



Radio Operator Handbook

This document is a guide for the amateur radio operators who will be operating on the directed network supporting Black River Stages. To help the net run smoothly, please try to follow the procedures outlined.

The primary purpose of this net is to ensure the safety of drivers, workers, and spectators. Providing rally officials with information to help conduct the event is an important secondary consideration.

How Rally Safety Works

In very simplified terms, if there is a serious accident on the race course, a competitor will find it first. They follow procedures that result in another competitor showing up at a radio point (finish or spectator) to tell the rally that help is needed. ***It is critical to safety that the radio operator at the finish can quickly get this message from the control workers (last sign- stop) and relay it to NET.*** One of the first things NET will ask for is to stop starting race cars onto the road. ***It is critical that the radio operator at start can relay this to the control workers at the race start (last sign, red flag).*** For general safety, it is also critical that the start control workers do not put race vehicles on course until approved by NET through the start radio operator. Position yourself accordingly and consider use of GMRS directly to the control worker when needed/available.

Common Critical Times on the NET

There are a few times when net traffic becomes critical to safety and non-essential traffic should hold or be very careful not to interrupt more important traffic.

- Any time there is a medical event reported.
- When course cars and Net Control are working to locate a missing competitor.
- When a start or finish of an active stage has radio traffic.

General Procedures

1. This is a directed net; all calls will be made through net control. If you wish to talk to another station on the net, you can call them *only after calling net control and getting permission!*
2. Before transmitting, make sure that the frequency is not in use, and that net control isn't waiting for a response from someone. You must listen.
3. Use your tactical call sign to get the attention of net control. "Three Start to NET" alerts the control operator that the operator at three start wants to speak to net. Wait for acknowledgement for routine traffic.
4. Use your call sign only at the end of your last transmission (of a series); when the net control operator hears your call sign they will assume that you have finished your business.
5. Net should be informed when you arrive on post and whenever you step away. Once you have checked in, it is assumed that you are monitoring the net. Check out at the end of your assigned duties.
6. All radio operators must listen to the net. Even if the stage captain asks you to do something else, remember that your first priority is "reading the mail" on the net, and that you must be able to hear and respond to the net at all times. If you haven't heard net traffic for a while assume you are having a problem & check in. This is especially important for radios at stage controls and at medical deployment locations. Rally cars are loud.
7. Unless you have emergency traffic, allow a small amount of time to lapse between the end of other traffic and your call to net control. This will provide a window for emergency callers to get to the front of the queue.

Frequencies

There is one repeater and two simplex frequencies which should be programmed into your radio for quick and easy access. The repeater is a temporary that will be setup Friday mid-day.

Primary Repeater WB3DLN 145.270 - Tone 127.3

Simplex Frequency 146.420

Secondary Simplex Frequency 147.420



BRS strongly discourages the use of cross band repeaters during the course of the event. The inherent delay in linking the two radios usually results in someone getting stepped on, there may be several radio operators trying to call a message into Net Control during peak times.

Emergency procedure

If you have emergency traffic, interrupt the net at any time by saying "break, break". This must only be done for true emergencies — something that threatens the health and welfare of people. Other traffic will be kept to a minimum, or suspended if necessary, during an emergency.

Do NOT broadcast details of an emergency event but do try to obtain and relay to net control the following information:

- Are there emergency services required (ie medical, fire or law enforcement)
- Location – how far from the start (and instruction number, if possible)
- Vehicle number-- obtain but do not broadcast until asked for.

Please brief the control worker at finish that will give you this info so that this occurs efficiently.

Log Sheets

Radio operators are also asked to record the vehicle number of competitors which start, finish, or pass by them. Please record the information on the log sheet provided when possible. At a minimum try to keep an accurate count. Net will ask for car numbers when needed.

What Net Control Needs to Know

The following events should be reported to net control:

- Arrival at your assigned location
- When you are in place and ready
- arrival of the Medical team (Junction)
- arrival of first rally competitor vehicle
- arrival of the sweep vehicles at start of stage (They generally self report)
- time that sweep vehicles start sweeping a stage (They generally self report)
- arrival of the last competitor at start & finish controls
- time that sweep finishes stage
- when the stage is cleared, and all marshals are picked up

There are other items that may have to be reported to net control, but the above items should **always** be reported when they occur.

Things Net Control Must OK

These events must be cleared with the net control operator **before** they happen:

- Departure of car 0 and/or Combo car from a stage start
- **Departure of the first rally vehicle from a stage start (THIS IS CRITICAL TO SAFETY)**
- Departure of sweep vehicles to sweep a stage
- Shutdown of a stage
- Medical entering the stage to respond (to ensure rally traffic is clear)