



**SONORA  
RALLY**

**GENERAL RULES  
2017**



## 1. Event Overview

SONORA RALLY loosely follows the FIA definition of a Cross Country Rally. Special stages throughout the day timed individually and linked together by liaisons or transit stages.

A SONORA RALLY Rally will typically consist of several Special Stages run over several days.

Each Special Stage will be scored individually. Liaisons (transits) will not be scored for speed but have maximum allowable time windows to complete. Ample time is allowed to complete each liaison section. There is no benefit to speeding and laying up.

Super Special Stages may also be included. Super Special Stages are typically very short (less than 10km) stages. A Super Special Stage may be used as the opening event of the rally to set the starting order for the first Special Stage of the event. Additional Super Special Stages may be included in the rally. A Super Special Stage is scored the same as a Special Stage and its results are included in the event.

## 2. Disclaimer

2.1. Off road racing is a hazardous sport and as such, no entrant, pit crew member or vehicle sponsor shall have any claim for damages, expenses, lawsuits or otherwise against promoter, track operator, SONORA RALLY, its officers, agents, directors, or entrants arising from damage to any vehicle, personal injury or death, or monetary loss of any kind whatsoever. Entrants, pit crew members or vehicle sponsors who voluntarily participate in any racing activities conducted under these rules, waive any claim they may have against promoter, track operator, SONORA RALLY, its officers, agents or directors.

2.2. SONORA RALLY assumes no responsibility whatsoever for delays, postponements and/or cancellations of all or part of an event because of inclement weather, unsafe course conditions and/or any other reason.

2.3. SONORA RALLY assumes no responsibility for impounded vehicles. SONORA RALLY intends to make reasonable efforts to ensure the vehicles' security.

## 3. Registration

3.1. SONORA RALLY reserves the right to refuse and/or deny any entry application or person.

3.2. Any entrant who fails to fully fill out and sign required entry forms and releases shall be disqualified and shall forfeit any prize money, points and contingencies won in that particular event. Entry forms and releases must be signed in person in front of SONORA RALLY entry personnel.

3.3. Any entry application containing a falsified signature will cause entrant to be disqualified and shall forfeit all prize money, points and contingencies won in that event.

3.4. No entrant may enter restricted areas, including tech inspection, until they have signed all releases and/or entry forms. No person shall sign the release or entry forms for anyone other than himself or herself. Proper identification may be required (i.e., picture ID).

3.5. Entrants must make all reasonable effort to arrive at the registration and pre-event technical inspection during the hours listed on event information sheets. Failure to do so may result in penalties being placed on entrant at the discretion of SONORA RALLY.

3.6. The entry applications of persons under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian sign the release form in the presence of SONORA RALLY officials. Identification of the guardian may be required.

## **4. Technical Inspection**

4.1. Each vehicle must pass a safety inspection before it will be permitted to begin in any SONORA RALLY event. A designated identification marker will be placed on the vehicle after successfully passing the safety inspection. The identification marker must remain on the vehicle until after the finish of the event.

4.2. Categories may be combined or split into multiple categories at the discretion of SONORA RALLY.

4.3. All personal protective gear will be checked at pre-event tech. This includes but is not limited to fire suits and helmets. First-aid kits, fire extinguishers, seat belts, and nets will also be checked.

4.4. SONORA RALLY reserves the right to subject any vehicle to a mechanical inspection at the discretion of the chief steward and/or chief technical inspector. In the event of a mechanical inspection, the driver of record will be responsible for removing or preparing the requested items to be inspected as directed. Failure to comply will result in disqualification of entrant and vehicle.

4.5. SONORA RALLY may impound all vehicles at the end of each day.

4.6. Post-event impound of all finishing vehicles is at the discretion of SONORA RALLY.

4.7. SONORA RALLY reserves the right to seal or impound any and all event vehicles.

4.8 All vehicles must have SONORA RALLY number decals in place to pass tech. Number plates will be provided at registration.

