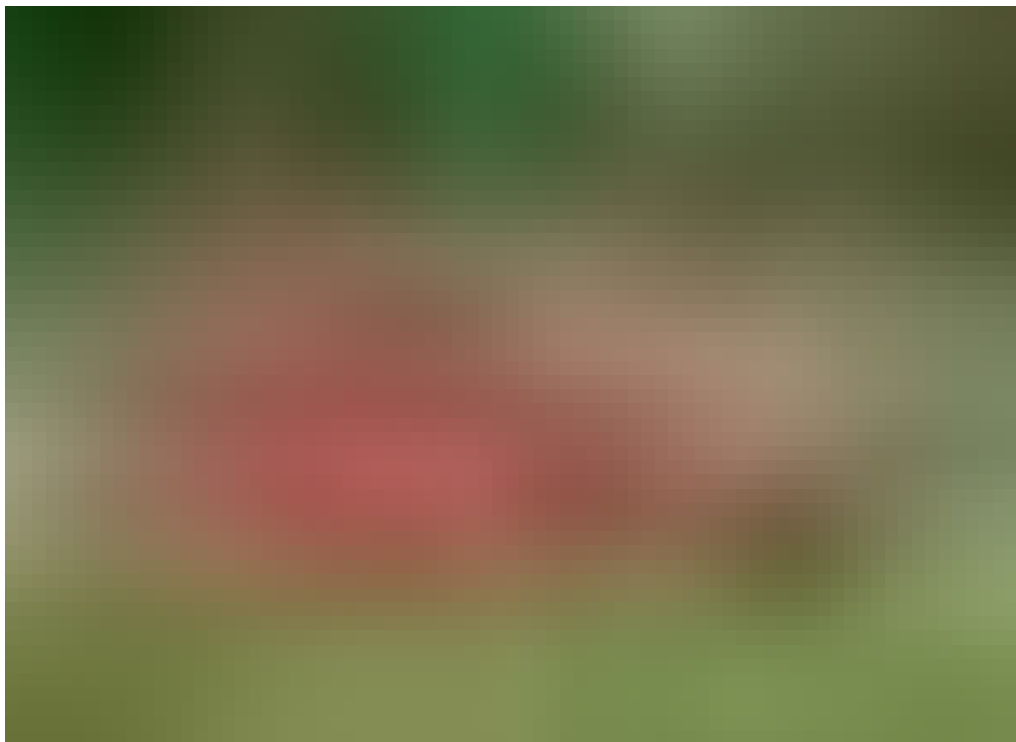
RallyCross Safety Stewards

Every RallyCross event requires at least one certified RallyCross Safety Steward (RXSS), an endorsement that is separate from the Solo Safety Steward (SSS) qualification. Any potential RXSS must be a SCCA member able to receive a RXSS training session and serve as an apprentice to the RXSS, typically at two events. Coordinate these activities with Divisional RallyCross Steward well in advance where possible.

RallyCross presents unique safety issues not present in other SCCA programs, much of it rooted in the variable nature of the competition

surface. On-the-ground RXSS training is very important, and it's where a safety steward will encounter some of the most frequent concerns at a RallyCross. A RXSS works with the course designer to avoid obstacles and monitors the course throughout the day for excessive surface wear or abnormal chassis bounces. Corner workers must be instructed to report issues, as well. Crowd control, vehicle safety determinations, and incident reporting also fall under the umbrella of safety.

RallyCross has some vehicle configuration requirements that may be unfamiliar to novices. Convertibles are not allowed to compete without a factory hardtop in place, and any car equipped with targa tops or T-tops must have them latched shut. Any window next to an occupied seat must be lowered no more than an inch unless there is a window net or arm restraints.



This Honda del Sol correctly has its targa top attached, and windows raised next to both the driver and passenger. Sometimes entrants forget these rules, especially if they are used to Solo.

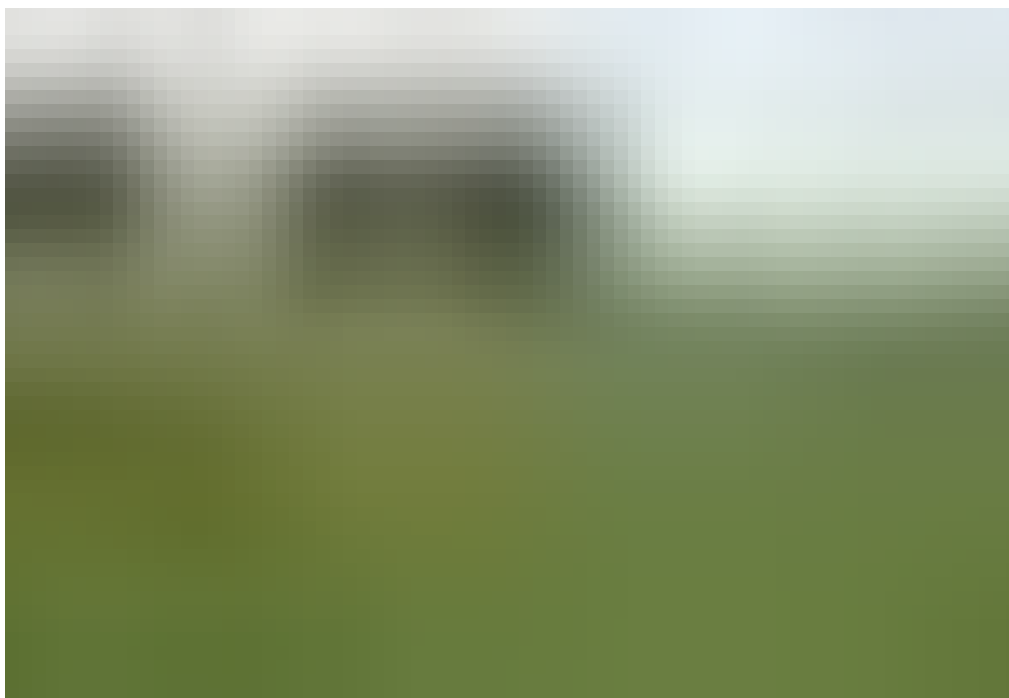
Despite some specific vehicle prohibitions in the RallyCross Rules, some potential entrants may have vehicles that fall into a grey area. Surfaces vary by location and weather, and a traction profile for one part of the country may not apply to another. Be clear in your event announcements and any online registration that certain types of vehicles unsuitable to your site—

lifted trucks, 4x4 trucks, and certain body-on-frame sport utilities, etc.—are not allowed. Always mention in advance that those wishing to compete with a taller or narrow-track vehicle need to contact the host region before signing up. That gives you time to consult the divisional steward for guidance if necessary. Non-production-based vehicles are not allowed, period. For now the sport is not structured to handle the safety considerations of sand rails, side-by-sides, buggies, ATVs, and other custom dirt devices.

Course Fundamentals

A well-designed course is critical to RallyCross. Before anything else, make a concerned reading of the rules, and keep a current copy on hand to reference if questions arise. Take special note of sections 5.1 and 5.3, which cover course guidelines and safety. A guiding principle is “hazards on the course must not exceed those encountered in legal non-paved road travel.” Any entrant of any skill level with an acceptable vehicle should not be put in harm’s way.

Maximum speed in a straight course element is limited to 40 MPH for Stock category vehicles and 50 MPH for the rest. Those speeds feel pretty fast on an unpaved surface, so don’t feel hamstrung by the rules. If you do have sections with cars going that quickly, they can’t go anywhere near spectators or other hazards. Turns are capped at 30 MPH for Stock and 40 MPH for everyone else. The goal is to have a course that flows well within that range.



A course that flows well between gates and has enough width to allow driver line choice will minimize wear points. Be judicious in your use of sharp turns, tight slaloms, and narrow crossovers if possible.

The rules warn that going too slowly may present a hazard, too. Surface rutting is often hastened by course elements that are slow and tight with sharp radius turns and little driver line choice. If there are no related safety concerns, target course speeds in the middle of the range rather than first-gear-only affairs. Also avoid longer, higher-speed elements leading to very slow turns. A measured flow from one element to the next is ideal from both a safety and an enjoyment standpoint.

Surface degradation is a threat on any course, though. Some surfaces and moisture levels wear like iron, while others do not. Safety adjustments happen on occasion, so have contingencies and buffers built into the course design. If vehicles are routed only the minimum distances from objects at the outset, a wear issue can cause a massive delay while a workaround is constructed.

Course Design

A RallyCross safety steward must approve the course for competition, and that person must be different from the course designer. An event organizer is wise to pick individuals able work together as a team and share respectful suggestions to bring about a fun, but safe and rulebook-legal driving

experience. Ultimately, the primary duty of the RXSS is to determine if a course is safe, not if it is entertaining.

