

Beverley & District Motor Club

Event Experience Report



The 2017 Pete Anable 12 Car Navigational Rally started and finished at The Star Inn, Nafferton and as MSA Regulations for such events allow, covered approximately 50 miles on Maps 101 and 107. The Map reference for the venue on Map 107 is 054596. This brief and shortened 'story' of the event that follows is aimed at giving an overview to a new and interested potential club member of what happens on the event from different perspectives, describing drivers, navigators, marshals and organisers experiences during one of Beverley & District Motor Clubs events. Other Motor Clubs 12 Car Navigational events will most likely be fairly similar in format.

The Documentation referred to in this event report has been attached separately to be viewed.

The Event Report

Competitors and Marshals arrived at The Star Inn, Nafferton from 19.15 on the night of the event. Arranging to meet for the start inside a Pub venue ensures a more civilised Documentation process than a dark cold layby in the middle of nowhere as used to happen in the past. As folk tend not to spend a great deal before an event on drinks, it is usual to have gained permission from the Landlord on the understanding that the finish venue is also there, were drinks and food; crisps and nuts at least are bought after the event. Only seems fair!

The organiser would already have arrived before everyone else; hopefully, having placed any 'number plate' letter boards that are required along the 50 mile route. Marshals need to arrive as early as possible to allow time to sign on as officials and receive the instructions to determine the location of the Time Controls they will operate along the route. Generally, marshals are required to do a couple of controls each. On this particular event, Marshals also each had a couple of letter boards to position along the route on the way to their assigned Time Controls. The reason for the letter boards is to act as 'unmanned' Controls to ensure Competitors follow the correct route; failure to pass and record them resulting in an extra time penalty.

Once marshals are away to their first locations and all the Competitors have completed their documentation, the event can begin. Competitors will have signed official event forms as Competitors and to ensure that they are insured for the event. The Motor Club arranges this, but unless drivers have specific competition insurance of their own, they will have to pay the premium on the night. Currently, event entry and insurance combined is £20.00. Competing crews will at this point have received Event Final Instructions detailing where the first Time Control will be, along with Time Cards to be filled in during the night. Marshals will enter the times at each Control as they arrive and the Navigator enters the number plate letter boards as they are located on the route. View Time Cards.

As most events meet inside a Pub, the first Time Control is usually a mile or two outside the village. On this occasion, crews were given a start time of 20.05 plus their competition start number to arrive at MTC 1; Main Time Control 1. Crews are expected to drive slowly and quietly on any part of the route through villages. These sections are only to get to where you need to be, before beginning a more, 'competitive' section, when not being late at a Control is more important. Once arriving at the correct location from the correct direction, the Marshal enters the required time on the Time Card and signs it. The Competitors then queue up and wait for their section start time to arrive. A maximum of 12 Cars are allowed on these events; hence the title!

The Marshals will have arrived at least 10 minutes before the first car is due at the location and placed a warning 'Control Board' approximately 50m before the location, more if deemed necessary

to slow cars down for Marshal's safety. Equipped with pens, torches, warm and reflective clothing, the Marshals are vitally important to the event. The Marshal will also have copies of the appropriate Navigation Instructions for the section you are about to complete. Novices Navigation Handouts are always easier than that given to more experienced 'Experts.' As this report is aimed at Novices; Beginners, the Novice Instructions will be used to explain the early sections of the event. Refer to attached information to aid your understanding. Competitors should always remember to be courteous to the Marshals! It may be very wet, very cold or very windy; or all of them! They would rather be warmer and drier, but have come out to support the event and enable you to have your fun. Never forget that!

So, Car 1 is the first car away. They will be an Expert crew. The Marshal advises them that they have a minute to their start time at MTC1; 20.06. The Marshal has the Navigation Handout ready, but will not give it until the due time. A 10 second warning is given, followed by counting down from 5 seconds; 4, 3, 2, 1. As they last seconds are called, the Marshal hands the slip of paper with the instructions to the Navigator and they set off. As expert competitors on these events, they usually plot on the move and aim to know where to turn before arriving at the first junction. Each crew sets off at 1 minute intervals after the first car. For the explanation of describing the event for Novices, I will assume you are a Novice; Beginner crew on your first ever 12 Car Navigational Rally at Car 10.

