

## PCA Pre-Event Safety Briefing v2.1

Let's talk about safety.

In case anyone is under any illusions that you can not get hurt at an autocross, a participant has been killed during an autocross event in New Mexico.

Let's stop for a moment and let that sink in.

It is a pretty sobering thought that you might leave your home in the morning for a day of cone-killing, and do not return.

So, let's talk about ways that we can all work to prevent that from happening and have a fun, safe event.

- Everyone here needs to have signed the insurance waiver, and should have a wrist band. Parents are required to sign the minor waiver for any minors present. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** The venue may also have a waiver that must be signed.
- There are no drugs or alcohol allowed at the event at any time.
- Only PCA instructors or those approved by one of the PCA drivers council members are allowed to take passengers or ride with other drivers.
- Bare feet are not permitted at any time, and flip-flops or loose sandals or similar footwear are not permitted while driving on course.
- Your car needs to have been checked over to insure that things like the throttle return spring is operating correctly, the wheels are torqued to specifications, the wheel bearings are not loose, and the battery is properly secured. You **DO NOT** want to encounter a stuck throttle on course. Everyone signed a tech sheet indicating that these items and many others were checked. It is **YOUR** responsibility to insure that your car is in track worthy condition.
- By now you should have already taken all loose objects out of the car; that means the passenger compartment and trunk. Look under the seat too. You don't want to have a water bottled sliding forward and getting stuck behind the brake pedal. For the same reason, it is a **VERY** good idea to remove the floor mat from the drivers side of the car.
- When driving in the paddock and grid area, no faster than walking speed is permitted.
- Your tires will take a couple laps to warm up, and *you* will probably take a bit to warm up too. The course will likely also be pretty dirty at first. That means that you may find that the car is initially a bit loose.....be aware.

- When on course, you must maintain control of your car at all times. Everyone will spin occasionally, but the key is that once you have lost it, you need to gather it back up without endangering the course workers or yourself. This is not a drifting competition.
- At events such as Sandia where it is possible to drive off course into the dirt, we will have a chat with you if you go four wheels off, or repeatedly go two wheels off. Don't be "that guy".
- You may be required to do a full stop at the finish. A full stop means a full and complete stop. Regional Safety and Event chairs have been given DNF's for failing to do so, which is our way of saying *we mean it*. Once you have made your full and complete stop and are acknowledged by the course worker manning the finish, proceed immediately back to your grid or paddock spot; do not linger admiring the awesomeness of the time you just set, as another car may be fast approaching.
- On courses where a full stop is not required, you must reduce your speed immediately after the timing lights to a pace determined to be safe by the event and safety chair for that event.

### **Let's talk about working the course**

When working the course, you will have a yellow safety vest, a radio, an air horn (for emergency use only), a fire bottle and a red flag.

Rule #1 is NEVER turn your back on an approaching car. Follow the car through your position, check for cones in their wake, and then immediately turn around for the next car. Things can get dicey when we have overlap, but the takeaway is that you never want to put yourself in harm's way. If you can't get to a cone before the next car, leave it; the approaching driver has the option to stop for a downed cone and request a re-run.

### **Let's talk more about red flags and when to use them**

You should wave the red flag under any of the following circumstances:

- When instructed to do so by timing
- If you hear another corner calling for a red flag
- If you observe ANY unsafe condition

The key is that when a red flag is called, EVERYONE should be vigorously waving their flags. If you see an unsafe condition of any kind, wave your flag immediately and call it in on the radio.

Reasons for throwing a red flag could mean a spectator walking onto the course, a dog, a horse, a jackalope, a chupacabra attack, a Sharknado.....anything. Or, it could mean an unsafe condition with a car on course, say a gas leak or a loose wheel.

If you have to wave the flag, do not hesitate and do so vigorously but DO NOT jump in front of an oncoming car. If the driver does not see you, the day will end very badly for everyone; hopefully they will see the flag at the next worker position.

Lastly, do not hold the flag rolled up tightly; hold it unfurled but secure so when you need to wave it an approaching driver will see a red flag, not a red stick.

As a driver, the rules regarding red flags are simple; if you see a red flag, safely bring the car to an immediate stop, and do not move again until instructed to do so by a course worker. When so instructed, finish the rest of the course at a greatly reduced pace. Do not short-cut the course in any way and make sure you go through the finish lights.

Lastly, for photographers - you need a yellow vest and a spotter if you are within the course boundaries, and that spotter cannot be a corner worker. If you are unsure about where to stand, ask the event safety chair.

That should be about it....let's have fun but let's be safe!