A RallyCross course should be consistently marked and readable at speed on grass and dirt. Unlike autocross, flour or chalk lines as visual aids are usually not an option. Even if your surface is bare and hard-packed, any markings on the ground will be rapidly obscured by a layer of dust. Also, grass height can obscure cones, especially pointer cones. RallyCross design demands simplicity while providing enough cones to keep cars within safe boundaries.



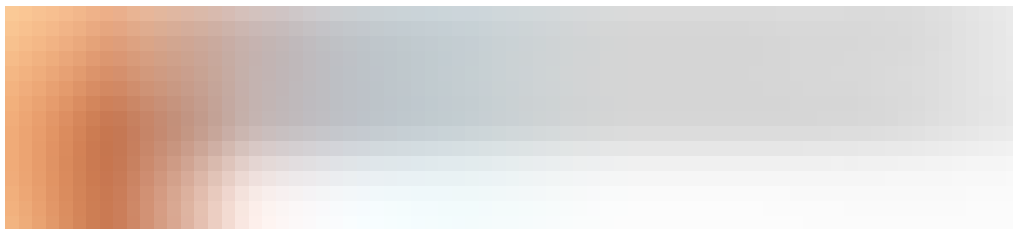
Solo course readability tips are even more helpful to RallyCross course design. (Roger Johnson Solo Course Design Guide)

An invaluable resource for RallyCross course design is the Solo Course design handbook by Roger H. Johnson of Houston Region SCCA. An internet search will pull it up in Adobe PDF format. Obviously, some rules pertaining to RallyCross override the guidelines provided for Solo, but the fundamentals have significant application for both sports. Pay special attention to the tips for visual separation between gates and improving driver readability. Those experienced with autocross will likely discover that a RallyCross course is usually a little more open than a typical paved design. Most unpaved sites have a lower threshold of handling and acceleration, so a modestly slow autocross course element can be downright painful if placed identically on a RallyCross course. Don't be afraid to take smart autocross fundamentals and adjust to suit for RallyCross.

RallyCross course design requires some flexibility, though. Artfully sketching a course to scale on graph paper may be an exercise in disappointment if you aren't familiar with conditions on the ground. Get to know a site in advance beyond simple dimensions. Mowing or storm runoff can reveal dips and hazards unseen from a casual survey. Arrive with a plan before setup, but allow extra time to fine-tune for the unforeseen. Slowly driving a vehicle around a field in the beginning helps route around minor bumps that you might not catch otherwise.

Course Setup and Equipment

The type of equipment brought to a RallyCross event is pretty much the same as an autocross, with some variations on cone marking and timing equipment. If your region is borrowing gear from the Solo group, establish expectations on the neatness and cleanliness of its return. Many Solo organizers can stand a little dust, while others will raise a stink. Be a responsible steward of both materials and personalities.



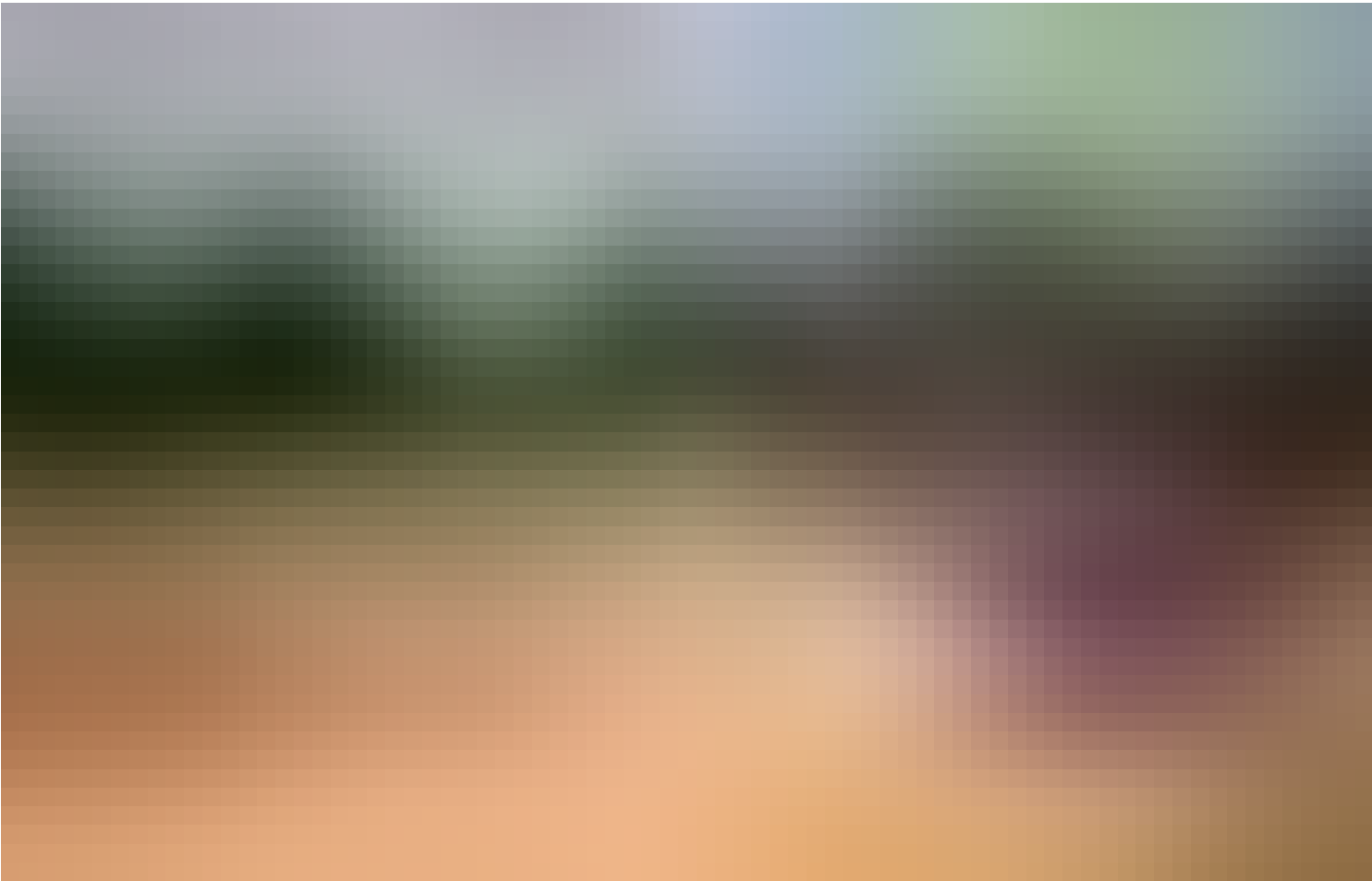
Solo uses a box marked around the base of the cone to mark its position, while RallyCross usually sticks a small flag underneath. Most common: if you knock over the cone or tip the cone sideways enough to show the metal flag stake, that's a two-second penalty.

Many RallyCross host regions use contractor flags to mark the location of stand-up cones rather than mark a box around the base of the cone. Field marking paint can work, but at most sites it will disappear under silt in short order. Home improvement stores carry inexpensive quantities of 2x2 inch plastic flags on 18-inch metal stakes. Sites with especially rocky or hard earth can bend the bottom few inches of the metal stake into a "V" shape and hammer them in. As long as you explain the basis for displaced cones during the drivers' meeting, use the method that works best for your area.

Timing equipment has to contend with potentially dusty conditions. The reflective beams used at most autocross start and finish lines are adequate, but lingering debris can report false trips that confuse your timing and

scoring efforts. There is nothing wrong with stopwatches and notepads, but the competitor experience is heightened by digital timekeeping and timely results posting after the event. Test your equipment beforehand or contact the equipment vendor for suggestions. Some timing boxes have a user-selectable delay to account for additional false trips in a given time frame. Alternatively, air hose setups connected to a pneumatic-electric switch are used by a number of RallyCross programs. Service-station-style hoses staked into the ground have proven durable at large events. Pneumatic RallyCross setups can be possibly adapted to your existing equipment, and plans can be searched online.







A pneumatic hose setup is a sturdy and dust-proof means to start and stop your timers, but isn't mandatory.

Oh, and don't forget to bring SCCA waivers, minor waivers, armbands, incident forms, a printout of the rule book, and the usual assortment of pens and paper to organize run/work assignments. Never take it for granted that the region stocked up on the necessary forms and documentation for your event. Confirm it yourself, and make a packing list to stay organized.

