



Susquehannock Trail Performance Rally, 9-11 Jul 2026

DECISION 7

posted at: xx Jul 2026 xx:00

From: the Steward

Date: 31 Jul 2026

To: all Officials and Competitors

Time (decision): 01:12

Stewards Decision 6 established a Stewards Review Panel to review the event and investigate matters that the Panel determines needs a closer look. The Panel consisted of Alan Perry, Andrew Frick, and Curt Faigle.

Topic 1: Passage of Car 432 Through TC14A

Facts: During Section 4 of the rally, Car 432 suffered some kind of alternator failure. The team took actions to mitigate this and completed all the stages but had to be flat-towed on the transit to the subsequent Regroup before Service. The entry to that Regroup was TC14A, referred to as *Regroup In* throughout this document. Specifically, Car 36 towed Car 432 to and not beyond the Regroup's yellow warning sign.

At their check-in time, the crew of Car 432 entered the control on foot. Even though their competition vehicle was not in the control zone, as confirmed by RallySafe, the team was checked in on that minute.

The crew then returned to the competition vehicle and pushed it into the control. Video showing this was made available to the Panel. They crossed the Regroup In red control sign approximately when Car 797 checked in, which would have made them two minutes late if they had not been checked in when they first presented themselves.

Decision: No action against Car 432.

The Event is admonished for inadequately training its marshals.

Rationale: Car 432 did not meet all of the conditions to check in at the Regroup In but were checked in anyway. This was a mistake made by the Event. Details of the mistake made will be provided to the Event so that the training can be improved. The crew made no attempt to deceive the marshals to get checked in and benefited from the Event's mistake.

Topic 2: Moving the TC14B Sign

Facts: After pushing their competition vehicle into the TC14A/14B Regroup, referred to as the *Regroup* throughout this document, the crew of Car 432 continued pushing it until they encountered a softer and uneven surface. There they lost momentum and their progress drastically slowed. It became clear to observers that the crew would not be able to push it through to TC14B, referred to as *Regroup Out*, throughout this document.

The crew of Car 432's attention was focused on moving their competition vehicle. For the most part, they did not interact with other competitors or marshals. They made no attempt to persuade marshals to take any specific action on their behalf.

While observing the struggle of Car 432, a few other competitors in the Regroup and a marshal brainstormed what options were available to assist Car 432 and keep them in the rally. The primary proposal was for the marshals, along with the crew of Car 432, to push the competition vehicle through the Regroup. A secondary proposal was

to move the Regroup Out sign to behind Car 432 so that the competition vehicle would effectively be through the Regroup Out where they could be assisted by the team's Service Crew. No one in the discussion was convinced the second proposal was a legal solution. By the time that the Event Chair had arrived, the competitors had returned to their cars and were preparing to check out of the Regroup. No decision on what to do about Car 432 had been made and the discussion on that took place without competitor input.

The Event, as it was represented at the Regroup, decided to move the Regroup Out sign, the secondary proposal. It is not known how this decision was made.

The Clerk of the Course, located at Race Control, was contacted over the radio net to seek permission to move a control sign. Somehow the request came across as to those in Race Control as one to move the Regroup In, not Regroup Out, sign. The nature of the request was confirmed by interviewing the Clerk of the Course and reviewing the Net Control log. After some discussion, the request was approved by the Clerk.

The Regroup Out control sign was moved to behind where the crew of Car 432 had pushed their competition vehicle. The crew checked out of the Regroup, and then the sign was moved back to its original location.

Pushing Car 432 to the Regroup Out using marshals and the crew was likely the only way to get the competition vehicle through the Regroup that was consistent with the rules.

Decision: No action taken against any competitor.

The Event is strongly admonished for changing the route for one team and one team alone. The matter has been referred to the Competition Director.

Rationale: The Panel has no power to penalize an Event; the Panel requests that the Competition Director look at what happened and determine any penalties or corrective actions for the Event.

The Panel reviewed the conduct of the crew of Car 432 and found no violations of the Code of Conduct. Similarly, the Panel reviewed the actions of competitors who suggested actions that the Event could take and determined they were all attempts to keep a competitor in the event and not to gain a competitive advantage.

Topic 3: Passage of Car 432 Through TC14B

Facts: Car 432 was in the Regroup but not in a position to be able to check out when the time arrived to start releasing teams from the Regroup. Instead, the next team to check in was released and this continued with subsequent cars on subsequent minutes.

When, as described in Topic 2, the Regroup Out sign was moved to behind Car 432, there was no End of Control in place. The competition vehicle was effectively in the Regroup Out/Service In at that point. The team's co-driver ran to where the marshal was operating the control and checked the team out of the Regroup. The team's Service Crew drove their service vehicle to the competition vehicle, attached a tow strap, and flat-towed the competition vehicle to the team's service location.

Car 432 was the first team to check into the Regroup Control and was the eighth to check out.

Car 432 was repaired in Service and then continued on to finish the rally.

At the 2026 Sno*Drift Rally, that Event placed the sign marking the end of that Regroup at the wrong location. A team received assistance from their Service Crew to move their competition vehicle. That assistance happened between where the sign should have been and where it was actually placed. Protest and Appeals panels reviewed the matter and determined that, despite the Event's mistake in placing the sign, its actual location marked the end of the Regroup.

