

So you want to run a Moto Trial?

This document has been published to help in **all** facets of planning to help you make a success of your event be it a club day or a championship event. It has been developed as a “work in progress” which will allow for updates as they come to hand. The author attempts to bring you the best knowledge available but will substitute superior information as and when received. To this end all ideas, theories and knowledge is welcomed by the author as tentative upgrades to this document.

This information is designed to give you an understanding of requirements and protocol of the sport that is sometimes not fully understood, especially by those new to Moto Trials. It is designed at all times to be helpful and should not be misconstrued as criticism.

You are involved in a sport that encompasses some brilliant skills, wonderful people and “laid back” organization but unfortunately in NZ, a woeful lack of riders.

The purpose of this publication is to be **part** of the recipe to present Moto Trials as a highly efficient, motivated, professional, and coordinated sport with the ultimate aim..... More riders.

To ‘kick this initiative off’ I have included valuable input from Craig Mills [PP] John Ravenscroft [online/offline entry] and a Trials club in America [whose name I have forgotten] and Tony Perkins. Thank you all.

How to run a Moto Trial #1

Some of the random ideas below may work for you!

- Visit www.mnz.co.nz click on '**club**' then click on '**championship events**', Scroll down to **Protocol introduction, Protocol, Event budget, media, plan and promo.** Read and digest all of these. Some are not Trials orientated but adaptable. Although this information is directed at championship events the principles are the same for well-run club events that will foster growth of the sport.
- Contact other clubs who run successful Trials. They will be only too happy to help with budgeting and event planning.
- **DO IT EARLY**

TO RUN A NON-ONLINE [standard] MOTOTRIAL EVENT

– LOCAL EVENT

1. BEFORE THE EVENT

- 1.1 the organizer, through their club, obtains a permit from MNZ
- 1.2 MNZ set up an event file into which event information can be loaded
- 1.3 the organizer advertises their event

2. AT THE EVENT

- 2.1 each rider fills-in the event details on their licence
- 2.2 each rider signs on
- 2.3 each rider prepares lap cards for himself
- 2.4 the event organizer collects the fees
- 2.5 the event organizer collects the licences
- 2.6 the event steward stamps each licence
- 2.7 each rider compiles a score on the lap cards
- 2.8 each rider hands in their lap cards
- 2.9 the steward compiles an event report
- 2.10 each rider and collects their licence

3. FOLLOWING THE EVENT

- 3.1 the event organizer loads the scores into a spreadsheet
- 3.2 the event organizer emails the results spreadsheet to each rider
- 3.3 the event organizer emails the results spreadsheet and to his club secretary
- 3.4 the club secretary loads the results onto the club website
- 3.5 the event organizer returns the event report to MNZ
- 3.6 MNZ load the event report into the event file
- 3.7 MNZ may be required to 'tag'/retain a rider's licence (injury, offence, etc]

TO RUN AN ONLINE MOTOTRIAL EVENT

– LOCAL EVENT

1. BEFORE THE EVENT

- 1.1 the organizer, through their club, obtains a permit from MNZ
- 1.2 MNZ set up an event file into which event information can be loaded
- 1.3 SWAN advertises their event <http://trialscores.com> and www.mnz.co.nz
- 1.4 SWAN accepts entries
- 1.5 SWAN receives entry fees
- 1.6 SWAN compiles entry lists

2. AT THE EVENT

- 2.1 each rider fills-in the event details on their licence
- 2.2 each rider signs on
- 2.3 each rider prepares lap cards for himself
- 2.4 the event organizer collects the fees (if not previously paid)
- 2.5 the event organizer collects the licences
- 2.6 the event steward stamps each licence
- 2.7 each rider compiles a score on the lap cards
- 2.8 each rider hands in their lap cards
- 2.9 the steward compiles an event report
- 2.10 each rider and collects their licence

3 FOLLOWING THE EVENT

- 3.1 the event organizer loads the scores into a spreadsheet
- 3.2 the event organizer loads the scores into SWAN
- 3.3 the event organizer advises MNZ of the results on SWAN
- 3.4 the event organizer advises his club of the results on SWAN
- 3.5 the event organizer returns the event report to MNZ
- 3.6 MNZ load the event report into the event file
- 3.7 MNZ may be required to 'tag'/retain a rider's licence (injury, offence, etc)

Section Setting

(A Basic Guide to Consistent Section Setting from an American club perspective)

The #1 reason why a new rider doesn't come back after riding an event, or why long time club members quit coming to the events is because the sections are too hard or dangerous. Our club level sections should be fun. They don't have to be killer.