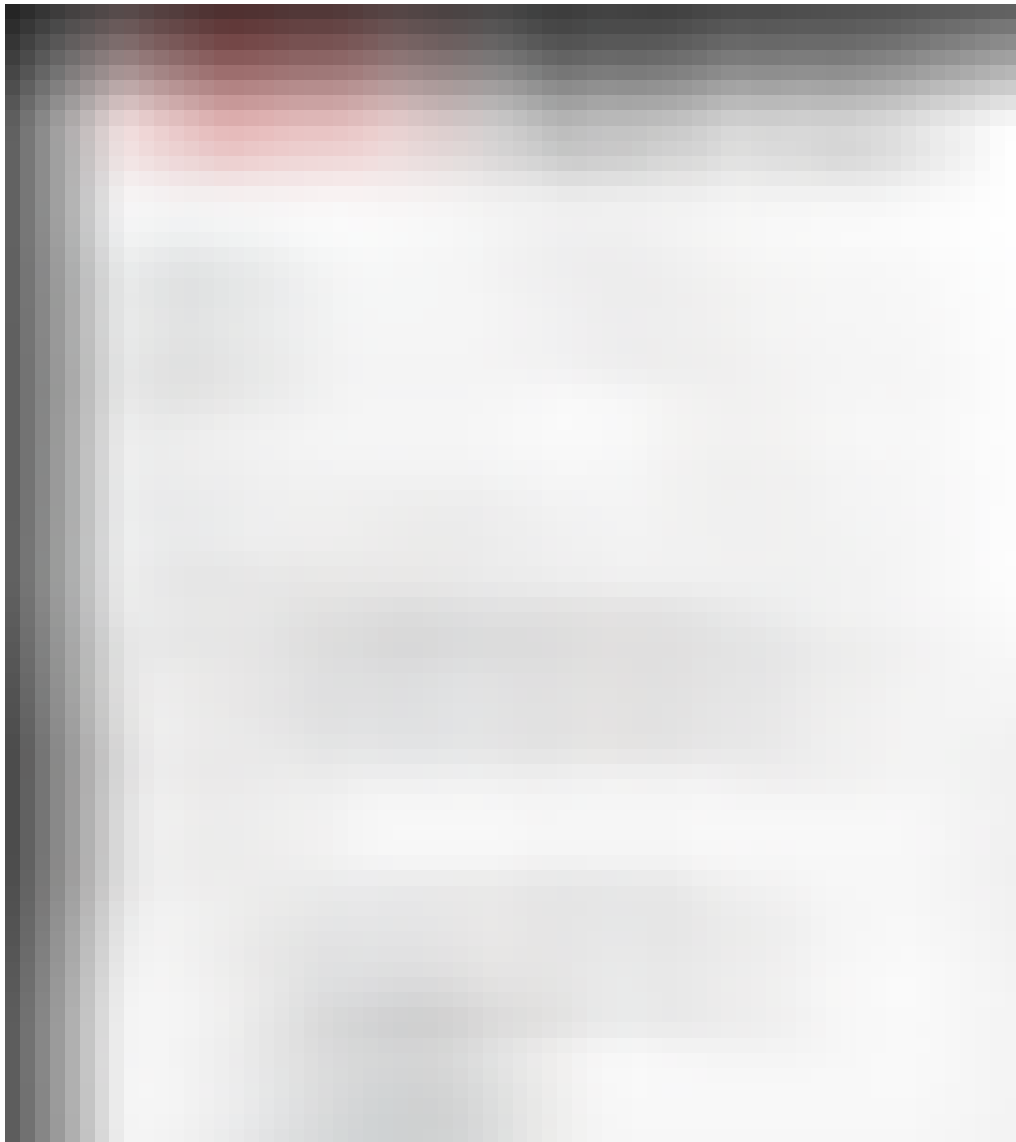
Creating a Schedule

Picking RallyCross dates can be a thorny enterprise. A lot of motorsport activity competes for a finite number of weekends throughout the year. Solo, ClubRacing, and RoadRally already have to dodge competing events within their own programs, and you don't want to hold a RallyCross while everyone

else in your region is doing something else. Plot known events in your area on a calendar, and circle potential dates with the least conflict. You cannot accommodate everyone, but do choose dates that give you the biggest chance of a healthy turnout.

Another potential problem is having a RallyCross on the same day as another nearby RallyCross. This is still a young and growing program that sees a fair amount of interaction between regions. Scavenging entrants and sometimes safety stewards from one another reduces the success of both. Not everyone has their first choice of dates, but make the effort to coordinate with neighboring RallyCross programs where possible. Your divisional RallyCross steward can help in this regard.

Sanction Requests



Like a Solo sanction request, the RallyCross sanction request asks for event details and officials. It also requires a safety plan listing contacts for emergencies. If you are hosting an event several miles from town, this is good info to have.

A RallyCross is not official until a sanction request has been confirmed by the SCCA. The process begins by filling out a form outlining your event officials, site parameters, and emergency contact procedures. Visit SCCA.com/downloads to find the latest version of sanction request. Your Divisional RallyCross Steward can field any questions you may have. Once approved by your region executive, email, fax, or mail it to your steward for approval and forwarding to the SCCA national office. Once received, the SCCA insurance provider will send you a proof of insurance that mints your event as the real deal. Just be aware that sanction requests need to be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the event date, or they will be subject to a late fee.

Ideally, you should submit known dates to your divisional steward as soon as they are confirmed. That way they can be shared with the SCCA and coordinated with neighboring regions. Even if your sanction request isn't complete, a known date can be posted on SCCA.com for any visitor to view in their neighborhood. The more advanced warning potential entrants have, the more likely they will be able to arrange their personal schedule to compete.

Crowd Sourcing

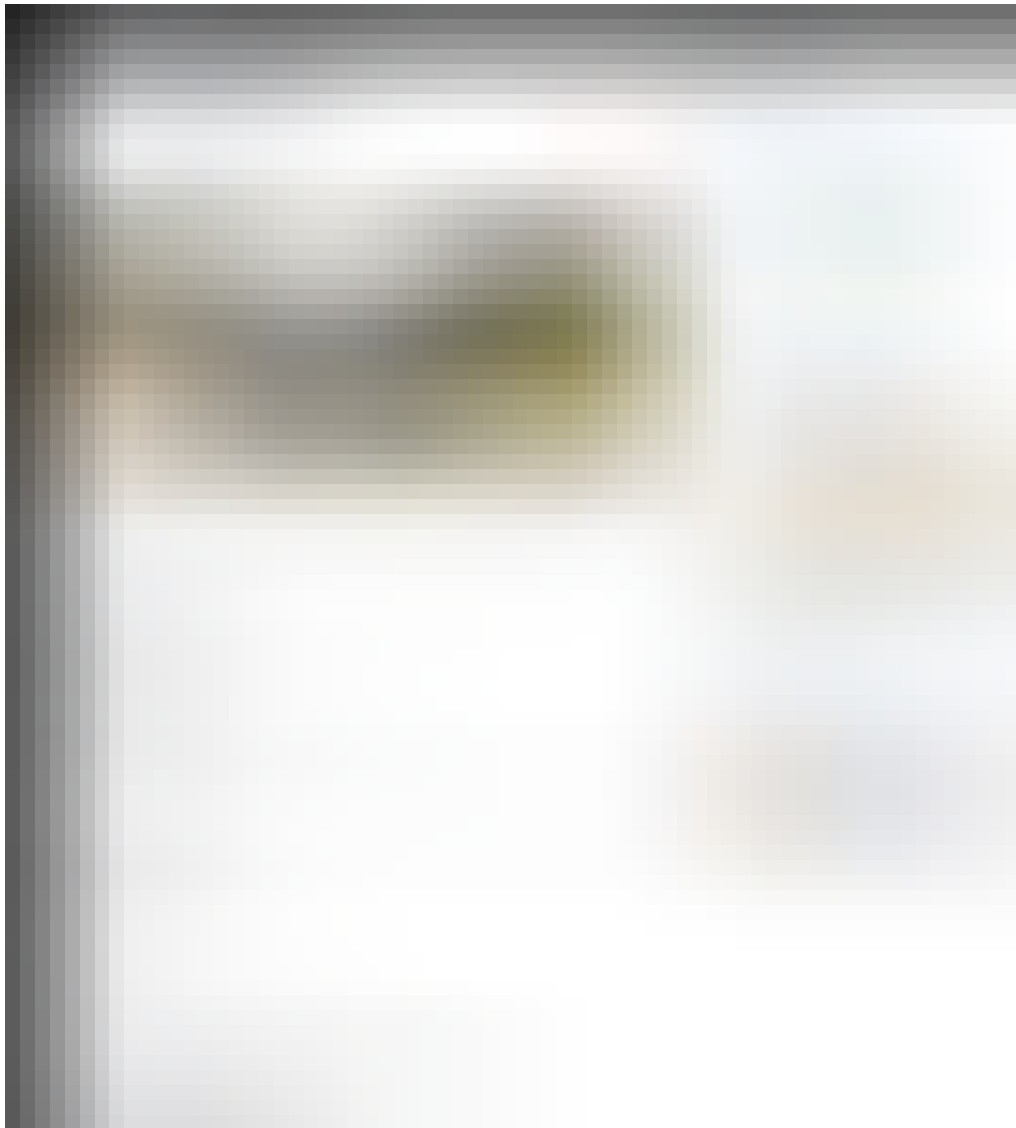
Pre-Register Entrants Online

Offering online registration is a major advantage for a number of reasons. You can download entries into your timing and scoring computer, saving considerable hand entry on the day of the event. It also gives you an idea of your turnout, and lets potential competitors see who else is coming. Lastly, it motivates entrants to research their class and choose their number in advance. Fielding questions is easier by email or Facebook than a busy race morning.