Decision: Car 432 is assessed a 70 second penalty for 7 minutes of Lateness at TC14B.

Rationale: As the first team into the Regroup, under RCR 5.9.2, Car 432 was obliged to be the first out (unless event officials indicate otherwise, which does not apply in this case). They didn't. They checked out 7 minutes later than they should have, thus the penalty.

The Sno*Drift Protest and Appeal decisions oblige Competitors to treat the actual location of control signs as correct.

While an argument could be made that, without the Event taking the illegitimate action described in Topic 2, Car 432 would not have been able to complete the rally (because they would not be able to get to the Regroup Out). However, as discussed in Topic 2, there was an option that the Event could have taken that was within the rules and the Event, as represented at the Regroup, expressed a "press on regardless" interest in keeping the team in the rally. If there wasn't a legal option to keep Car 432 in the rally at that point, perhaps it may have been decided to DNF them at that control, but there was.

Topic 4: Car 432's Use Of A Jump Start Battery To Mitigate Alternator Failure

Facts: As noted in Topic 1, Car 432 suffered some kind of intermittent alternator failure in Section 4 of the rally. To continue competing, the team attached a jump start battery to the competition vehicle's primary battery to extend the charge available to run the engine in the absence of charge from the alternator. It was used on transits and on stage, but it was not particularly effective.

This matter was referred to the Technical Director for review. The Technical Director indicated it was likely a violation of RTR 2.2.4.

Decision: No action to be taken against Car 432.

The Panel strongly encourages ARA to issue a statement to competitors advising them not to make use of jump start and other lithium batteries in this manner.

Rationale: The topic came up during interviews for the investigation of Topic 1. These interviews took place approximately a week after the event had completed. If nothing else, the reporting of any potential technical rules exceeds timeliness requirements for submission, so no action is taken.

The Panel is concerned about the risk that small, portable jump-start-type (as well as other high energy density lithium ion) batteries can introduce in a competition vehicle on stage, particularly when used as described above. They can be overcharged or damaged, which can result in a fire that is very hard to extinguish. Competitors should know to use these batteries in this manner, but, since they apparently don't, ARA should remind them.

Topic 5: Violations of the Code of Conduct in Submitted Inquiries

Facts: The Sportity web form for submitting Inquiries is provided in lieu of the inquiry submission mechanism described in GCR 8.1. It is official communications and its use is subject to the Code of Conduct.

The co-driver of Car 175 observed or was informed of the incidents described in Topics 1, 2 and 3. Car 175 was competing against Car 432 for overall standings and submitted an inquiry making claims about actions taken by the crew of Car 432 and event officials. In that inquiry, he made derogatory claims against event officials, claims that he was not in a position to know whether they were accurate. As observed by the Event Steward, some were factually incorrect.

An unidentified individual submitted an inquiry that attacked event organizers for not providing a route that would allow Service Crew to spectate.

Decision: The co-driver of Car 175 has received a verbal reprimand.

The Panel recommends that ARA issue a statement to competitors reminding them to be professional in submitting inquiries. The Panel also recommends that ARA change the online inquiry submission system to somehow verify who is submitting the inquiry.

Rationale: The online inquiry submission form has been a great addition to the sport, but its ease of use and lack of identity verification allows it to be easily abused, and poorly considered submissions have been made in the heat of the moment. Competitors should be professional and think before posting items there. The online inquiry submission form is not a complaint hotline.

Topic 6: Statement of Standing From Car 353

Facts: Car 353 was placed second overall in the Provisional Results posted at the event.

Car 353 claims that a) Car 432 failed to follow control procedures at the TC14A/14B Regroup, violating RCR 5.9.1/5.3.3, b) Car 432 did not obstruct passage through the Regroup, and c) the terrain of the TC 14A/14B Regroup was such that it was not possible for the crew to push their competition vehicle through by themselves. Based on these claim, Car 353 asked that the applicable rules be applied, implying that penalties be applied against Car 432.

Decision: No additional penalties have been assessed against Car 432.

Rationale: With regards to these claims except for when Car 432 left the Regroup, the actions of the crew followed the rules. As noted above, mistakes were made by the Event and Car 432 benefited from.

The Panel considered the fairness of Car 432 benefiting from these mistakes. If, in the absence of the Regroup Out control sign being moved or other rules violations, there was no possibility under the rules for Car 432 to get through the Regroup, then they would have been excluded at TC14B. But, within the rules, the Event could have had the marshals for the Regroup push the competition vehicle (as long as this assistance was available to all competitors). This was an instance of force majeure in Car 432's favor.

Next Steps

Scoring is to apply any penalties described in the Decisions above and then prepare new Provisional Results. Once those Provisional Results are posted, a new review period will start. That period will be 48 hours, which will start at the Sportity posting time of those results. Since the general 30 minutes review period expired some time ago, the only topics that can raised are those covered in this document. Since this document is a Stewards Decision, only Appeals are permitted. Intent to Appeal must be communicated to the Event Steward and Competition Director via their e-mail addresses listed in the Supplementary Regulations. Arrangements to collect the Appeals fee will be made at that time.

The Event Steward thanks Mr. Frick and Mr. Faigle for contributing their time and effort to serve on the Panel as well as everyone who provided information and documentation of what happened.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APerry', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alan Perry, Event Steward