You have been given the following location of MTC 1, located at Map Reference 048585; Approach from ENE. Refer to the Final Instructions. Having plotted that Map Reference, you will have already guided your driver quietly out of the village to MTC 1. Cars 1 to 9 have now departed from the control. The Marshal approaches the passenger window to sign your Time Card. You should know what time you require, assistance to explain event timing is always available at Motor Club meetings before even attempting the 12 Car Rally; ask and accept it. In this instance, as Car 10, you are setting off from MTC 1 at 20.15. If you view Time Card 1, the nominal Car 0 is scheduled at 20.05.

On the section you are about to be given, the Navigational Instructions for will take you to STC 2; Standard Time Control 2. You will see that you are due to arrive at STC 2 at 20.15 plus your start number; 20.25. The Marshal calls out, "10 seconds to go!" You have your Map on a board on your lap; card not wood in case of injury! Ideally you will have a Map Magnifier and internal lighting in the car. Neither you, nor the driver have any idea where the Navigation will take you, so try and relax and insist the driver sets off at a sensible pace; or not at all until you tell him/her it is ok to do so! There is no point accelerating away on a Navigational Rally and pinning the Navigator to the seat and disturbing them to the point they can no longer function; other than to be quickly sick. Remember this! Once things fall into place and the route is plotted, you can allow the driver to increase the pace. The Navigator is in charge! Remember!

The Marshal calls, "5 seconds!" Being kind to you as a Beginner, they hand the route to you a few seconds early. You are pleased as it has just started raining and your Map was getting wet. The Marshal was also getting wet. Remember that too! You look at the sheet of Navigation Instructions as the Marshal calls, "...4, 3, 2, 1....ok you can go!" If only you could!

You read the Instructions carefully. Refer to Novice Route Handouts. 'From MTC 1, traverse the following Grid Squares in order taking the longest route possible. STC 2, NTC 3 and RC 1A to RC 1E will be located using this Route.' You have been told what the Instructions are and they begin where you are at MTC 1. As you can see, the location of Route Checks; RC is shown. At these points, a letter board will be at the side of the road to enter onto the Time Card. Your driver; friend, is keen to set off as you ponder what to do. If you look at the Map 107, the road goes straight for a bit after MTC 1, turns tight right and continues to a 'T' junction. There is no junction until then, so you may as well tell the driver to set off, but drive steadily; even if briskly, while you plot and work out where to go next.

So, let us look at the Navigation and refer it to the Map 107. Grid square 0458 SGW. The 'T' junction is in this Grid Square and you are asked to 'Stop and Give Way.' The penalty for not stopping on a

Road Navigational Rally is exclusion. STOP means stop. If a Marshal is manning the junction, you are out! Make sure the driver understands Stop. That does not include rolling slowly over the give way line or sliding over with all 4 wheels locked up braking!!!! It all happens and many have fallen foul of this at some point. You can warn the driver of the '90°right' and then straight to junction. The next square is 0459 and RC 1a, also requiring you to SGW followed by 0559 and SGW. The fact that you, 'SGW' in 0459 takes you along the 'yellow' road to the A614, then continue along to the roundabout near the edge of the Map. You may have plotted this and the driver can get a move on now. Hopefully you saw and recorded RC1a on the Time Card as you drove by it before reaching the Main road! Make sure the driver slows enough to ensure you read and wrote down the number plate digits correctly. If recorded incorrectly, you will be penalised at the finish.

