Advice for Drivers New to SCCA Road Racing

Welcome to SCCA Road Racing. Whether this is your first venture into racing or if you are experienced with other racing organizations, this brief guide is intended to help make your entry into SCCA Road Racing a smoother experience. For drivers who are minors, you and your parents should also read the companion paper "Advice for Minor Drivers and Their Parents in SCCA Road Racing".

Reference materials:

- **General Competition Regulations (GCR) (https://www.scca.com/pages/cars-and-rules) It is expected that drivers and entrants have an understanding of the parts of the GCR that apply to them and their car. Sections 2 (Participant Conduct), 6 (Racing Rules and Procedures), 7 (Penalties) and 8 (Stewards Actions, Protests and Appeals) are especially important in terms of expectations and processes at events.**
- **Supplemental Regulations**
    - **Supplemental Regulations (often called the "Supps") establish specific conditions for an event. They are an addition to the GCR. These are different for each event and often have track-specific information that you will need to know. The Supps are usually written by the host region for the event.**

Before coming to an event:

- **You must bring a proper competition credential to drive at an SCCA Road Racing event. This may be an SCCA Novice Permit, an SCCA Full Competition License or a competition license from another SCCA - recognized sanctioning organization. See GCR Appendix C.2 for competition licensing details.**
- **Who is an entrant? The person submitting the registration for an event is the entrant. Often, the driver is also the entrant. However, there are advantages to having a separate entrant. This could be a family member, a friend, car owner (or prep shop representative) who is present at the event. Only the driver or entrant will be recognized (have standing) for certain administrative purposes at an event. Designation of an entrant is made during registration for each race event.**
- **The driver and the entrant should understand the structure of the officials at an event. Some officials deal with specific tasks (e.g., registration, grid, flagging, pit, tech inspection). Stewards: some are responsible for the operation of the event; others are responsible for adjudicating disputes. (GCR section 5)**
- **Registration for most events is handled on line, but paper registration by US Mail is usually available. For every event, whether entering online or by paper, the driver and entrant agrees to abide by the requirements of the GCR and the Supplemental Regulations.**

At the track:

- **Even though most registration details are handled before the event, a visit to the registrars is usually the first at-track activity, specifically to resolve any outstanding items and to receive event credentials. If your competition credential is a Novice Permit, he/she must present the Novice Permit to the Chief Steward or his/her designate before participating in any on-track session. It is your responsibility to get your Novice Permit back from the steward at the end of the weekend.**

- **Unless someone is doing this for you, the next thing is to find a paddock place for your car and support vehicles. Ask for help if you are not familiar with the facility. There may also be information in the Supplemental Regulations or the host region's web site.**
- **Before going on track, you must visit the scrutineers (usually referred to as tech) to obtain a tech sticker for your car. You will need to present the log book for the car; you may also need to present your helmet (see the Supplemental Regulations for the event). For your first event each year, you will also need to present your personal safety gear. Once each year, your car must be inspected. (GCR section 5.9.2)**
- **In addition to registration and tech, you should also find out where you enter the grid, where fuel is available, where timing and scoring is located, where medical assistance is located, where drivers meetings may be held, where the various stewards are located, where results are available and where trophies are awarded. Again, the Supplemental Regulations may have information about these items.**

On the track:

- **Racing is a competition. It is exciting for both participants and observer What it is not, is an uncontrolled free-for-all. Many years of experience have resulted in "Rules of the Road" that are spelled out in the GCR.**
- **Before you drive your car onto the race track, it is expected that you are completely familiar with GCR Section 6. This familiarity will guide you through both expected and unexpected events. Of prime importance is Section 6.1 because the flags are the means of communications from officials to drivers. Section 6.11 details what is acceptable and what is not when cars are close together on track. Racing is a potentially dangerous activity. Abiding by the elements of 6.1 and 6.11 reduces the risks.**
- **Failure to obey flags or the rules of 6.11 will result in a discussion with a steward. Depending on the severity of the infraction, penalties may be imposed. The range of penalties is described in GCR Section 7.2.**
- **There are occasions when honest disagreements occur between drivers or between drivers and officials. There are procedures for dealing with these disagreements that are explained in GCR Section 8. An important part of these procedures is that there are defined time limits for beginning one of the actions specified in this section, usually 30 minutes after a session (practice, qualifying or race). If you wish to employ these procedures, you must do so in writing (obtain the proper form from one of the stewards) and, for protests, the required fee must accompany the form.**

Advice for Minor Drivers and Their Parents in SCCA Road Racing

Minor participants in SCCA Road Racing often need advice and support during the early part of their involvement in the program. Usually, parents or other adults are expected to provide such guidance, but they may not have much familiarity with the Road Racing program either. The purpose of this brief guide is to provide basic information and pointers to more detailed information needed for a minor to succeed in the program. This guide should be considered an addendum to "Advice for Drivers New to SCCA Road Racing". Much of what follows is directed to the driver, but parents should be aware of many of the same things. Please understand that everyone involved in putting on a race is there because they enjoy racing. They want this to be a positive experience for everyone, but it is necessary that the rules are enforced for everyone's benefit.

Before coming to an event:

- Minor drivers and their parents must submit the Minor Waiver forms each year to the SCCA National Office, whether you are competing on a Novice Permit or a Full Competition License. It is particularly important that both the minor and parents understand the conditions to which they are agreeing.

At the track:

- Even though most registration details are handled before the event, a visit to the registrars is usually the first at-track activity, specifically to resolve any outstanding items and to receive event credentials. If your competition credential is a Novice Permit, he/she must present the Novice Permit to the Chief Steward or his/her designate before participating in any on-track session. It is your responsibility to get your Novice Permit back from the steward at the end of the weekend.

On the track:

- You should keep in mind that you will be competing against not only other young persons, but also adults, many of whom have extensive road racing experience. Whether or not you have previous racing experience (e.g., quarter midgets, karts), you will be treated the same as adults with regard to on track performance and behavior. Obeying flags and knowing what is expected of you in close quarter racing is the same for you as for every driver on the track. This is important because road racing is potentially dangerous. No one wants to bring their racecar home in pieces and no one wants to sustain an injury because of someone's failure to obey flags or lack of awareness of what is going on near them.

A Note for Parents:

As much as this guide has a positive tone, it cannot ignore the nature of people when under stress. Let's be frank: tempers can flare, words may be exchanged or worse. You are supposed to be "the adult in the room". You are expected to set a positive example. We've all heard about little league parents who get involved in unacceptable ways. Of course you will want to protect and defend your child, but you must do so within the strictures of the GCR and the Supplemental Regulations. If you are the entrant, you have agreed to abide by them. (If you are not the entrant, you will not be allowed to participate in any official proceedings.) This does not mean that you surrender your rights and responsibilities as parents such as, for example, with regard to medical decisions for your child.

However, for event-related activities, your young driver will be treated as an adult and will be held accountable for on-track situations. For example, for a Steward of the Meet (SOM) hearing where one of the parties is a minor, it is recommended that <u>one</u> adult (parent, guardian, or other) accompany the minor to the hearing with the understanding that it is <u>ONLY THE MINOR</u> who is being interviewed (unless the parent, guardian, or other adult is also a witness to the action at hand). Please help us make the SCCA Road Racing experience what we all wish it to be.