

## ***Tidewater Sports Car Club Novice Handout (Go ahead and keep this copy with you at all times)***

Welcome to our auto-x event! We're glad to see you out here with us having fun. Here are some tips to keep in mind during the event:

Rule # 1 – If you're not having fun, you're either doing something wrong or taking this all too seriously!

*“Just play. Have fun. Enjoy the game” – Michael Jordan*

Rule # 2 – If you're not sure or if in doubt, ask! (There's no such thing as a dumb question. Someone else asked it long before you did.) Find out what “slow in, fast out” (ape latexing) really means.

*“Nothing is intuitively obvious to the uninformed” – Gregory House, MD*

Rule # 3 – Use your first run of the day to nail down the course's layout. You still have three other runs to improve your time. Remember, a slow, clean run is always better than a fast run with lots of cones or an “Off Course” call.

*“It is not always possible to be the best, but it is always possible to improve your own performance.” – Sir Jackie Stewart, three-time Formula One World Champion*

Rule # 4 – Be safe on course, know what you're going to do ahead of time in case of an emergency such as a stuck throttle or faded brakes.

*“When things start to get out of control, exercise the two-foot rule. One foot on the brake, one foot on the clutch – both feet to the floorboard until the car is under control” – Skip Barber Racing Schools*

Rule # 5 – Do the majority of your hard braking out on course in a straight line before you turn your wheels. Get this one wrong and you'll be spinning out at least once every run.

*“Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes” – Oscar Wilde*

Rule # 6 – Be safe when working the course. Always stand up, no cell phones, cameras, iPods, or camcorders allowed at worker stations. Watch the cars on course. If you have to shag a cone, keep the next on-coming car in your field of vision at all times. It's better to let the next car get a re-run than to try to out run an on-coming vehicle after setting up a cone at the last second.

*“Think you can safely turn your back on a car? The typical course worker can run 8-9 MPH while the slowest car on course is moving at 20 MPH. You do the math” – Anonymous Safety Steward*

Rule # 7 - Keep your vehicle's speed down in the paddock (parking) and grid areas. Watch out for other people as well as cars pulling out to go to Tech or the Start.

*“Don't drive any faster than you would want to be hit by another car” – Audie's Admonition*

Rule # 8 – Apply your car's number in contrasting colors to both sides of your vehicle prior to Tech. Blue Painter's Tape on a blue car won't work! Beige (tan) on a silver car is a no-no too!

*“We can't score you if we can't read your number” – Timing & Scoring*

**(Turn over for tips on how to judge penalties for cones)**

## Cone Penalties:

1. Only cones originally upright on course can be considered for penalties. Directional/pointer cones whose initial state is lying down do not count in the total cone count reported to Timing & Scoring (Control).
2. If an upright cone is completely out of the box, whether standing up or knocked over, it's a **PENALTY**.
3. If an upright cone is knocked over on its side, even if any portion of the cone is touching its box, it's a **PENALTY**.
4. If an upright cone is still standing upright after being hit, and part of its base still touches or crosses the box it sits in, then there is **NO PENALTY**.
5. If the car goes outside of a gate or on the wrong side of a pointer cone (a directional cone lying down next to an upright cone), then that car is **OFF COURSE (OC)** and scored **DID NOT FINISH (DNF)**.
6. Similarly, if a car hits a pointer cone in a slalom, but does not knock down or move the upright slalom cone completely out of its box, that driver is **OC** and the car is scored as **DNF** for that particular run.
7. If a car spins out, gets turns around, or drives outside of the "normal driving line" (typically outside of some directional cones), but does not miss any gates/mandatory slalom cones nor go through the same gate twice, there is **NO PENALTY**. Only when a gate or slalom cone is missed during spinouts or while driving outside of the "normal driving line" is the driver **OC** and the run scored as a **DNF**.
8. A slalom is an auto-x element wherein the driver alternates sides while driving a series of upright cones from start to finish. In some slaloms, each upright cone is marked with a pointer cone indicating which side the driver must use when driving past each cone. In some instances, only the initial upright slalom cone is marked; however this will dictate the mandatory alternating sequence for all the following cones in that slalom. Infrequently, no pointer cones are used at all which allows the driver to select which alternating sequence to use for the slalom. Regardless of how the slalom sequence is initiated, the driver must follow that sequence until the end of the slalom. Any deviation from the alternating sequence will result in the car being **OC** and scored as a **DNF**.

## Keeping Track of Cones:

1. If you have to replace a cone as a course worker, determine first if the cone is a penalty. If so, raise the cone to shoulder height prior to placing it in its proper position inside its box. (This will allow the station worker with the radio to report the cone penalty prior to your return to the worker station.
2. Sometimes a car will deliver a glancing blow to an upright cone that results in the cone staying upright and some portion of the base touching the box drawn around the cone's position. In this case, merely move the cone back inside the box. Turn around and signal "safe" (crossing one's arms in front of your body and moving them in a scissors fashion similar to an umpire calling a runner "safe") as you run back to your worker station.
3. Don't forget to check the cones in your section of the course even after the current car has driven by. Many cone penalties are the result of not hitting the cone with the front of the car, but turning too late to prevent the back wheel(s) from driving over an upright cone while turning the car for the next course element.