Adopt the registration platform most widely used in your area. For example, MotorsportReg is common to most of my neighboring regions and makes cross-participation fairly simple. If drivers already have a login and their demographics entered into one system, that gives them the lowest barrier to committing to your event. More importantly, use the system best supported by local know-how in your own region. Every platform has a small learning curve, and your life gets easier when you have a familiar resource to help set up an event online.

Open online registration well in advance. Most people wait until the final weeks to register, but you want the event posted as soon as you can. This gets the event on the calendar inside MotorsportReg or similar, and alerts the potential entrant pool within a certain radius know that you are open for business.

Essential Event Information



A typical MotorsportReg event splash page from Middle Georgia Region giving necessary details. Potential entrants can click “continue” to find out more information and register.

The registration page and event announcements will need to explain more than the basic when, where, and how much. Some entrants may not know much about the sport, so briefly describe RallyCross, what kinds of vehicles are allowed, and what entrants must bring. Note that there will be both a run and work assignment, and also link to rules, classing, and minimum helmet standards.

Outlining vehicle requirements in your announcement is critical to preventing ineligible vehicles from showing up and leaving entrants disappointed. Make special note that vehicles without a fixed roof must have a factory hardtop, targa top, or T-Top secured. Also include a statement

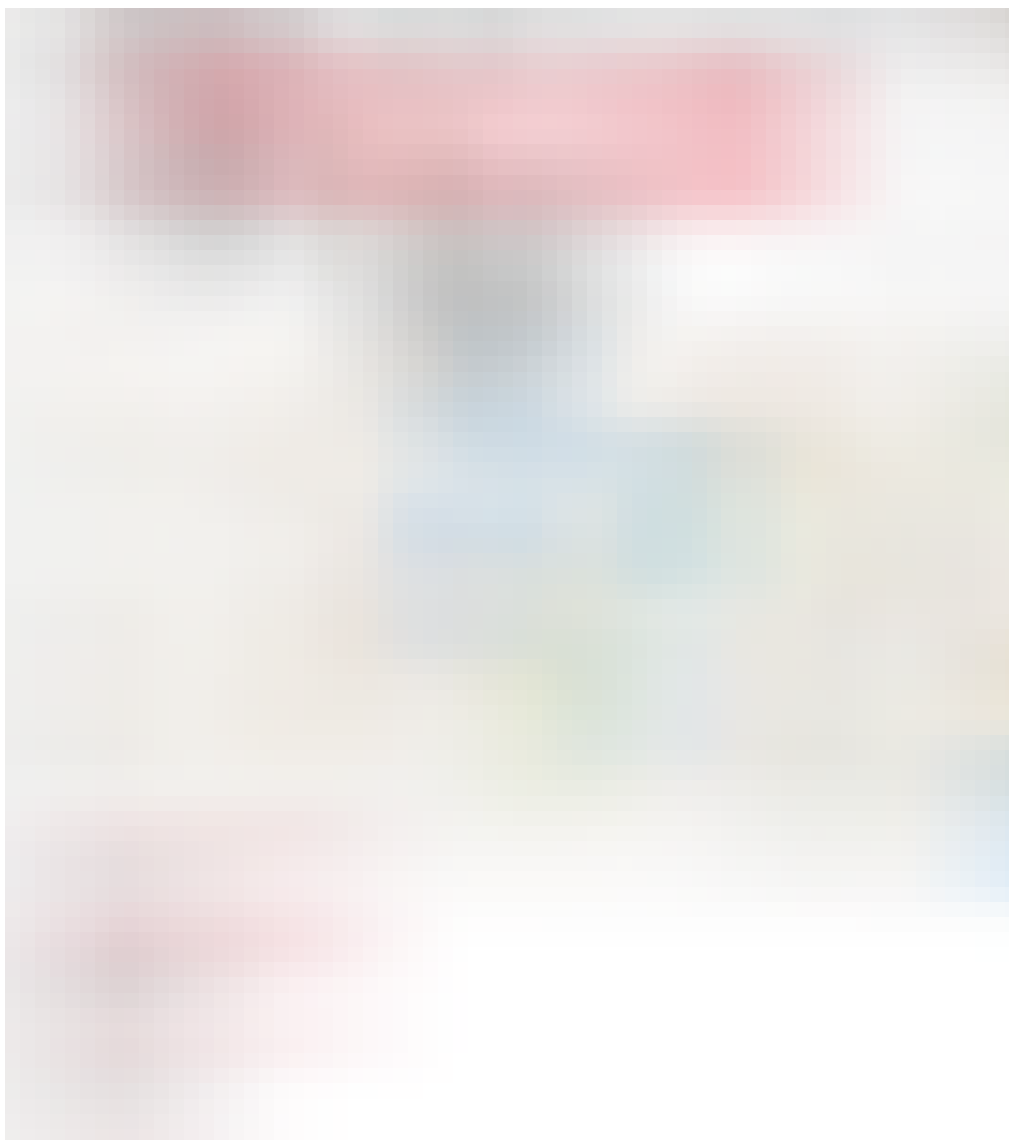
excluding the type of vehicles prone to rollovers for your surface type. “For safety reasons, rollover-prone vehicles such as SUVs, 4x4’s, and many full-sized trucks will not be allowed to compete,” for example. Then provide a contact point for any questions about eligibility. Not every truck or SUV will be a hazard at a given site, but you want that worked out ahead of time with your safety steward. Also note that ATVs, side-by-sides, and non-production vehicles like dune buggies are not currently allowed in SCCA RallyCross competition.

Address logistics specific to the venue, as well. Note whether there is a lunch break or not, and if they need to bring lunch or can find food locally. List restroom availability, as not everyone is equipped to use the nearest tree. Drivers will need to know where to get air, and the general surface type. Some fortunate sites are billiard-table-smooth enough to accommodate lowered cars without problem, while others are not. Remind everyone to bring insect repellent, dusk masks, rain protection, or other outdoor gear as applicable.

If you need a sample text to use as a template, try this one.

Promotion

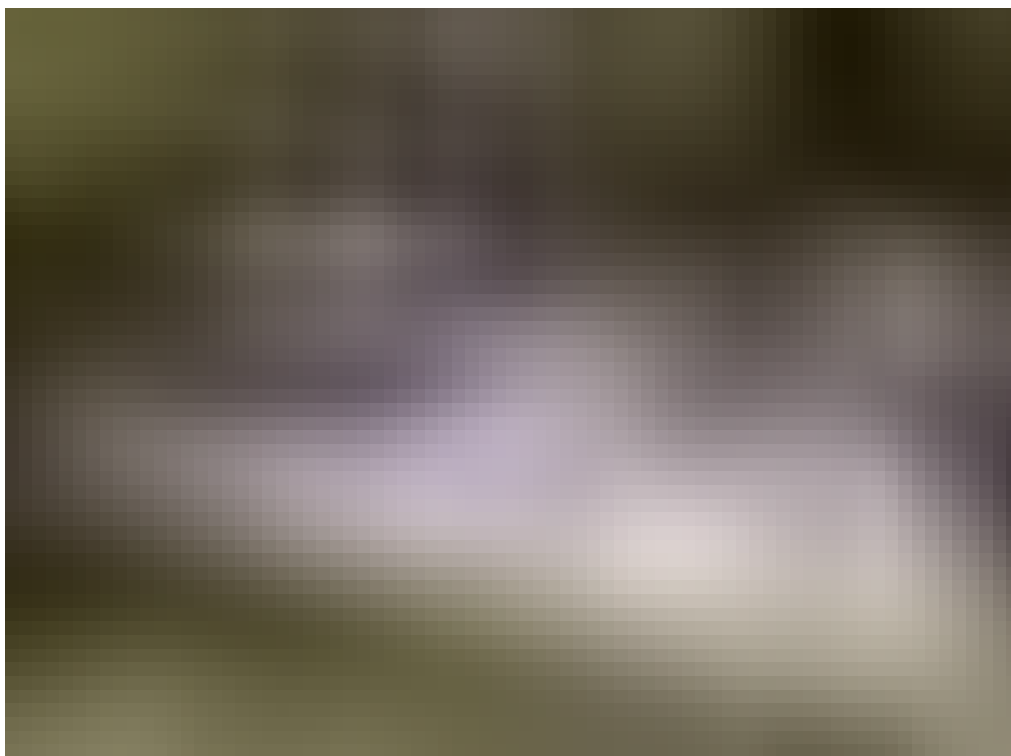
Getting the word out in a timely manner is critical. Announce the event with too little notice, and potential competitors will have made other plans or not have time to arrange their work and family schedules. News also has to reach entrants where they commonly visit, as well. Facebook, your regional web site, local enthusiast forums, and all other electronic haunts need announcements and revolving reminders. Email the SCCA national office with your dates as soon as they are settled, even if the sanction request is not yet ready. When SCCA.com visitors look for events in their area, they need to see your listing.