The Navigation takes you onto another Map now; 101. Be prepared; with the map to hand, before this happens. Have it open at the point you expect to join it. Looking back at the Navigation for the section up to STC 2, it clearly lists each Grid Square you will go through in order and notes all RC locations. Most important is that you plot the correct route and guide your driver on the correct roads. Additional information can be given to the driver as you gain confidence and experience such as pin-pointing RC and control locations more accurately to prevent the driver searching the roadside along the entire route just in case he misses one, not having any idea when one will be near. As you gain experience, everything will hopefully get easier and once a section is successfully plotted, the Navigator can also start 'reading the road;' warning and describing distances and severity of bends by extracting the information accurately from the Map using all Map features as a guide.

Imagine again that you are competing in the car. Plot all the Grid Squares in order and guide your driver square by square along the roads that follow within those squares. Write on the map all the information you need to follow that route. Do not draw lines over the actual roads as you obliterate information you may need to see. Draw any lines to one side and write Control locations in spaces on the map with maybe a line or arrow pointing to it. All these ideas will become clear if you attempt Club Night Table Top Rallies before competing on a 12 Car Event. Ask and find out!

So, you have now plotted the section all the way to NTC 3 in Grid Square 0960. Yes you have! The Time Card 1 tells you which direction you approach from. What you do not know is where STC 2 will be. If you have plotted correctly you will eventually arrive at it. Although you had to ask the driver to slow down and stop after RC 1b as you were not sure where to go next at the 'T' junction, once you had got your head together, the rest of the route made sense and you worked the rest out. Now you have it all plotted, you can guide him to STC 2.

"Turn right at 'T' junction...make sure you SGW." "Drive about a kilometre straight and take the right at crossroads. Follow the lane...looks to get a bit twisty!" "At the end...SGW at RC at junction." Although this does not resemble World Rally Pace Notes...it is a start for a beginner. Believe me, when you get better it will sound more like it! In actual fact, the junction at RC 1d looms up quite quickly over a brow and may prove harder to stop than expected! Adds to the fun!

Anyway, back to the event. You guide your driver past the village via a few tight bends, heading south east now, via RC 1e. "SGW at A614...turn left...200, slight right! Fairly straight to another slight right and take slot right at crossroads!" See...you are getting better! As you approach the next village, you pass the Control Board warning of STC 2 before entering speed restriction signs for the village. You stop at STC 2. As the next section is to NTC 3; Neutral Time Control, you can warn the driver to drive slowly and quietly when you leave STC 2 as it is not a competitively timed section. Ask to find out about various sections and Controls. We are all glad to advise and help.

The Marshal leans to your open window, checks his clock and asks what time you would like. You look at your Time Card and see that you are due at STC 2 at 20.25. Remember, as Car 10 you set off from MTC 1 at 20.15 on a 10 minute section. Unfortunately, as you needed to stop a couple of times to plot and check the route, not to mention stop to accurately read and write down the Letter Boards;

Stop at Give Ways and twice have to reverse back to see two RCs you drove past too swiftly, the time is now 20.31. The Marshal enters that time on your Time Card and signs that at least you have approached the Control from the correct direction. Sadly, the Marshal also points out that you have only written down 4 letter boards; not 5. RC1a to RC1e are on this section. You may or may not know why you could have missed one. Do not worry; it is your first event. You were not going to win anyway. What I have written into this experience report is this. The instructions tell you to take the longest route possible using the Grid Squares listed. In square 0463 is a triangle of 'yellow' roads near the crossroads. I have suggested you simply turned right at crossroads. You should go to the left and via that triangle; taking the 'longer' route to see the RC board around that loop. This is just an example of the accuracy that catches navigators out in the heat of the moment. Expert crews still make these errors on occasion as well.

As you arrived at STC 2 at 20.31, you have 6 minutes penalty for being later than your 'due' time, plus one missed Letter board. No problem, you are here to enjoy and learn. You must not make up time at an NTC, as it is a 'quiet' section, so you must take the allotted time; shown as 5 minutes to get to NTC 3, meaning you take 20.36 at NTC 3. You remind your driver to drive slowly and quietly through the village to NTC 3 and pull up at the Marshal. He will again ask you what time you want. You tell him; 20.36 on this occasion; 20.31 + 5 minutes. His clock may say earlier than that, 20.34 maybe, but you wait for the one you want. You will be penalised if book in early. Members at the Motor Club will teach and explain Rally Timing in more detail.