## 5. Behavior

5.1. Contact between vehicles including nerfing, bumping and pushing, intentional or accidental, is strictly prohibited in SONORA RALLY. Blocking or failure to pull over when caught is also strictly prohibited in SONORA RALLY. It is each competitor's responsibility to watch their mirrors and listen for horns and to pull over when caught to facilitate a clean pass. The RALLY COMP device installed in all vehicles has a "push to pass" alert system. If you are caught, the competitor behind you is faster, they have just come through your dust and you are required to pull over. If you receive an alarm and do not move over you run the risk of being penalized at the organizers discretion.

If you catch another competitor you are required to be patient, provide ample warning and make a clean no-contact pass. Protests for contact incidents are subject to review by the Operations Director including review of on-board camera video and interviews with the parties involved.

5.2. Drinking intoxicating beverages in the official pre-event technical inspection area and post event areas (i.e., impound, etc.), pits, on the course or in the surrounding areas by any person is strictly forbidden. The use of narcotics (amphetamines or any other stimulants, barbiturates) is forbidden.

## 6. Course

6.1. SONORA RALLY is a navigation rally on a secret course. Competitors are required to navigate using a roadbook and compass headings.

6.2. SONORA RALLY courses are not physically marked. The official course (route) is defined by both the road book and hidden GPS points (WPM's).

6.3. A competitor must pass all the WPMs on a special stage. Missed WPM's will result in a time penalty.

6.4. The Special Stages will be listed in the road book and in the stage timing file distributed at registration.

## 7. Timing

7.1. Excluding racing stages, there is an assigned time to travel between each official time control. The amount of time supplied is designed to allow the racer time to safely make it from one checkpoint to another while remaining under the speed limit of the road. There is a window of time in which to check in without penalty. Checking in before or after your window results in a timing penalty.

7.2. The size of the check in window is:

1. For the start of each day: two minutes.
2. For the arrival at the each racing stage: two minutes.

### 7.3. Examples:

At the very beginning of the rally, you have an assigned time, published beforehand, to leave the ceremonial start on a transit at 7:15:00. You need to present yourself at the start between 7:13:01 and 7:15:00 to receive your time card and begin your transit at 7:15:00.

After the ceremonial start, you have a 60 minute transit to the beginning of the first stage. Your start time, 7:15:00, plus 60 minutes is 8:15:00. You need to present yourself at the line between 8:13:01 and 8:15:00 to be ready to start at 8:15:00.

You finish racing Stage 1 at 9:30:24. There is a 60 minute transit time allowed to the start of Stage 2. Take the time you finished (ignoring the seconds) and add the transit time: 9:30:00 + 60 minutes is 10:30:00. This is the earliest you can check in.

Racers are free to ask the timing control marshals what time their official clocks have before they check in.

7.4. All liaison transit times will be provided on the time card.

7.5. The finish time for your special stage, minus the seconds, is the start or out time for the next liaison.

## 8. Time Controls

8.1. A time control is any location where the racer has a time recorded.

8.2. For the first Special (or Super Special) of the day, every vehicle must leave the start line at its designated start time. A vehicle that misses its assigned start time will be penalized and inserted into the starting lineup under direction from a SONORA RALLY official.

8.3. A vehicle that fails to start or finish a Special (or Super Special) stage shall be assigned a maximum time for the stage. The maximum time is determined by SONORA RALLY for each stage. An entry may miss or fail to complete one or more specials and remain in the event as long as the competitor has presented their time card at the first time control of the day.

8.4. If a competitor fails to start the first time control of the day, they may not race that day's specials however they can proceed down the highway to that night's bivouac and petition the Operation Director to be allowed to start the next day to remain in the rally. Failure to do this will result in the entry being removed from the starting order and scored as a DNF for the entire event.

8.5 A competitor cannot start a 2<sup>nd</sup>, or greater, stage unless all previous special stages that day have been completed. If a competitor fails to finish a special stage then that competitor is done for the day and will receive the maximum time for all remaining specials that day. The competitor is welcome to start the next day. A

competitor may not skip a special or dnf a special then jump into the next special. This rule is a safety rule to prevent slow vehicles from jumping in front of faster ones.

