



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRIALS ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

Revised May 2008 v5

Promoting the sport of Observed Trials in Southern California

The SCTA Championship Series normally runs from September through March. Other, non-Championship Series events may be scheduled from April through August.

TECH AND SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

- Operating front and rear brakes
- FIM-approved trials tire not exceeding 4.00-inch cross section (Novice excluded)
- NATC-approved motorcycle helmet
- Functioning kill switch, handlebar-mounted
- Ball-end levers
- USFS-approved spark arrestor at events where required.
- Number Plate (See rules)

INTRODUCTION

Observed trials is a form of off-road motorcycle competition that began in England shortly after the motorcycle was invented. Competition difficulty has dramatically increased over the years as more sophisticated motorcycle engines, suspension systems and riding techniques have been developed.

Today's contestants ride highly specialized motorcycles (such as Beta, Gas Gas, Montesa, Scorpa and Sherco) imported from Italy, Spain and France. They are state-of-the-art water-cooled machines with disc brakes, exotic metal components, no seat, and weigh in the vicinity of 150 pounds.

The sport challenges a competitor's ability to ride over difficult large and small natural terrain obstacles maintain complete throttle, clutch and brake control while not touching his or her feet to the ground. Trials bikes are ridden at low speed and requires significant rider coordination. The rider must balance and maintain complete control of the motorcycle while simultaneously executing precise maneuvers through section obstacles.

Each section has start gates and finish gates, and in between, the rider must stay within boundaries established by ribbon. Each time a rider's foot touches the ground once it is scored as one "dab". Five is the maximum assessment per section. A typical event will have 10 sections spread over a three or four-mile course called a "loop". Competitors typically ride the loop three times for a total of 30 sections, though some events may have, for example, seven sections ridden four times.

The competitor with the lowest score in each skill level is declared a winner. It is a challenging sport that has classes for everyone, young and old alike: Novice, Sportsman, Intermediate,

Clubman, Advanced, Expert and Pro. Riders that compete Nationally are usually of Advanced or better ability.

Welcome to the Southern California Trials Association. Have a safe riding experience and enjoy the sport of trials with your family and friends.

SOME DOs AND DON'Ts

Observed trials has long been enjoyed and supported by sportsman; a pure competitive sport, free from the pressures and confinement of commercialism. To help enjoy our activity and to enhance the pleasant participation of other contestants and spectators, the Southern California Trials Association offers the following suggestions:

1. On your last ride through a section, thank the observer/checker without these devoted people, the sport could not exist.
2. Don't harass or argue with the observer/checker. Direct your complaint or concern to the course marshal.
3. Don't be an announcer. Let the observer/checker do the scoring. If you're not officially involved, stay that way.
4. Don't block the section. Give other riders the courtesy of riding room.
5. If you stall in a section, do get out the quickest, shortest way without plowing up the section.
6. Do not harass a rider while he is in a section.
7. When lining up to ride a section, do give the rider behind you a break; shut off your engine. Your spark plugs will be happier too.
8. Don't ride the loop against traffic. Ride the proper direction with courtesy and caution.
9. Do comply with the rules of the property owner, whether public or private.
10. Do applaud a good ride. Whether friend or rival, everyone enjoys recognition for their efforts.

RULES COMPLIANCE, Article 100.

Every entrant, upon acceptance of entry, shall comply with all established and supplementary rules set down by the SCTA, its representatives and any officials designated by the SCTA event sponsoring club. Failure to comply with established and supplementary rules may result in expulsion, disqualification and/or suspension. Any rider found to have conducted himself in a un-sportsman-like manner will be assessed 25 penalty points for each infraction, or disqualification from the event at the discretion of the course marshal. This decision may be protested in writing by the rider and presented at the next SCTA meeting for final adjudication. Intentional infractions of any rules by a sponsoring club are subject to a maximum \$100 fine by the SCTA.

MEMBERSHIP, Article 101.

Southern California Trials Association (SCTA) membership fee is \$20 per rider or family per year. The SCTA will not accept dues from any rider or family that does not have a club affiliation. Non-SCTA riders must purchase a one-day SCTA membership for \$5 to compete in SCTA events. That fee will go to the SCTA.

Family membership is two or more people living at the same address related by birth, marriage or adoption. Any child under 15 years of age may join the SCTA without cost when accompanied by an adult SCTA member.

