

POST RALLY DEBRIEF RALLYMASTER'S CRITIQUE OF THE COURSE

When I started putting this rally together, I was planning a route that went north through Lebec, across Lockwood Valley, and down 33. I found a really nice maze in Ojai on a previous scout, and I figured to work that in. The first day I went out to look at roads for this rally, I-5 was closed, Lockwood was closed solid, and 33 was closed. Heaviest snowfall in anyone's memory. I decided on a low altitude route, and rewrote the rally that morning. Some people say I write better rallies when I don't think about them so much. By the time you read this, we'll know whether or not that's true.

The following discusses the routes in detail. If you don't have a set of Official Maps and Route Instructions, you should get them at the link below, so you can follow along with the discussion.

<http://www.rallyroutes.com/TrainingWheelsRally.zip>

Experienced rallyists will be able to determine much of the intended course ("preferred route") using the Route Instructions, Official Maps, and Generals. This critique may be a bit verbose at times, but it's meant to take you step by step through what is, really, a very simple process. The Route Instructions specify the exact location of each Standoff and Course Control. You need to determine where the Checkpoints might be, and where they cannot be, and then plan your course..

LEG 1

I've been wanting to do a demo leg as part of the school for a long time. I finally found a parking lot that seemed to work. I hope nothing special was going on at the park, and that the location worked out ok. I hope it helped illustrate how to deal with active vs. passive Checkpoints.

COURSE CONTROL 1

This was a good example of the textbook use of an unstaffed Course Control, as a means to control rally traffic past certain points, i.e., to force you to go a certain way. Traffic on the 101 approaching the 405 bogs down sometimes, so CC 1 was to take you up to the 405 at Victory to avoid some of the potential problems.

Also worth discussing, the Generals state that the placement of the information about Course Controls in the Route Instructions does not necessarily correspond to where you collect those Course Controls during the rally. On this event, all the Course Controls were grouped together at the beginning of the Route Instructions. You had to figure out when to get them. Each Course Control showed a turn in location in the Route Instructions. That gave you a point before which you had to get each CC. You then just had to find the most convenient and logical place on course to do that.

LEG 2

In the beginning, it seemed hard to tell where this leg might be. Roads which fit the “from the south” requirement, and which might be within reach of Inmarker 4 (Leg 3 was deleted before the rally started) included:

Lake Hughes Rd.

Bouquet Canyon Rd.

Sand Canyon Rd.

Sierra Hwy.

Agua Dulce Rd. (unnamed on map)

San Francisquito Canyon Rd.

Vasquez Canyon Rd. and

Spunky Canyon Rd.

Ridge Route could be excluded north of Templin Hwy, because it has unpaved sections, but was eligible south of Templin.

With so many choices, you go with a process of elimination, and you’d definitely have to look for other info that could impact this leg. Generally, in such a case, you’ll need to look to the following leg for possible help, since you’ll need to be able to get there in the time allowed on that leg. That was true here, and, in this case, you also had a Course Control (2) to pick up. Further, both Legs 2 and 4 had a mileage marker in their Passage Control information. The Passage Control sign is useful since any intended Inmarker is declared to be within one mile of the pictured sign. So there were several things to factor in.

First, the Leg 2 Passage Control sign was a mile marker “19.32”. Map 1 shows only 4 roads long enough (more than 19.32 miles on the map) to have such a marker: Lake Hughes Rd., San Francisquito Rd., Sierra Hwy., and Bouquet Canyon Rd. That cuts our choices by more than half. All 4 of those remaining roads are a little over 20 miles in length, and, in general, mile markers in L.A. county run from north to south, but that is not 100% consistent, so never bet the farm on it. But in any case, the mile marker for Leg 2 indicates that the Inmarker would be near one end, either the north or south end, more likely the south, of one of these roads.

Next look at Leg 4, just below. For Leg 4, you didn’t really need any info at Standoff. You had enough in the Routes to figure it out. It would be around the middle of San Francisquito Canyon Rd., and would be entered southbound.

That meant that Checkpoint 2 could not also be on this same section of San Francisquito Canyon Rd. as Checkpoint 4. Now we were down to 3 possible roads for Checkpoint 2. Time to look at Course Control 2.