8.6. All vehicles must enter each stop checkpoint at a safe speed. Unsafe racing into and/or through any stop checkpoint is prohibited and subject to penalty up to and including disqualification. Safe speed is defined as speed at which a vehicle may make a controlled, non-skidding stop without endangering anyone within the immediate vicinity of the checkpoint, paved road crossing or pit areas.

8.7. Starting procedures will be announced at the drivers/riders meeting.

8.8. At all controls, only the Timing Marshal is allowed to write the time on the time card, vehicle time sheet, and control log.

8.9. Start Time Control

8.9.1. No vehicle may start a Special (or Super Special) stage prior to being instructed to do so by a SONORA RALLY official. Unauthorized early starts will be penalized up to and including disqualification.

8.9.2. Red signs with white flags will be on both sides of the vehicle lane at the start.

8.9.3. If a vehicle has an issue within the control zone the team needs to notify the Timing Marshal immediately that the appointed start time will be missed. This vehicle must clear the cone corridor and not delay any vehicles ready to take the start.

8.9.4. If a vehicle has a problem with the start; he or she needs to be moved immediately from the start to make space for the next vehicle to begin. If a team is not ready to go on course after the Timing Marshal has issued a start time, then a penalty will be assessed against that team. Note: the wise move here is to not approach the time control zone until you are completely ready to start.

8.9.5. Upon arrival at a Special Stage Start, vehicles will check in with the Timing Marshal when ready to start. Racers should remember that their time of arrival, as far as calculating timing penalties is concerned is when the drive up to the control, not when they start the stage. In this way the racer is not penalized if the Timing Marshal holds the start for safety or technical reasons.

8.9.6. A Timing Marshal is the person responsible for issuing and recording vehicle start and finish times at the beginning and end of each Special stage.

8.9.7. The Timing Marshal will ask the team "Are you ready to start?" If the team responds "Yes" than the Time Control Marshal will assign that teams start/departure time.

8.9.8. If Driver answers "YES" the Timing Marshal will assign the start time and then instruct the team to move to the start.

8.9.9. Starting Line control is designated by a corridor of signs, (2) stopwatch with yellow background, followed by (2) stopwatch with red background on each side of the vehicle lane.

8.9.10. Driver will get a 30 second countdown before they receive their start.

8.9.11. The starter will count down from 30-15-10-5,4,3,2,1 GO!

## 8.10. Finish Time Control

8.10.1. There are two locations to be aware of at a Finish Time Control. The Stop location and the Flying Finish location.

8.10.2. The Flying Finish location is where the official time for finishing the stage will be measured and it will be indicated by red checkered flags. Racers will continue at race speed until they have passed the red checkered flags, at which time they will immediately reduce their speed. The Flying Finish will be 100-200 meters (300-600 ft) before the Stop location.

8.10.3. The Stop location is after the Flying Finish, and will be indicated by red stop signs. All racers will stop at the Stop location to have their time cards filled out. All racers must use caution and safely approach the Stop location.

8.10.4. When a vehicle is approaching a Flying Finish there will be a corridor of markers set off by 2 yellow flags 100 meters (300ft) out to warn the team that the finish is approaching.

8.10.5. Teams need to slow their rate and be ready to make a full stop at the Stop signs signifying the Time Control.

8.10.6. The Timing Marshal will then write the finish time on the vehicle time slip, the master time control log, and the Driver/Rider Time Sheet.

8.10.7. Once the Timing Marshal records the finish time, the team will be released for the following liaison/transit.

## 8.11. Control Zone

8.11.1. Start Controls define their control zone as 100 meters before and 100 meters after.

8.11.2. Finish Controls define their control zone as 300 meters before and 100 meters after.

8.11.3. Within a Control Zone, no working on the vehicle is allowed excluding minor operations such as cleaning a windshield or applying a zip tie.