As soon as you tell the SCCA that you are planning a RallyCross on a given date, it can be added to SCCA.com. Visitors can see RallyCross events within a certain radius of their zip code.

Social media is an important tool of announcements, and Facebook is the most populous platform at the moment. Maintaining a regularly updated, media rich presence is key to having your announcements spread virally. For more tips, visit my article on running your region's Facebook page.

Also, remember that RallyCross is a participatory sport competing against the clock. Don't specifically invite spectators or call it "racing." The rules emphasize a safe, accessible experience for drivers of regular street cars, so make sure it comes across as an appeal to doers, not watchers.

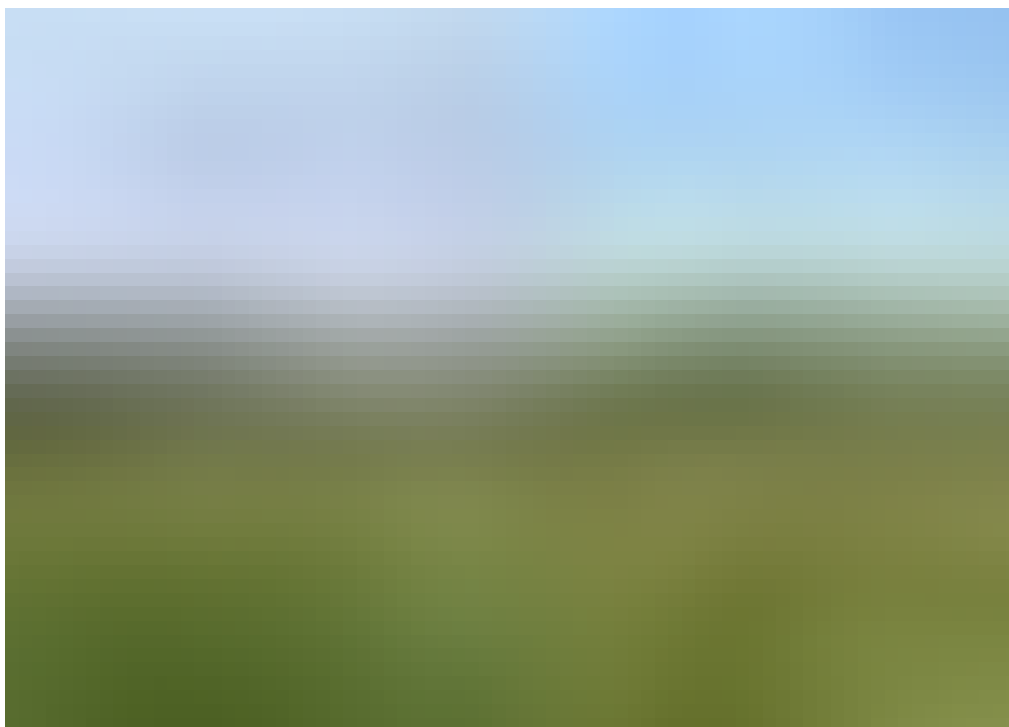


Most of your promotion initiative will probably be online, but good old fashioned flyers at gearhead hot spots such as car shows, meets, and stage rallies can raise awareness.

Preparing the Site

Simply finding a venue feels like an accomplishment, but there is more work to do before RallyCross time. Spend some time before the event hunting debris, stumps, holes, rocks, and other hazards. Sometimes a proper mowing is necessary to make problem spots visible. Waiting until the competition day to address surface warts can cause delays and burden your course designer and safety stewards. If you have access to a tractor, perform any dirt grooming weeks in advance. As mentioned, a good rain and drying period will “cement” moved earth, whereas loose soil will simply dig out if pushed around right before the event.

Many RallyCross sites are fields that are unused before the day of the event. If the course designer can arrive a day early and set up, that will ease the task of the event organizers on the competition day. If using contractor flags, the regional equipment trailer does not even need to arrive early. The course can be roughed out and examined for surface issues, eliminating surprises.



If early setup is a luxury afforded by your site, take the time to inspect for surface issues that might affect your course. You might drive around slowly looking for bumps that might be hard to feel out when walking.

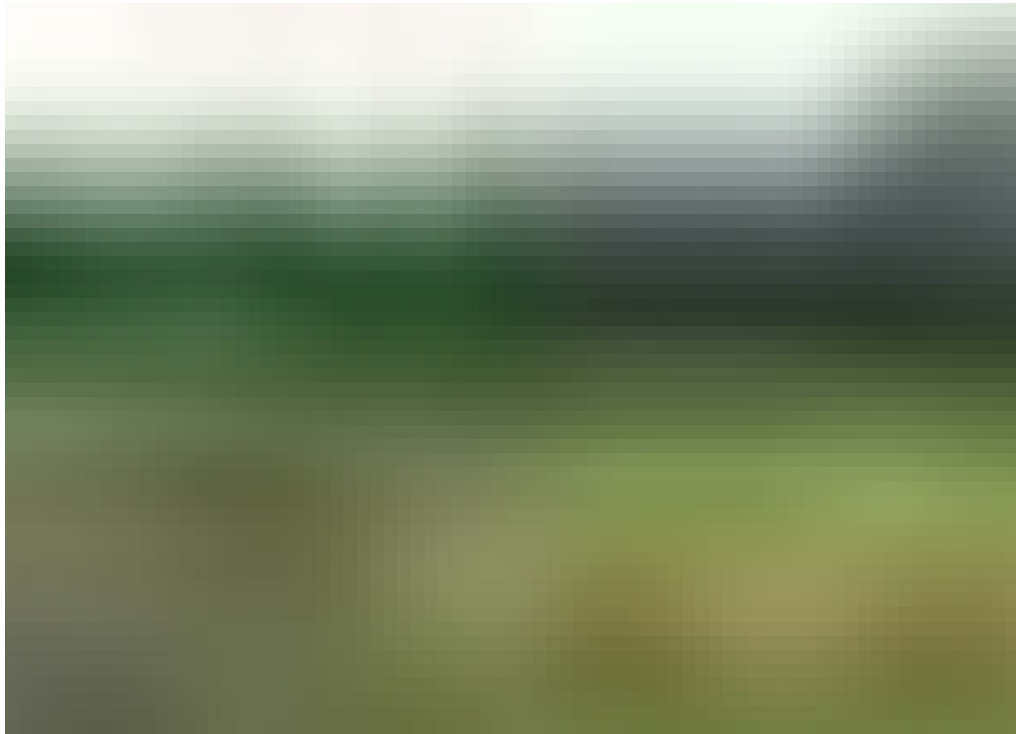
The Weather Factor

There is no rule against hosting a RallyCross if precipitation threatens, and many events have been held in rain and snow. As long as no lightning threatens, the show can go on. However, too much water can convert an unpaved surface into a bog that is fun for no one. Rutting up a muddy surface can anger the site owner and later harden into an unusable mess for future events. As your event approaches, consider the amount of recent rain and the what is expected to come.

Cancellation is a sore subject. A lot of work has been done to create an event, and entrants have scheduled their lives to be there. Still, it's a possibility that you always want to include in your plan. Advise your entrants well in advance if you are considering postponement, and tell them when and where they can get the final word. Remember, some entrants have to travel a significant distance, and deciding on the morning of the event is too late to be useful. Send a confirmation through MotorsportReg's email tool for example, and post to all of your social media outlets ahead of time.

Some sites may dry and "recover" rapidly from rain, though. Get an idea of how well the surface drains and wicks water. Depending on the site, an

overnight rain can be no issue or a real problem. Notifying entrants that the event will start a few hours late is an option that I have seen used.