At this point you may realise you could use longer to wait before setting off again. The first section has already melted your brain! But no...you are off soon again. "...30seconds!" shouts the Marshal. You realise you are near the Map edge again so keep both Maps near. 'Where is your pencil?' 'Dropped it somewhere!' Make sure you have another! It can happen. "...15!" 'Found it...put it on the gear lever boot!' "...10 seconds!" The marshal has the slips of paper with the Route Handout teasingly close for you to grab at... "Please give me mine early...it is my first Rally!" "...5...here!" They give you it and count you down... "1...Go!"

The driver is away; wheels spinning and spaying mud from the roadside; way over excited now. You glance at the Navigation Instructions, see a list of different numbers; try to read it and realise you have already got to the first junction. Driver slows, "...which way?" he asks. You are not sure as you have had no time yet to work it out. You stop, regain composure...work it out and read the instructions. See Novice Navigation attached. Spot Heights and Grid Lines and another few RCs taking you onto Map 107 again.

As you look through the windscreen, you can see a Letter board on the far side of the grass triangle at the junction. The instructions say LW; long way, so you tell the driver to pull forward, go long way and stop to let you right it down on the Time Card. The next bit of Navigation seems to make immediate sense; cross Grid Lines 10, 61, 11. Really...it does! The road has a few tight bends, so you can warn the driver generally of that if you are not confident to 'read the road.' If you can.....
"200...30left...30right...300...90left...100...90right...200...45right...200...90left...300...90right...200
SGW at T junction...turn right but go LW round grass triangle to left first...RC at junction!
Whoa!! That section was fun!

Once having successfully arrived at STC 4; which I am assuming you have, the Navigation is straight forward describing the 'Transport Section' to TTC 5; Transport Time Control. Instruction state that you can 'make up lost time,' at TTC 5, which advises you to maybe complete the section at a 'brisker' pace, within speed restrictions and being quiet through villages and past properties at on the way. Once arriving at TTC 5, the Time Card allows 3 minutes 'make up.' This simply means that if it is possible to do so, you can take 9 minutes rather than the maximum 12 shown to travel between STC and TTC 5. Don't be concerned if it all appears confusing; fantastic if it does not, but all aspects of Rally Timing and Navigation you will want to learn are willingly offered at Motor Clubs.

Hopefully you have enjoyed the events so far. You have made up 3 minutes lateness at TTC 5 and are ready to go again. "Only 15 seconds!" says the Marshal, brandishing your next Route Handout.

I am not going to complete the whole route in this experience report, so this is about it. Plot it all and if you fancy learning; having a go, come along to the Motor Club to find out more. Club nights are on the website. Our advice would be to talk to members about what you are interested in, practice Navigation skills on Table Top Club Nights, maybe marshal a 12 Car Event with another member with a view to competing maybe...next time!

However well this first event went for you, so long as you enjoyed it; got back to the Pub finish venue for a drink and share your woes with other crews, and then all is good! Always the next one!

As you can see from The Beverley & District Motor Club Ltd website, we are involved in many Motor Sport events, as are all of the MSA affiliated Motor Clubs around the country. We not only have members competing in Road Navigational Rallies at night, having learned their skills on the 12 Car Rallies, but members also compete on Auto tests and many are regularly entered on Stage Rallying at local, National and International level. The Timing and Navigational skills learned on what may appear to be a small local 12 Car Rally, are the same ones magnified to a larger scale that you see World Rally Co-Drivers using as they keep the leading World Rally Drivers on Time and 'read' the Stages using intricate Pace Notes. They all started somewhere at a local Motor Club! MSA Motor Clubs are also regularly providing volunteer members to Marshal all levels of Rallying, from a local night rally to Rally Wales, World Championship round in the Welsh Forests.

Rallying is great fun! Come along...learn...enjoy!!