## 8.12 Time Control Layout

**Start of Zone: 2 signs with yellow background**      **Control: 2 signs with red background**      **End of Zone: 2 signs beige with background**



100 m



100 m



Check-in Stop

**Time Control**



100 m



100 m



Check-in Stop

**Time Control followed by Selective Section Start**



100 m



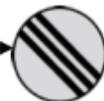
Check-in Stop

50 to 200 m



Check-in Stop

100



**Selective Section Start Coinciding with start of Stage**



100 m



Check-in Stop

100 m



**Selective Section Finish**



100 m



150 to 300 m



Check-in Stop

100 m



**Selective Section Finish at the Bivouac**



100 m



150 to 300 m



Check-in Stop



**Road Section Finish at the Bivouac**



Check-in Stop



## **9. Start Order Determination**

9.1. The Rally Director has the final say on any start order. All start orders, for maximum safety and minimum dust and passing, will attempt to have the faster vehicles leaving first and the slower vehicles leaving last.

9.2. The Start Order for the beginning of the rally will be determined by using historical race data on the entrants, as well as comparing the racers that SONORA RALLY does not yet have data on to other racers in similar races. Entrants new to SONORA RALLY are encouraged to provide a racing resume directly to the Race Director.

9.3. Racers who feel that their position on a start order is too high or too low may petition for a change only by filling out the proper paperwork and delivering it to the Race Director for consideration.

9.4. A Super Special Stage may be held as the first competitive event of the rally, the results of which may be used to determine the starting order for the first Special Stage of the Rally.

9.5. Starting Order for the first Special Stage each day after the first will be based, not on the results, but rather on the modified average speed of each entrant. The average speeds for each stage are computed. Some stages will be thrown out in an effort to ignore anomalies (such as stages where a racer was stuck in a ditch for four hours), and the remaining "good" stages are averaged together. These calculations are based on all previous days, to get the best possible picture of the representative speed of each vehicle. The racers are then ranked with the highest result first and lowest result last. No penalty times are included when determining the mid-rally start orders.

9.6. The starting order for the first Special Stage of the day will be published at least 3 hours prior to start.

9.7. All vehicles must be lined up in the order published that morning and ready to go 30 minutes before the starter calls for their start.

9.8. A vehicle that misses its assigned start time will be inserted into the starting lineup under direction from a SONORA RALLY official.

9.9. Vehicles will start at either 60 second or 30 second intervals, as directed by the Timing Marshal, except in the special case of a mass start.

## **10. Penalties**

10.1. SONORA RALLY shall have the authority to penalize any entrant 20 minutes up to and including disqualification and/or suspension if found to have committed violations of general rules.

10.2. SONORA RALLY shall have the authority to penalize, disqualify and/or suspend any entrant for violations of vehicle technical rules.

10.3. Any entrant disqualified from any event for any reason whatsoever forfeits any and all rights to prize money, points and contingencies. Entrant will not be entitled to a refund of all or any portion of his/her entry fee.

10.4. The following list of penalties is a guideline used by SONORA RALLY. Depending upon circumstances of the infraction, the actual penalty may be modified from these guidelines.

#### 10.4.1 Timing

10.4.1.1 Starting out of sequence at a stage with a published start order: 10 minutes.

10.4.1.2 For each minute that a racer arrives before their assigned time at a time control: two minutes

10.4.1.3 For each minute that a racer arrives after their assigned time at a control: one minute.

10.4.1.4 Arriving at the finish of the day without the officially issued time card: one hour up to max stage times for all stages listed on that card.

#### 10.4.2. Checkpoints

10.4.2.1. Speeding through and/or unsafe racing up to or through a stop checkpoint: Disqualification.

10.4.2.2. Rolling through a stop checkpoint (i.e. failure to come to a complete stop): 15 minutes.

10.4.2.3 Missing a WPM: 20 minutes.

10.4.2.4 Opening a WPM: 10 minutes.

10.4.2.5. Missing the final control of the day: 30 minutes.

10.4.2.6. Passing an open control without checking in: 2 hours.

#### 10.4.3. Location

10.4.3.1. Entrant vehicle traveling on the course in the reverse direction of the event, before the official closing of the Special stage: Disqualification.