From the Rallyemaster’s standpoint, Course Control 2 was all about the roads, and about allowing time to move crews to their next assignments. The reason it’s important to consider here is that you had to get it before Checkpoint 4 and therefore it can help

you figure out Leg 2.

From Checkpoint 2, it seems like a long time to get to Checkpoint 4 at 1:21.00 leg time. Minus the 1.00 the rules say will be included to exit the previous Checkpoint leaves 80 minutes actual driving time. At 55 that's about 73.4 miles. Also, CC 2 had to be entered from the south. The Generals say no u-turns are allowed at Rallye Controls, so you'd have to leave northbound as well.

Work back from your known point, here that's Checkpoint 4. Using the Passage Control information to determine a maximum point, it would be less than 10.9 miles south of N2 (Elizabeth Lake Rd). From CC 2 to the top of SFC, you have a choice of 2 routes, 138 to 110th ST W to Johnson Rd, OR Lancaster Rd to Munz Ranch Rd (unnamed on map, 4.4 miles long over Portal Ridge). You would have to take one of these routes regardless of how you got to CC 2. Via 138/110th/Johnson is 29.3 miles. Via Lancaster and Munz is 24.6 miles. Advantage: Munz.

In addition, regardless of where Checkpoint 2 was, there was really only one way to get to CC 2, and that was on N2 from the town of Lake Hughes. From there to CC 2 is 10.1 miles.

So, $10.9 + 24.6 + 10.1 = 45.6$ miles from the town of Lake Hughes to Checkpoint 4 (maximum distance) via CC 2. In reference to "maximum distance", that refers to the Passage Control.

To determine the very farthest away CP 2 could be, you want to use the closest place 4 could be. Checkpoint 4 could be, at most, 1 mile closer and still be close enough to the Passage Control sign to be consistent with the Route Instructions. That would make 44.6 miles the shortest (minimum distance) for this part of the Leg.

73.4 miles is our maximum for the leg, and that's if it was calculated all at 55.
 $73.4 - 44.6 = 28.8$ miles.. From Lake Hughes to Checkpoint 2 could be no more than 28.8 miles.

From that, obviously all of Lake Hughes Rd. is still eligible. Working the mileage tells you that Bouquet Canyon Rd is also still on the hit list, though just barely. Looking at time back on Leg 2, and then ahead to CC 2 and Checkpoint 4, for 2 to be on Bouquet, it would have to be in the middle someplace, and that doesn't jive with the mileage in the Passage Control, which puts 2 near the end of the road. From at least 9 choices, you're now down to 2, or maybe one and a half. You would be expecting more information at Standoff, and you got it.

Even without a compass, the pictures told you all you needed. It's discussed on Leg 4, below, how you could figure where Checkpoint 4 was. Once you got the sighting for Checkpoint 4, all you really needed to know for 2 was whether Checkpoint 2 was right or left of the sighting for Checkpoint 4. It was left. Actually way left. If you plotted a

bearing it would put you 4 to 5 miles up Lake Hughes Rd., which would correspond to the mile marker in the Leg 2 Passage Control. Target acquired.

Apologies for all the freeway driving on this leg. It was just the fastest way to get us out of town.

LEG 4

The Inmarker information in the Routes says it's on San Francisquito Canyon Rd., enter heading away from Green Valley, which is 3.0 miles from the top end of SFC. Now look at the Passage Control for Leg 4. In the information it says the sign is a few feet from a mile marker "10.90". SFC Road is 20.6 miles long (add up all the little mileages). Regardless of which end is the zero point for the mile markers, 10.90 will be near the middle, between the Corrections Institute and A Place to Shoot.

That means that to enter heading away from Green Valley will be to enter southbound. It also means that the part of SFC north of Green Valley will not have a Checkpoint. In rally terminology, it will be "safe".

All of this would be confirmed at Standoff both by the sighting in the photo, and in the handout for novice and beginners.

LEG 5

By now it would be dark, and you'd be into a break, then a restart. A relatively boring run through Santa Clarita, and then west on the 126 to Fillmore.

Regarding the break, 28 minutes is a very short break. It takes about 10 minutes to get gas if you have to go inside to pay, and it takes about 20 minutes to get take out, just from the time you get to the parking lot, to order, grab and go. Forget sitting down to eat. But we did give you about 20 miles of smooth road after the stuff on The Old Road, so it should have been easy to eat while driving.