Many sites can “recover” from an overnight rain or light shower and remain slimy for only a heat or two, but a long deluge may be an incurable slop-fest.

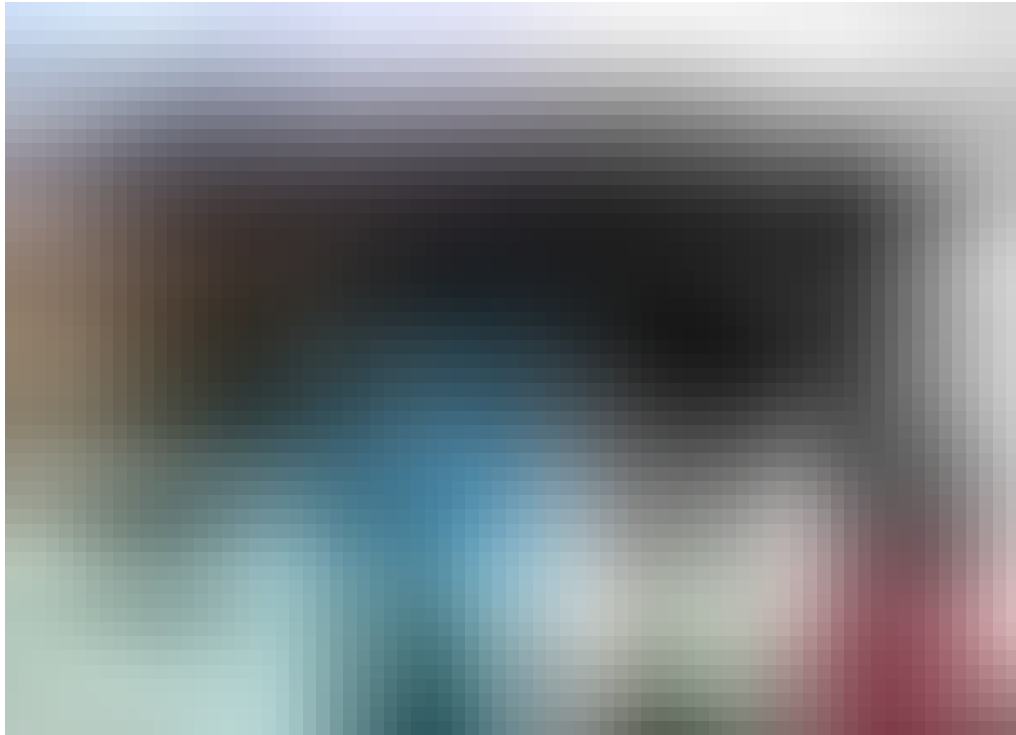
Sunday! Sunday! Sunday!

Manage the Turnout

Online RallyCross pre-registration is highly recommended so that you know the rough size of your turnout. The last thing you want is accommodating a head count dramatically smaller or larger than expected, and I have seen both happen.

At a minimum, you will need about a dozen people on hand to pull off an event. This sounds like a tiny figure to a typical autocrosser or road racer, but it’s perfectly serviceable in RallyCross. Smaller and more remote regions may have to grapple with this scenario. One suggestion is to have three heats in which everyone runs one and works the other two. No one likes the sound of working two heats, but if you only have 12 people, everyone spends less time working two heats than working one heat at a bigger event.

At the opposite extreme is the unexpectedly large turnout. RallyCross is a new and interesting activity for a startup region, and curiosity is a powerful motivator. Have a tight schedule worked out, and make sure you have enough registration and tech inspection volunteers to process the line smoothly. A sizable proportion of entrants may need to fill out weekend memberships, too. New faces in your club are a positive, but be prepared to handle the volume.



Registration is a chance to make a solid first impression. A well-run line keeps your event on time, as well.

If your expenses are slim, there is zero wrong in having smaller events as your program grows, though. One advantage of a lighter turnout is that you often have the time to give competitors multiple run heats throughout the day. Many of my local regions offer a separate configuration for the morning course and the afternoon course. Each driver runs and works once in the morning, has a lunch break, and then runs and works again on a backwards or changed version of the morning course. Flipping the run-work order in the afternoon is another feature you can employ. These add an element of variety and challenge in a cumulatively timed sport.

Make the right first impression by starting the event on time and finishing at a reasonable hour. Timely changeovers and well coordinated course adjustments play into this, no matter the head count. Watch the clock as the

event progresses in the opening heat, and announce a change in the number of runs if necessary.

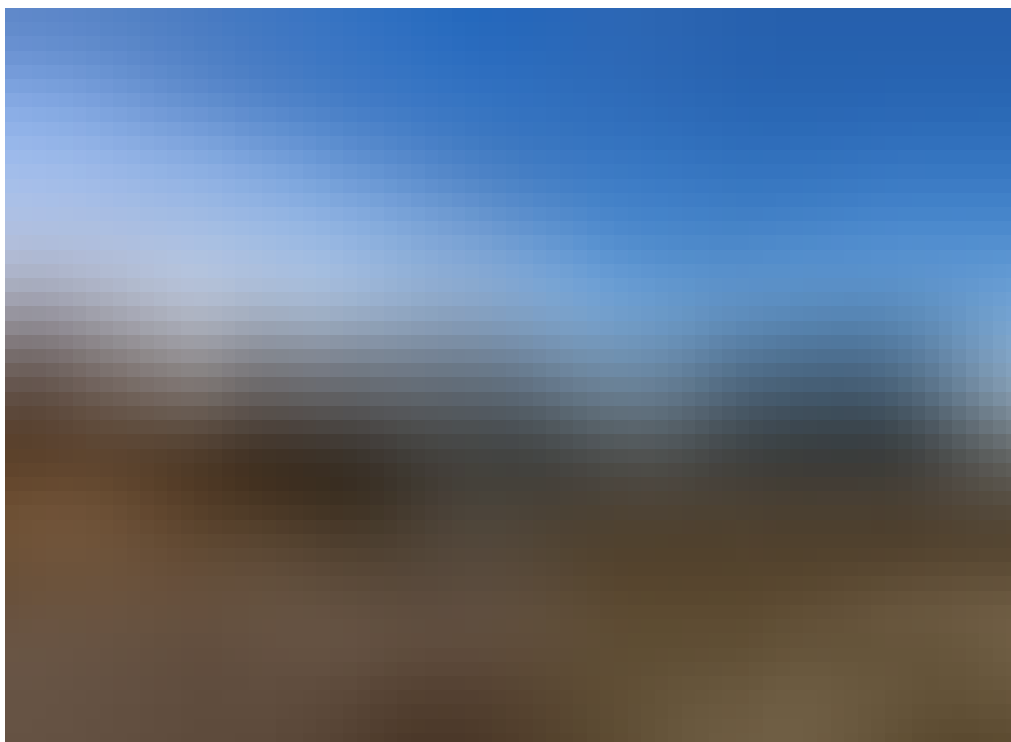
Dividing Run Groups

You want an evenly divided number of competitors and workers to keep from being shorthanded during the competition. Still, it is customary in RallyCross to have all entrants in a class run at the same time. Changing conditions and course adjustments can cause class competitors to be scored on different courses, which isn't fair. Keep a tally of class sizes during registration, and divide the run-work order accordingly. Be aware that some cars may be doing double-duty in two different categories (i.e., two drivers in Stock, and two more in Prepared in a different heat).

Safety concerns may demand a course change mid-heat. To keep things fair, all drivers on a given run number should compete on the same course. An urgent course change may require a few re-runs. A less urgent modification may be able to wait until every car has finished the current set of runs. Have your safety steward and timing crew work together to maintain equity and efficiency.

Pre-Game Essentials

All competitors attend a driver's meeting before the fun begins. Early on, expect some crossover from other racing programs such as Club Racing and Solo, plus a few total novices. Be thorough in your message. RallyCross safety has a few unfamiliar dimensions for them, including the need to have windows opened no more than inch, be it driver or passenger seat (window net or arm restrains are an allowed alternative). This is also an important moment to deputize workers to be vigilant against for unsafe surface conditions such as ruts and hazardous chassis bounces. The RXSS depends on crowd-sourced feedback from drivers and workers to keep tabs on the entire site at once.



Enlist the help of every competitor to keep the event rolling safely.

Having photographers on site is a real benefit to your program. RallyCross makes for exciting shots and video that are ripe for online viral sharing to potential entrants in the future. Keep the photographers out of harm's way, and use the driver's meeting to outline where on site is allowable to stand with and without a spotter.

The driver's meeting is also opportune to revisit the "every run counts" format that is customary to the sport. A parade lap at the beginning of each heat is also typical. Cover the flow of the event, including the anticipated number of runs and lunch break duration. By nature, RallyCross demands some flexibility in pacing, but promote the expectation that timely heat changeovers and breaks will maximize seat time. Finally, repeat the class run-work order a few times to make sure everyone knows where to be once the driver's meeting ends.