The SCTA will maintain a membership list (or otherwise record) specifying class, club, and member number that will remain with the member or family as long as they maintain their membership. Membership cards of past presidents will specify that status. Past and present SCTA (or American Trials Association) presidents ride events free only if they are a current SCTA member and only the year they are in office and one year after. (ATA Presidents in office prior to 1992 may continue to ride free for life.)

RIDER ELIGIBILITY, Article 102.

All competitors and officials at SCTA-sanctioned events must wear an NATC-approved motorcycle helmet when riding the loop or sections of an SCTA event. A competitor may compete on only one motorcycle and in only one class at each event.

OFFICIALS, Article 103.

The Course Marshal is the final authority for all aspects of the sponsoring club's event. The Course Marshal shall not compete in the event. The sponsoring club will announce the names of the Course Marshal at the riders meeting conducted immediately prior to the event.

Checkers/Observers. At least one checker at each section must be 15 years of age, or older. Service as an official at an SCTA sanctioned event is an experience both individually rewarding, and necessary for the SCTA and member clubs to ensure successful events takes place throughout the competitive year.

SCTA members (except those in the Pro Class) may serve as an official at as many event as they choose. However, SCTA members will receive first place Championship Series Points for working as an official no more than three times in a Championship Series. Pro Class riders may officiate for points no more than once per Championship Series. Any individual competitor who does not officiate at least one event of a Championship Series shall have 60 Championship Series Points removed from his Series total. Competitors under 15 years old and those riding less than two events in a Championship Series are exempt from this penalty.

COMPETITION CLASSES, Article 104.

There is no required minimum entry to establish a Championship Series Points-paying class. No divisions will be made regarding motorcycle engine displacement for Championship Series Points.

1. PRO. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Pro status.
2. EXPERT. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Expert status.
3. ADVANCED. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant advanced status.
4. CLUBMAN. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Clubman status.

5. INTERMEDIATE. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Intermediate status.
6. SPORTSMAN. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Sportsman status
7. NOVICE. Any competitor who has the experience and demonstrated ability to warrant Novice status.

A Rider may only compete below his current skill level if he rides “No Points, No Trophy.” Riders may move into a higher skill level to “test the water.” Such a ride must be declared by the rider at the time of sign up and will be ridden “No Points, No Trophy.” These riders will not be official finishers in the class, and will have no effect on other riders’ Championship Series points.

Additional classes may be run at the option of the sponsoring club; however, Championship Series Points will not be awarded. Those classes may include but are not limited to:

- Open. No points or trophy awarded. Rider chooses a line to ride, but may not intentionally ride over signage, outside the section or backward in the section.
- Women’s class (females only).
- Trail bike; any non-trials-type motorcycle.
- 1st Time Beginner. For any competitor who has never competed in an observed trial.
- Vintage Class. Dual shock trials bikes.

PRO CLASS, Article 105.

All entry fees of Pro class riders will be used to create a purse for the event. Additional monies may be added to the purse at the discretion of the sponsoring club. Purse payouts schedule:

- 1-3 entrants: 100% for 1st Place
- 4-5 entrants: 67% for 1st, 33% for 2nd
- 6 or more entrants: 50% for 1st, 30% for 2nd, 20% for 3rd

MOTORCYCLE REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY, Article 106.

Motorcycles of all competitors and officials at SCTA-sanctioned events will comply with all legal requirements for the area in which they are competing. Handlebar-mounted levers must be ball-ended for safety reasons. A functioning killswitch must be located on the handlebars. All foot and hand controls must be in proper operating condition.

Tires. Any type tire is eligible in the Novice class, including knobby-treaded tires. All other classes must use recognized trials-pattern tires. Tire tread in all classes may be cut or altered providing no change in the tread pattern is made.

Number plates. Front number plates should have a written indication of the class the rider is competing in. Riders without this indication (or an indication of a class other than the one he is entered in) must call his class name out to the officials at each section before entering the section. Recommended number plate colors are as follows: Pro/black, Expert/red, Advanced/white, Clubman/orange, Intermediate/yellow, Sportsman/green, Novice/blue.

THE TRIALS COURSE, Article 107.