At restart, we hope you saw 2 very good flashing lights. (Rain to the east, and problems with the light, meant that only 6 had a light on the rally. - Ed.) The Route Instructions told you Checkpoint 5 would be south of 126, east of 23, and entered westbound. There were only 2 roads in that defined area. Howe and Guiberson. If you looked at the Passage Control, it was a curvy road next 6 miles warning sign. So Howe, at barely a mile, was probably not it. It was probably Guiberson, near the east end. (Guiberson is 7.1 miles long. Since the PC sign would be on the right, that sign would not be seen westbound at the west end of the road.)

The light would have just confirmed that it was at the east end. Although a very slight error in compass reading might have had you think it was still Howe. It was possible to take a look down Howe on your way east on 126, then go to the stoplight and turn right.

Which put you in position to search all of Howe, if necessary. If you had confidence in your bearing, you actually could have used Howe to get to Torrey, as it showed to be about a mile shorter that way.

For Leg 6, the light was at the top of the hill. Map 2 had "South Mountain", a satellite tracking station (that you could see from Standoff), and "Oak Ridge". All these were pretty good clues that the top of the ridge had to be north of Bradley.

The Routes said 6 was on Balcolm Canyon, entered away from Bradley. If you had considered only time alone, could you have determined north vs. south? Not really. Although it was pretty easy to know before Start where 5 was, there were at least 3 options within the time frame for 6. Balcolm north of Bradley (where it turned out to be), Balcolm south of Stockton, or Balcolm south of the tiny square of roads there Stockton and Balcolm meet.

Had 5 been on the far west end of Guiberson, then you might have been able to use Bradley to get to Balcolm. So, before Start, every possible way to do 6 was in play.

COURSE CONTROL 3

This was an especially nice Course Control, in that you could take any of at least 5 different routes and still be within about a minute of each other. As you left 6, you could turn left at the north end of Balcolm and go over to 126 to 118, etc. to CC 3. If you went right at the end of Balcolm, you also had to take the 23 back toward Moorpark, as you had done after Checkpoint 5. From there, you could go any way you could possibly figure and they would be about the same. The only way that didn't look good was staying on the 23 all the way into Moorpark, which adds almost 4 miles.

After CC 3, you had a short run on busy roads to Standoff 7.

LEG 7

Kudos to Sean and Kevin for finding the Standoff spot. Hope it worked out ok on the day. This should have been a nice light, with the Checkpoint about 10 minutes from Standoff. The Route Instructions said CP 7 would be in an defined area out on the Oxnard Plain, and that it would be entered westbound. Even before Start, only 4 roads fit the criteria: Etting, Laguna, 5th St., and Cawelti.

Further, the Passage Control sign gave you some important info, in the form of the sideroad left sign. There was only one road, Etting, which showed a sideroad left intersection (Naumann) when heading westbound. All the others were crossroads. However, as there are sometimes marked intersections not shown on the maps, again, you couldn't bet the pink on it.

At Standoff, a bearing to the light would have crossed Laguna, west of Las Posas, and

Etting, around Wood. That was your search pattern. Out of SO, west on 101, south on Las Posas, west on Laguna. From that point on Laguna you should have been able to see the flashing light across the fields over on Etting.

COURSE CONTROL 4 and LEG 8

Course Control 4, of course, was to keep you off the freeway as much as possible, and to use another favorite road, Potrero, instead.

After CP 7, you could go either Laguna or Hueneme over to Potrero, which was a little tricky to find due to recent construction which has changed the intersections a bit.

In Newbury Park, you had to dodge right on Reino to continue left on Portrero to CC 4. Then after CC 4, you had a choice in Westlake Village about turning on Agoura Rd, or going all the way up to the 101 and taking it over to Reyes Adobe. 101 was much faster than Agoura Rd. About 3.3 miles at 65 vs. the same at 40 or 45 plus signals.

I hope the location for CP 8 worked out ok. It's always nice to have the last CP very close to the Finish, and this fit that bill. The Route Instructions defined a 1.1 mile long piece of road as the Checkpoint 8 location, so no Standoff was necessary.

We sincerely hope you enjoyed this rally. Many thanks to all our workers and friends who make it all possible.

Please join us in San Luis Obispo on April 12 for TOTAL RECALL.