Run Time: Stay on Track

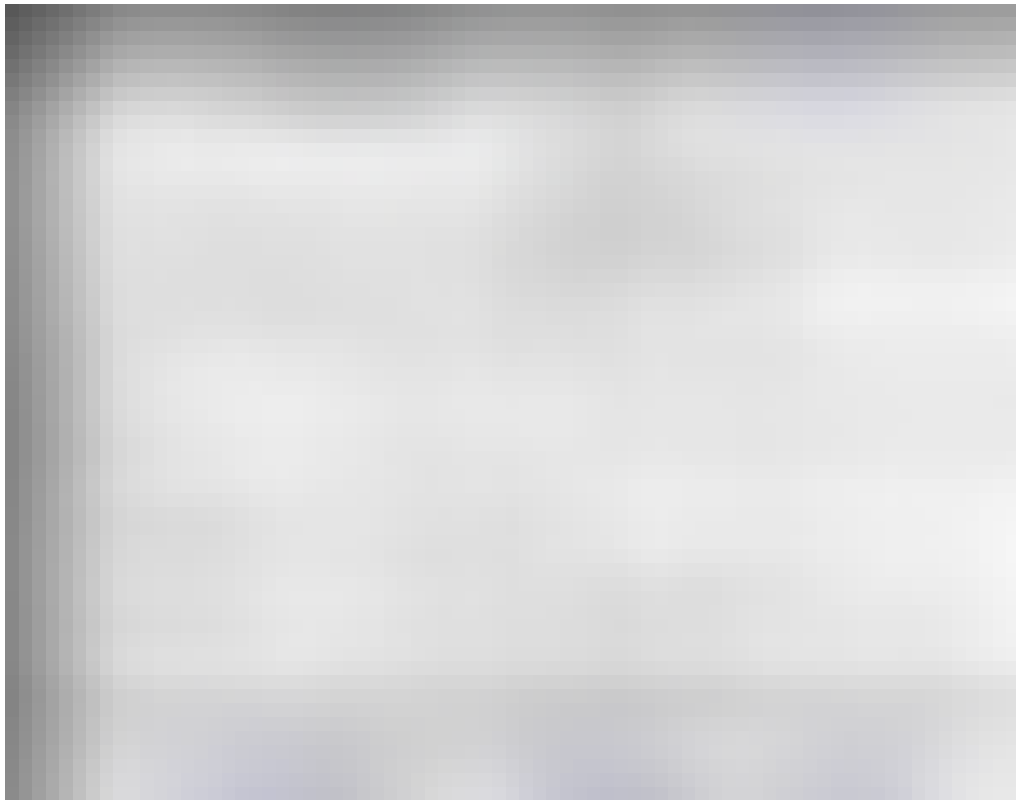
Idle downtime and waiting is the enemy of a quality experience. With less volunteers on hand than a typical Solo, time management is vital to a young RallyCross program. Take the initiative to quickly staff worker stations, make final radio and timing checks, and safely get each heat under way. Also, start announcing the end time of the lunch break before the runs are complete. If

you don't have a public address speaker setup, make sure you have a bull horn. Regional RallyCross tends to be fairly laid-back, but delegate a time minder to keep the event moving.

Safety considerations will sometimes monopolize the clock. An unexpected rut or unearthed hazard may require a course adjustment on the fly, and a solution satisfying the RXSS must be found before runs can continue. Still, the RXSS should be in regular communication with workers and drivers, and be ready to head out on course as demanded. If necessary, the safety stewards should be ready to make a course walk immediately after the end of each heat to review conditions, rather than hold up the event.

If Something Goes Wrong

A unique benefit of SCCA sanction is the Safety Steward structure. Your event will have a named RallyCross Safety Steward of record or delegate RXSS ready at every moment to manage incidents. The sanction also requires that a safety plan be populated ahead of the event, and you will be able to reference that document to determine emergency numbers and delegation. Make sure that your insurance document and safety plan are posted clearly and ready to consult. The RXSS on duty should be provided a radio to address issues immediately.



No one wants to have to fill out an Incident Form, but if the unlikely happens, document the situation thoroughly and turn it in as soon as possible.

In the rare event of serious injury or property damage, tend to the emergency per the safety plan and then have the safety steward call the hotline on the insurance document immediately. The claims department will need to know about a major accident in short order. As an event organizer, help the safety steward manage the documentation of the incident. Ask everyone on hand to respect the involved parties and keep their distance. Gawking and picture-sharing do nothing to help the situation or the sport.

Minor incidents still require the attention of the safety steward and possibly halting the event until any contributing safety issues are addressed. For example, a tire de-bead should trigger an examination of the course where it occurred. You want the event to keep moving, but communicate with the RXSS and allow time to document or correct any issues necessary. Simply announce that the safety steward is tending to a concern, and that the event will resume shortly. Drivers and workers should stay put unless told otherwise.

Do not publicly speculate or share details of an incident, especially over the radio or public address system. The information may be personal, or subject

to liability concerns. Problems like this are very rare, but remember to represent your sport professionally if an incident occurs.

Finishing Up

After the course goes quiet, send your entrants home on a high note. You may be covered in silt and ready to pack up and leave, but don't neglect a customer service opportunity. Review the results, thank everyone for attending, and encourage volunteering to grow the program. Keepsakes like trophies, memento decals, or a group picture foster inclusion and involvement.

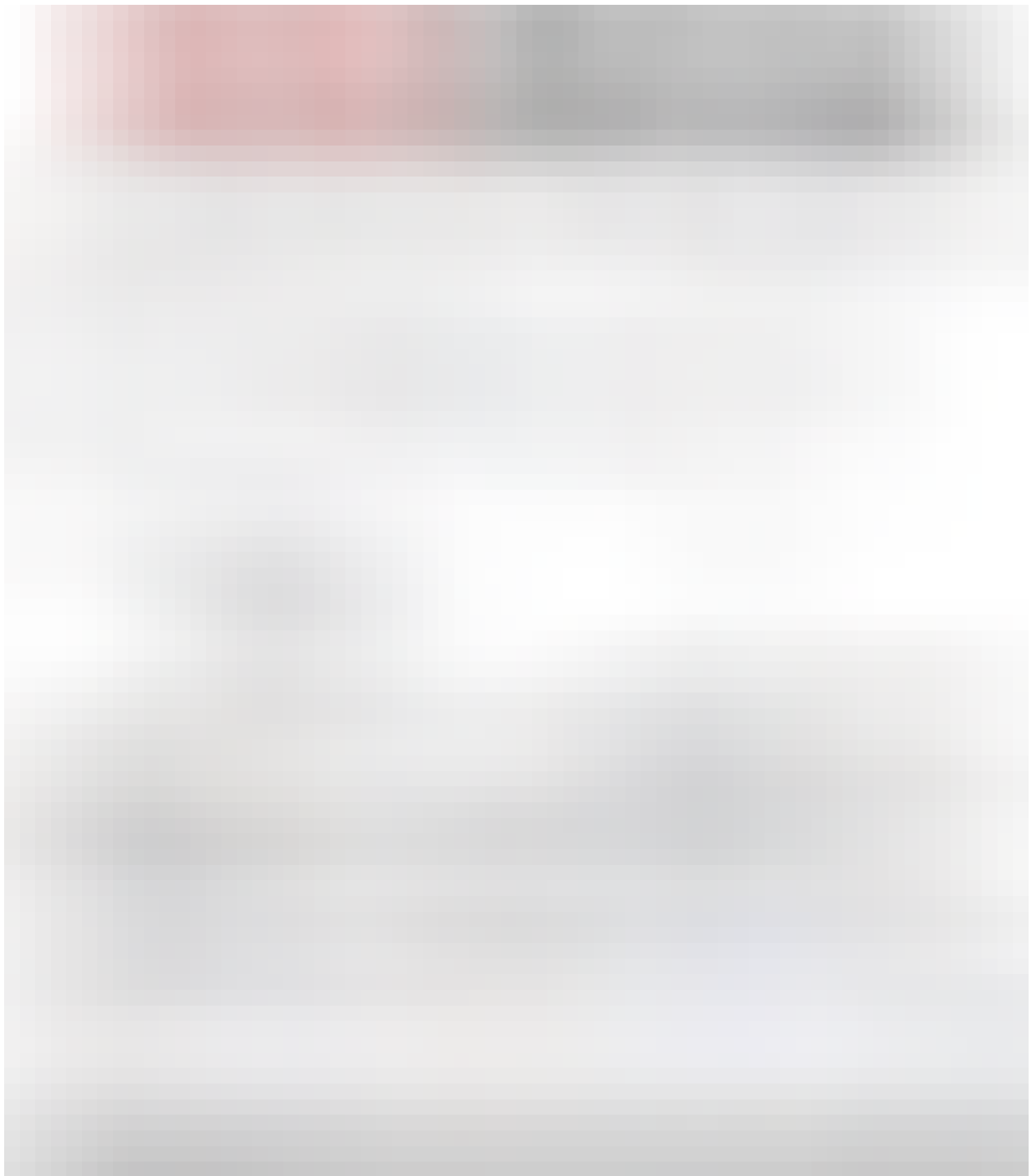
Having an event wrap-up also snags helpers for packing up the equipment. Shake dirt off cones, wipe down timing equipment, and sweep the trailer before sending it home. If borrowing from the Solo program, leaving the gear neat and organized will build good will in your region.