The loop will be marked in a clear manner. SCTA-spec loop cards, sign-up, loop markers and ribbon will be used by each club to provide for uniform signage between trials events. Each section must be suitably marked with pairs of wooden stakes, wire stakes, flags and/or ribbon. Opposing stakes or ribbon should be a minimum four-feet apart. Each section must contain section-start and section-end cards. All start and end cards will be numbered signifying the section's relative numerical sequence on the loop.

Sections must not be unnecessary dangerous or designed in such a way that all classes cannot successfully negotiate the section. The section does not have to be cleanable, but, it must not contain impossible turns, descents, ascents or other obstacles. The capabilities of both the lowest and highest rider in each class should always be considered during section design. To the maximum extent practicable, all sections should be test ridden by a non-competing member to ensure compliance.

Sections should be ridden in numerical sequence. Riders are not obligated to start Loop One at Section One, unless directed to do so at the riders meeting. Second and subsequent loops will start at Section One. The loop must be ridden in one direction only, unless otherwise signed. The loop must be ridden the number of times specified at the riders meeting and completed within the time limit specified at the riders meeting.

Competitors must ride their designated sections only. Practice in any section before or during the event is strictly prohibited. Inspection on foot prior to riding the sections is strongly recommended. No changes are allowed to the sections at any time without the specific consent of the Course Marshal. Changes to the time limit or number of loops to be ridden are not allowed after the riders meeting is adjourned.

SCORING, Article 108.

SCTA "fault" and "failure" definitions are based on North American Trials Council rules.

The checking officials at each observed section should be stationed so the entire section is plainly visible. When more than one observer is required, penalties will be called to the observer at the end of the section. To ensure consistency of scoring, observers shall not be changed during the event. The observer shall show a raised, balled fist and announce rider in a loud voice to authorize a rider to start riding the section. Scoring begins when the front axle passes between the start markers, and ends when the front axle passes between the end markers.

Any course official, including a section Head Observer, has the authority to close a section or part of the loop for unforeseen reasons, including, but not limited to, natural disasters or rider

injury. In cases when part of the field has ridden a section on a loop before it has been closed, scores for rides on that loop will be deleted.

Scoring will be based on the FIM observed trials scoring system as follows:

ERRORS PENALTY

1 Fault =1-Point

2 Faults = 2-Points

More than two faults = 3-Points

Failure = 5-Points

A. Fault Definitions:

1. Footing. Any contact providing support between any part of the rider's body or machine (exceptions: tires, footpegs, skid plate) with the ground or an obstacle (tree, rock, etc.). Footing can occur either inside or outside the boundary. Footing with the rider's foot on the peg carries no penalty.
2. Foot rotation/pivot counts as one point.
3. Sliding a foot counts as three points
4. Both feet placed on the ground simultaneously counts as two points.

B. Failure Definitions:

1. The machine is moving backwards, with or without the rider footing.
2. Any displacement of a marker by direct contact by the machine or rider that requires the marker be reset—such as breaking or knocking down. Touching a boundary is not a failure.
3. The rider dismounts from the machine and has both feet on the ground on the same side of or behind the machine.
4. The rider does not have both hands on the handlebar when footing while stationary.
5. The rider receives outside assistance.
6. The rider or minder changes the condition of a section.
7. The rider begins a section attempt without observer acknowledgment.
8. The engine stops while footing or while any other part of the machine, except for the tires, is used for support, without forward motion. (The motorcycle must be moving forward while footing with a dead engine to avoid a Failure.)
9. If the handlebar is used for support and the motorcycle is beyond 45-degrees from vertical.
10. The motorcycle does a complete circle, crossing both its own tracks, with both tires.
11. The rider fails to pass through all the gates for his class.
12. The front wheel must precede the back wheel when passing through the gates.
13. The rider passes, in either direction through a gate of another class, breaking the plane of a gate. A gate for a class other than your own constitutes a boundary.
14. When a marker is passed by either tire on the out-of-bounds side of the marker with the tire on the ground. In the case of running over a taped boundary, there must be ground visible between the tape and the tire and the tire must be on the ground on the out-of-bounds side of the tape.
15. It is permitted to float one wheel over a marker, but not both wheels—for example, jumping the bike outside a boundary is a failure.

16. The front axle must pass between the start gates and end gates. The front axle is only allowed to pass between the start gates once.