10.4.3.2. Pit support vehicles traveling on the course in the reverse direction of the event, before the official closing of Special stage: Disqualification.

10.4.3.3. Stationary pits or chase crews or traveling in restricted areas: Disqualification.

10.4.3.4. Deviation outside the allowable course tolerance: Judgment will be made as to severity with penalties ranging from time penalties up to and including disqualification. Short coursing typically results in exclusion from the Special stage results and entry is assigned the maximum penalty for the Special stage (same as failing to complete a Special stage).

#### 10.4.4. Conduct:

10.4.4.1. Unsportsmanlike conduct or conduct that belies SONORA RALLY's tradition of fun, safety, and brotherhood in the desert: from 30 minutes up to disqualification, at the Rally Director's discretion.

10.4.4.2. Nerfing or contact with another vehicle: Time penalty or disqualification and possible suspension from future events. Subject to review and investigation by Rally Director.

10.4.4.3. Abusive conduct toward a SONORA RALLY official: Disqualification.

10.4.4.4. Reckless driving in pit areas or any access roads by entrant vehicle or support vehicles: Disqualification.

10.4.4.5. Failure to appear before the Chief Steward or Rally Director when requested: 1 hour.

10.4.4.6. Unsafe racing across any paved road crossing is prohibited and subject to penalty up to and including disqualification

#### 10.4.5. Speeding

10.4.5.1 Speeding on transits: competitors must respect local traffic and speed regulations at all times. If you are stopped by local law enforcement you will not be credited back any lost time. Following penalties when a speed limit is posted in the road book for every 2 seconds over the limit: 5-10 KPH over: 1 minute 11-20 KPH over: 5 minutes 21-35 KPH over: 45 minutes 35-45 KPH over: 4 hours 46+ KPH over: disqualification

10.4.5.2 Speed Zones: speeding in speed zones listed in the road book during special stages: 1 minute for every 2 seconds over the limit.

#### 10.4.6. Equipment:

10.4.5.1. Competitor supplied GPS did not record complete tracks for all Special Stages and Liaisons: 30 minutes up to maximum stage time.

10.4.6.2. Missing RALLY COMP tracker, tracking not enabled, or miss-configured RALLY COMP tracker button messages in online setup: 1 hour

10.4.6.3. Damaged, tampering with, or failure of power to Rally Comp: 30 minutes up to maximum stage time.

## **11. Scoring**

11.1. An entrant's official time shall be the sum total of the elapsed time of each Special stage plus the total elapsed time of each Super Special stage plus any time penalties, less any time bonuses.

11.2. The winner of each category shall be the entrant with the lowest official time.

11.3. No vehicle shall be towed, pushed, pulled or transported by any non-event-entered vehicle on the official course while an official event is still in progress. This includes the time controls.

11.4. The Driver or Rider of Record must drive/ride each day.

11.5. No scores posted during the rally, either online or on-site, are final until they are marked final and signed.

## **12. Timing Inquiries**

12.1. Each day the scores are posted in the evening. It is the entrant's responsibility to review their scores and penalties. If the racer believes that any scores are incorrect, they must file a Scoring Inquiry form to have times reviewed.

12.2. Any racer can file an inquiry asking a question about another racer's score.

12.3. On the final day, the official Provisional Scores will be posted. Once posted, a 60 minute window remains in which to file Scoring Inquiries. For any Scoring Inquiries, verbal questions, and emails submitted after the 60 minute period, SONORA RALLY is under no obligation to change any scores, either the results posted on site or the results posted online, even if the scores as they stand are incorrect, wrong, inaccurate, or mistaken.

12.4. Once all Scoring Inquiries received within the 60 minute window are processed, Revised Scores will be posted that will be the results used to give awards. SONORA RALLY reserves the right to correct scoring inaccuracies after this period, however, the Revised Scores are generally considered final.

## **13. Protests**

13.1. The Rally Director, with or without protest, has the right to penalize, fine, disqualify, and/or suspend any vehicle or entrant for violation of any SONORA RALLY rules.