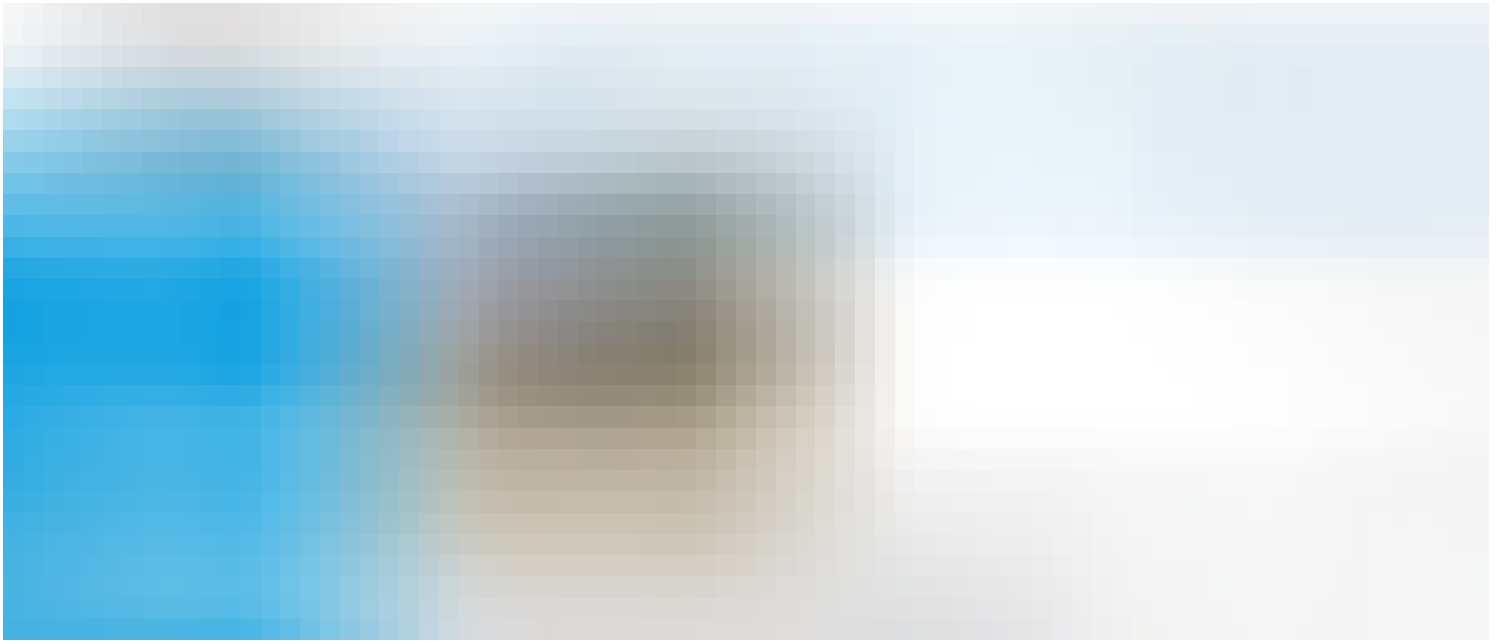
After the Event

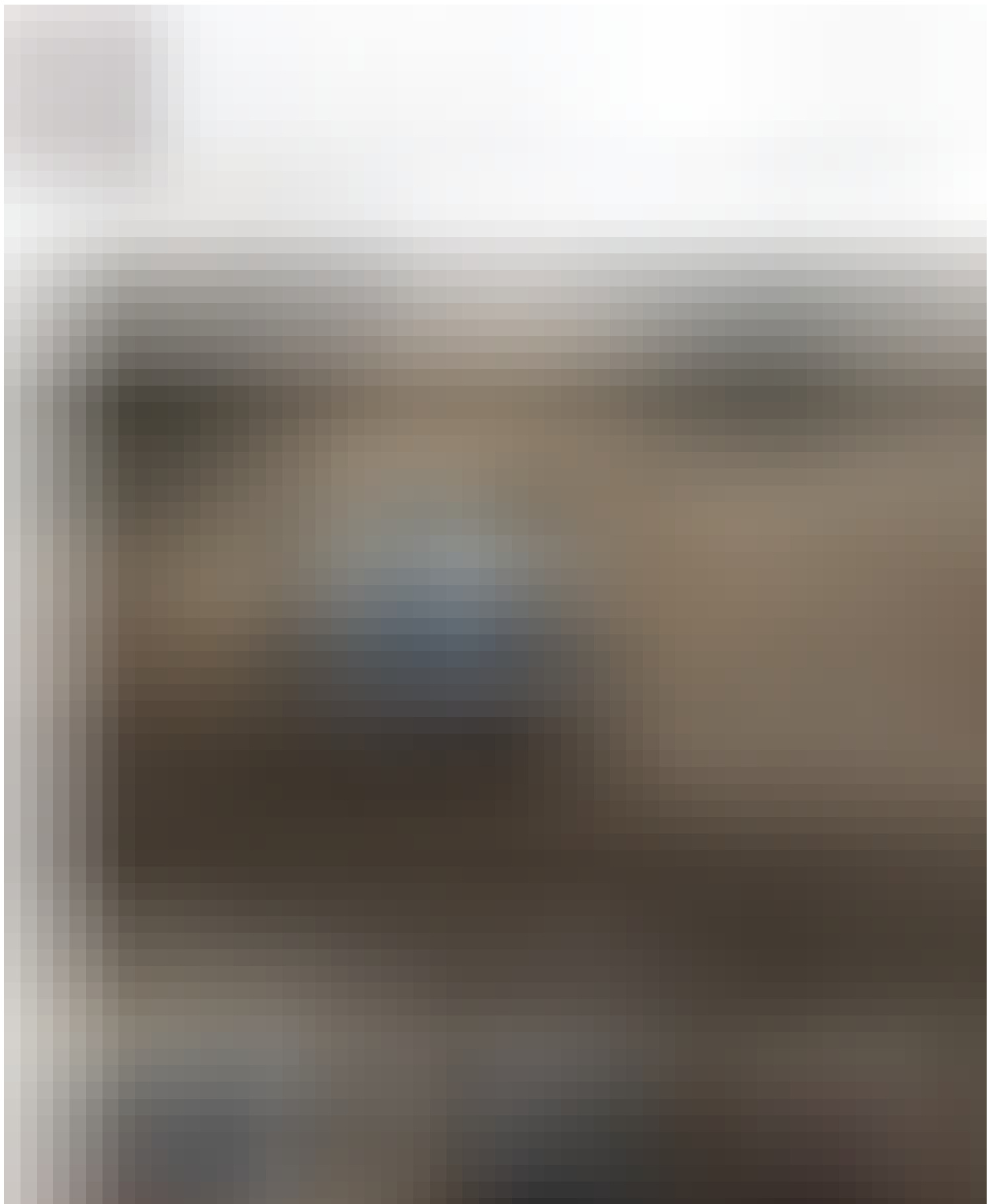
Once you get home, a couple of pieces of business need to be handled. Fill out the audit form and assemble the weekend membership copies, then coordinate with your regional treasurer to get the fees paid in a timely manner.

Post results and pictures to your internet outlets as soon as possible. If that's not possible right away, thank everyone for attending, announce when they will be posted, and follow through. This is a golden opportunity to delight competitors and advertise to future drivers. If you do not have access to your region's online presence or possess much web savvy, coordinate with your regional computer experts ahead of time so that your message goes out as fast as possible.

Lastly, thank the site owner, and ensure their expectations were met. A solid relationship with sites is a fundamental to maintaining a series.







Timely results and media will build momentum for your next RallyCross (Left to right: RallyCross audit form, a tidy Delta Region results page, and the viral capacity of a few good pictures from Yokohama Tire on Facebook)

Enough reading for today. Let's RallyCross!