17. A rider may report to the observer and receive a five for that section, even though he does not attempt it.

18. Only the greatest penalty, as defined above, shall be counted for the section. However, the following points may be added:

C. Other Penalties:

1. DNF/Did Not Finish: Any rider who does not entirely complete one loop (all sections scored) will be shown as a DNF in results. No rider completing at least one entire loop will be listed as DNF.

2. Complete loss of a loop card will result in a 10-points-per-section penalty for that loop. A partial loss of a loop card will result in a 10-points-per-section penalty for the lost scoring portion of the card.

3. Any section ridden more than once per loop will receive 10 points, in addition to the first attempt score.

4. Any sections on a loop card that are not scored will be assessed a 10-point penalty.

5. Practice in any of the sections before or during the event will result in disqualification of the rider from the trial. Sections may be inspected on foot at any time.

6. A rider waiting in line to enter a section must not leave his machine. If he does, he must go to the end of the line unless all other riders in line agree to let him retain his place in line. Refusal to comply may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

7. Unsportsmanlike conduct, offensive behavior or language, by a rider or minder, can result in a penalty up to 25 points. The penalty can be given at the sole discretion of any observer or course official.

8. Violation of these supplemental riding rules by the rider or minder will result in a penalty ranging from 5 points to exclusion from the trial. If the rider refuses to present his card to the Observer for punching of the additional penalty or leaves the scene of the infraction, the observer shall document the circumstance and report it to the Course Marshal. The appropriate penalty, in addition to the initial penalty, will be assessed by the Course Marshal.

D. Protests

1. If a rider is severely distracted, or if spectators or other riders in the section block his line, he may claim a balk and request a re-ride. At the discretion of the section observer, a re-ride of the section can be permitted. However, the re-ride will be the ride of record, even if the score is higher than the first ride.

2. It is the rider's responsibility to acknowledge his score and verify his scorecard is punched correctly at each section immediately upon completion of the attempt. Disagreement with the observer must be noted and settled, if possible, without inconveniencing or delaying other riders, while the situation is fresh in everyone's mind. Scoring protests will not be heard if the observer was not made aware of the conflict immediately after the section attempt.

3. No person may protest another rider's score.

4. Only the rider can protest his own penalty.

5. Protests must be filed with the Course Marshal as soon as practical, but not later than 30 minutes after the results have been posted. The Course Marshal shall render all decisions on

protests as soon as possible, but no decision shall be made before all the pertinent observers have been interviewed.

E. Ties:

1. In case of ties, the competitor with the most cleans, and then ones, twos or threes will win. If still tied, then the system of farthest cleans; 1s, 2s, or 3s will be used. If still tied, the rider who scored first (starting with Loop One, Section One) will be given the lower finishing position. Identical loop cards will result in a tie, with both riders equally splitting the championship points of the position they tied for and the position behind it.

AWARDS, Article 109.

The style, shape, design, or type of awards presented will be left to the discretion of the sponsoring club. Time is of the essence in presenting the awards to make them more meaningful. Awards should be distributed as follows:

No award for fewer than 3 entries

1 award for 3-5 entries

2 awards for 6-10 entries

3 awards for 11-15 entries

4 awards for 16-20 entries

5 awards for 21-25 entries

6 awards for 26-30 entries

7 awards for 31-35 entries

8 awards for 36-40 entries

9 awards for 41-45 entries

10 awards for over 45 entries

Additional or special awards may be presented at the discretion of the sponsoring club.

CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES POINTS, Article 110.

Championship Series Points are awarded to all SCTA event competitors who successfully complete an SCTA points paying event and class. A rider who Did Not Finish (DNF; see Article 108; C1) will not receive Championship Series Points.

Any SCTA member acting as an official (official observer, course marshal or signup/scorekeeper) at an event will receive first place Championship Series Points for that event. An SCTA member cannot officiate for points more than three times per Championship Series (Pro class riders may only officiate once per Championship Series for points).

An official will receive first place Championship Series Points for checking one day of a two-day event.

The rider with the most Championship Series Points in his class during the SCTA Championship Series shall be Number One (#1) and so on down to last place.

