2019 SCCA Road Rally Rule Change Proposals

The attached list of proposals has been submitted by members of the road rally community as rule changes for SCCA RoadRallies starting in 2019. The SCCA Road Rally Board (RRB) will vote on each one of these proposals later this year and we would like to hear your opinion on each of them. If you would be willing to let us know your thoughts about some or all of the proposals, please send an email to rrb@scca.com prior to August 30th. When commenting on a particular proposal, please refer to it by the number assigned in the list below.

Do not infer that any of these proposals or their rationales have been endorsed or accepted by the RRB. They are being presented to you as they were submitted so that the RRB may have the benefit of input from the rally community when discussing them.

1. **Increase the number of equivalents that can be counted toward the Championship**. There are two proposals on this matter. They are labeled 1A and 1B below:

   1A: Increase the number of equivalents that can be counted toward the Championship from 14 to 16.
   1B: Completely eliminate the limit on number of equivalents that can be counted toward the Championship.

   Rationale: Increase rally participation.

2. **Create a fourth Class for National and Divisional SCCA rallies – Class G, where the only requirement would be that all distance used shall be obtained from GPS mileage**.

   Rationale: Encourage the use of GPS based apps by creating a dedicated class for them and by not making them compete against teams using wheel driven odometers.

3. **Dismiss any claim (protest) and return the claim fee if allowing it would have no effect on the claimant's finishing position**. There are two similar proposals on this matter. They are labeled 3A and 3B below:

   3A: Restrict protests by adding to Article 20.E: If all potential dispositions of the submitted claim(s) can make no alteration to the posted scores that would result in a change in position for the claimant(s), the claim(s) shall be removed from consideration and the scores finalized. The official observer shall forward any such claim(s) to the NEC, together with a copy of the general instructions, route instructions, addenda and any committee comments for review of the claim(s) for needed clarifications or changes to the RRR or RFO. The claim fee would be refunded to the claimant if a claim is dismissed for this reason.

   Rationale: Any given claims committee on any given rally is not a final adjudicating body for the entire rally community, rather just a means to bring closure to a single event in a timely manner. With that in mind, there is no reason that a random committee needs to make a decision on a claim that doesn't affect the standings. A different claims committee may very well make a completely opposite decision, so no individual claims decision should be considered case law for future rallies.

   3B: A claim shall not be adjudicated and the claimant's fee returned if: 1) it is the only claim filed, and 2) the claimant's finishing positon in their class would not altered by the claim being upheld. Every properly submitted claim shall be either not adjudicated, denied, allowed, or forwarded to the RRB for final decision.

4. **Increase the fee for filing a claim from the current $25.00 to at least $50.00**.

   Rationale: The current $25 fee has not been updated for at least three decades. At that time, the fee was more than 50% of an entry fee that many times included food, dash plaques, T-shirts and other items. Inflation since 1985 would have increased the fee to more than $55.

5. **Require that leg times be adjusted by the organizer to fall close to the middle of the second or hundredth.** Add to Article 18D: The final leg time will fall between xx.4 and xx.6 seconds, or x.xx4 and x.xx6 minute, depending on the scoring unit in use.

   Rationale: For current National Tour and some Divisional Tour events, the scores of the top competitors are very close, averaging less than 1 point per leg. Additional accuracy can be attained by requiring organizers to cause the ideal leg time to fall in the "bottom of the second" or "bottom of the 1/100th". As an example consider an ideal leg time of 10.000 minutes. A competitor with a leg time of 9.999 minutes would receive a score of 1 for being 0.001 early, while a competitor with a leg time of 10.009 would receive a score of 0 for being 0.009 late - a better score for more error. Moving the ideal leg time as suggested would (more fairly) give each competitor a 0. These adjustments are easily made by either adjusting a CAST on the leg slightly or by moving the timing line up to +/- 0.003 miles.

6. **Require that all SCCA rallies allow no-penalty Time Allowances for any and all reasons, not just for force majeure**.

   Rationale: Current rules only require that Time Allowances be allowed without penalty for force majeure events (circumstances beyond the control of the competitor). History has shown this to have improved the safety of rallies. Allowing no penalty TAs for any reason further increases the safety of rallies.   Most rallies today already do this. This rule proposal would establish as a requirement what is already being done in many events.

7. **Prohibit rally organizers from displaying a clock to contestants**.

   Rationale: Official time is specified by the RRR to be the shortwave signals of WWV or CHU. The substitution of an organizer source of time for the official time is unnecessary, introduces an additional source of error, is contrary to the RRR, necessitates additional work by the organizer to set and display a clock, diverts a clock from being sent out on course with a checkpoint crew until morning registration closes, and may require some contestants to own a checkpoint timer to synchronize it to the organizer clock and then physically carry it to their vehicles to set the official time into their dedicated rally computer or "B box."

   If official time is determined by an organizer clock, then it cannot be reproduced after the start of the rally by either the organizer or the contestant.   That is because, although very accurate, the best clocks still drift slightly over time. So 6 hours after the rally starts, a checkpoint timer's clock may have drifted 0.002 minute fast and a contestant's clock may have drifted 0.003 minute slow.   With a leg time that ends in XX.XX5 minute, it could still be possible to get a 1 while having only 0.001 minute of actual error. The only way to fix this throughout the day is for the contestant and the organizer to be able to reset their clocks to an exact, common time. The only such time available in the countryside are the signals of WWV and CHU.

For those new to the sport that do not have a shortwave receiver, the time signals are now very closely approximated by 2 websites, https://www.time.gov and https://time.is. These are extremely close approximations of the aforementioned shortwave signals, typically appearing to be maybe only 0.001 – 0.003 minutes different from the audio signals of the shortwave stations. The accuracy is maintained even over cell phone links, so previous reasons to provide official time to contestants are now moot. Virtually everyone that rallies in the National championship has a smartphone that can access these time sources. While these sources are usually slightly different than the shortwave sources, those that are in contention for the class E win are the only ones that need be concerned with using the actual shortwave signals. Others have larger errors in their rallying than a few thousandths of timeclock error and can ignore the issue for practical purposes.

8. **Create protocols for using a third basic timing unit of 1/1000th minute to be available for timing rallies in addition to the currently available timing units of seconds and 1/100th minutes**.

Rationale: Current technology has rendered the existing timing units to assign penalty points without due regard to rally team performance.   That is, since the true leg time may range from having the 1/1000th minute digit being anywhere from 0 thru 9, a contestant that is 0.001 minute early on a leg with an official time that has a 0 in the 1/1000th minute position will get a 1, while another contestant that is 0.009 minute late on that same leg will get a 0.

  To mitigate the above inequity, some rallymasters have begun to ensure that their leg times all end with a 4, 5, or 6 in the 1/1000th digit of leg time.   This is unnecessarily difficult and adds extra work for the rallymaster. Timing to 0.001 minute would properly assign a score of "1" to the team that was 0.001 minute early on a leg with a "0" in the leg time's 1/1000th minute position, and a "9" to the team that was 0.009 minute late on that same leg.   This would be far more fair.