13.2. An entrant may protest another entrant within the same category for technical and class compliance. A five hundred-dollar (\$500) cash fee must accompany protests for each item protested. The protest must be in writing along with the fee and be delivered to the Steward or Rally Director no later than 30 minutes after the official end of time limit. If the protest is proved valid the \$500 fee will be returned to the protestor. If the protest is proved invalid the \$500 goes to the person who was protested. Protests considered by the Steward that shows a lack of sportsmanship may not be accepted. The Steward will direct the technical director to check the protested items. The decision of the Steward and Rally Director will be final. Interpretation of all rules along with violations and penalties thereof are at the discretion of SONORA RALLY. Penalties levied at the discretion of SONORA RALLY are final.

13.3. Any entrant who has an official protest lodged against his/her vehicle must submit to an inspection of the protested items. Failure to submit to inspection may result in automatic disqualification and/or suspension. Those attending the inspection(s) will be as follows:

- The protester or their designated representative.
- The protested competitor or their designated representative.
- The protested competitor's mechanic.
- SONORA RALLY officials.

13.4. A complaint filed for improper driving or conduct does not require a cash fee. The complaint must be filed in writing with the Steward or Rally Director no later than the closing time of the final control on the day of the incident. A complaint may be verbally filed with any radio equipped SONORA RALLY official if entrant filing the complaint is broken down on the track. The official will notify the Steward or Rally Director of the complaint.

## **14. Race Staff**

14.1. Chairman and Chief Steward – DARREN SKILTON. This person creates the event, guides the concept of the event, and builds the team for the event. They liaise with sponsors, as well as city and government officials to organize promotion and procure permits. This person is the impartial referee for any sporting issues. Under optimal conditions this person will have a long rally and desert racing history. To best achieve impartiality, the Steward does not participate in the operations of controls. The Steward contributes to sporting decisions.

14.2. Rally Operations – SCOTT WHITNEY. This person conducts the communication hub and tracking operations during the event. They are in charge of roadbooks, Rally Comp files and route creation.

14.3. Rally Director – RODOLFO FERNANDEZ. This person is the on site logistics director. They coordinate with course marshals, volunteers, local authorities. They

authorizes stages to start and stop, and contributes to sporting decisions such as penalties, inquiries, and protests.

14.4. Registrar – ERIN LEE SKILTON. The person manages all aspects of racer registration and determines whether each entrant has satisfied their mandated waivers.

14.5. Chief Scrutineer/Chief of Tech – JOE DESROSIERS. This person inspects the vehicles for safety compliance and reports which vehicles are cleared to race.

14.6. Scoring Chief – ERIC WHITNEY. This person manages the calculation of the times and penalties of racers. The Scoring Chief is empowered to fix timing related errors such as would be caused by illegible numbers and may contribute to sporting decisions. The Scoring Chief does not have the authority to solely rule on inquiries or protests.

14.7. Marshal –Any person stationed on the course.

14.8. Timing Marshal –A person involved in recording times at a time control.

## 15. Miscellaneous

15.1. All drivers and co-drivers of record as listed on the official SONORA RALLY entry form must attend all drivers/riders meetings. Failure to do so may result in penalties of up to and including disqualification and/or fines. Wristband checks and written roll calls may be made at the meeting.

15.2. All entrants must report all accidents and/or breakdowns they may have witnessed. Entrant must inform a SONORA RALLY official at the next stop check point, paved road crossing, pit stop or by radio (if so equipped) of the location, vehicle number, and injuries, if any.

15.3. All entrants may be checked for their wristband and all vehicles may be checked for the technical inspection sticker at any or all checkpoints or paved road crossings. Every entrant is responsible for his/her wristband and vehicle technical inspection sticker. Any entrant found not to have a wristband or vehicle without technical inspection sticker may cause that vehicle to be disqualified.

15.4. A RALLY COMP GPS recorder will be supplied and mandated on each vehicle. This will also be recording the start and finish times and this data will be downloaded at the completion of each day.