SCTA Championship Series Points are awarded as follows:

1st Place = 30 points
2nd Place = 25 points
3rd Place = 21 points
4th Place = 18 points
5th Place = 16 points
6th-20th Places = Decreases 1-point per position
21st-29th Places = Decreases 0.1-point per position
30th-39th Decreases .01-point per position

In case of a Championship Series Points tie at the end of the Series, the rider with the lowest overall score at those events where the riders competed against each other will win. If still tied, the total number of cleans, 1s, 2s, then 3s, at the first event of the series where the two riders competed against each other will be used. When the riders did not ride the same events and they are still tied, then the rider in the event with the largest entry, meaning that he or she beat more competitors, will win. In all classes, year end SCTA Championship Series ties for 11th place and beyond in the class will be listed as finishing in the same place.

SPONSORING CLUB GENERAL REQUIREMENTS, Article 111.

All SCTA-sanctioned events must contain all classes as defined in the Official SCTA Rule Book, with proper lines and splits. Any event failing to comply will not carry an SCTA sanction and will not pay points to any individual or class.

The sponsoring club will make every effort to ensure the sections and loops are not dangerous for riders on any skill level or too strenuous for the riders of any age.

The sponsoring club must conduct a tech inspection of all competitors' motorcycles to ensure each bike complies with the equipment regulations of the SCTA and the riding area.

The sponsoring club must furnish a copy of the results to SCTA website within 15 working days following their event. The sponsoring club may provide every finishing rider with an award such as, but not limited to, a pin, certificate, ribbon or T-shirt. A club has 90 days to present all awards.

The sponsoring club of an SCTA-points-paying event must remit \$1 per SCTA member rider and \$5 per one-day SCTA member rider to the SCTA.

All SCTA-sanctioned events must have sufficient sanitary facilities

If entries are to be limited, the maximum number to be allowed must be stated well in advance and any entries beyond the stated limit must be notified at least one week prior to the event.

Entries will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis.

The SCTA will reimburse the sponsoring club \$5 for each past, or present, president riding its SCTA-sanctioned event at no charge.

Newcomer Helper. Sponsoring Club will designate an individual to assist first-time trials riders, or riders new to our sport. At a minimum, the Newcomer Helper will ride the first loop, provide instruction as necessary, offer direction, answer questions and ensure first-time trials riders are properly introduced to the sport of trials. Newcomer Helper will be identified at the riders' meeting, at which time, new riders or first-time riders identified. Designation as a Newcomer Helper does not remove the individual from competition; that person may also compete in his regularly ridden skill level.

LIABILITY FOR DAMAGE, Article 112.

Any entrant is liable for any damage caused by him, his rider or passenger, or any agent, representative or servant acting on his behalf, during the day or days of any event.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, Article 113.

It is a condition of acceptance of membership in the Southern California Trials Association that the SCTA or its affiliates shall not be held responsible or liable for any damage to a motorcycle or its accessories whether by fire, accident, or any other causes, nor theft of a motorcycle or its accessories the day or days of any event. It is a condition of acceptance of entry that the SCTA and its affiliates shall not be held responsible in any way for personal injuries, loss of life or limb incurred by entrants competing in any event. The SCTA does not provide medical insurance coverage. The SCTA urges you to not compete in SCTA-sanctioned events without adequate personal medical insurance coverage.

COMPETITIVE EVENT SCHEDULE, Article 114.

The SCTA Championship Series calendar for the following season's competitive events will be determined at the May SCTA Board Meeting. Dates may be exchanged between SCTA clubs if approved by a vote of the SCTA member clubs at a monthly meeting prior to the event.

Any club that does not hold its scheduled event on the approved SCTA calendar must reschedule or permanently cancel the event, and specify the rescheduled date no later than before the adjournment of the next regularly scheduled SCTA meeting.

RULE CHANGES, Article 115.

Any rule, once instituted, cannot be changed for one year from the date it goes into effect. All rules remain in effect until changed, superseded or repealed. A rule can only be changed, superseded or repealed by a written request to the SCTA Board that is voted upon and approved by the SCTA Board. Proposed rule changes must be submitted in writing to the SCTA Board no later than the March SCTA Board Meeting unless extended by a majority vote of the Board. Rule change proposals must be submitted by club representatives or SCTA Board Members. Rule change proposals submitted by individual SCTA members will not be considered. The intent is to preclude the submission of rule changes that may possibly be construed as self-serving, to simultaneously enhance club involvement, and, to support the sound democratic process of the SCTA organization. Rule change proposals will be voted on by the SCTA Board during the May SCTA Board Meeting, unless extended by a majority vote of the Board.