There is only one person who has any control over how the sections are set...and that is you, the Trials Marshal. [Section setter/Clerk of course]

After polling riders and Trials Marshals from all across the country, we have come up with this guide to help Trials Marshals set **consistently fun, challenging, non-lethal sections...with the emphasis on FUN.**

The Loop:

1. **The loop is not a section.** It's ok to make it a fun trail ride, but **ensure that it is easily rideable by ALL classes.**

It should also be easily rideable by spectator riders who may be riding enduro type bikes.

2. Ideally the loop should go from the end of one section to the beginning of the next, with an easily ridden trail around each section.

3. Allow plenty of staging parking at the beginning of each section so that the section start gate is not blocked.

The Sections: Ideally there should be (8), but no more than (10) sections per loop. [New Zealanders would probably enjoy 10 +]

Sections should have a smooth "flow" from the start gate to the end gate and make clear sense. Try to avoid too many obtuse splits in a section.

A section should have at least (2), but no more than (3) obstacles for each class. More than 3 obstacles and the sections get too long. Instead of having 5 obstacles in a section, split the section into 2 sections.

A section should always be at least (3) feet wide at all points.

Section boundaries should be natural boundaries wherever possible. The perfect section would need only the start, and end gates marked, with the intended line defined by trees, rocks, rivers or other natural boundaries. This is, of course, rarely

possible, so ribbon must be used, **red on the right...white on the left, with yellow inside the section if necessary to define individual class lines.**

The boundary ribbon should be placed so that it is difficult for an inbounds motorcycle to displace it. Try to not attach ribbons or split markers to objects that can be easily displaced such as small rocks. Place the ribbons as low as possible so they cannot be snagged by the bike or rider.

Sections should be designed so that they can be easily observed and scored, preferably by a single observer/scorer, and so that the observer/scorer can be located near the end gate of the section allowing that riders to quickly present themselves to the observer to have their card punched.

Section Difficulty:

If you think a Section may be too hard...it is! Err on the side of easy...not hard! Think SAFETY!

Section difficulty should be aimed at the riders who routinely finish in the MIDDLE of the class. Not the top riders in the class. This will give the class a decent challenge and keep it fun. Those at the bottom of the class will have something to practice for, but will not be so difficult or dangerous as to scare them away. If those at the top of the class decide they need more challenge, they can and should move up to the next class. After all this is why we have classes. The sections should not be expected to get harder to keep the best rider of each class challenged. A rider should be expected to move up through the classes to get the challenge they need.

This is NOT National competition. A "club" Trial should be inclusive, fun and a good time to learn. **Ideally the winner of each class should "win" with (5) to (10) points. The goal here is (1) point per section for a mid class rider. This puts the middle of the class in the (20) to (25) point range (1 point per section) and the bottom of the class in the (40) to (50) point range for the whole meet.** If those at the top of the class find the sections too easy they will be more likely to move up a class if they are winning with 10 points than if they are winning with 35 points. However, if the class winner is winning with 35 points, he will never move up, and the bottom of the class may have 85 points. That is never fun, and indicates the sections are too hard or dangerous, both of which will cause riders to quit coming.

If possible, Trials Marshals should be riders who are Intermediate class riders and above. Ideally there should be one lower class and one upper class Marshal for each meet.

CAUTION: Upper class riders tend to forget what it was like to ride the lower class sections.

A Trials Marshal should test ride all of the sections he sets, from his own class down, to ensure their rideability. A Trials Marshal should be able to ride ALL of the sections for the class that he/she normally rides, getting ideally (1) but no more than (2) points per section. If you get a (3), the section is too hard. When test riding a section, you should NEVER EVER get a (5).

A Trials Marshal should be able to easily ride the sections for classes below the class he/she normally rides.

It can be difficult, but not impossible for a Trials Marshal to set sections for the classes above the class that he normally rides. Experience will help, but a **Trials Marshal should ride the sections for classes above his level, without necessarily riding the actual obstacles. This can give a good idea as to whether they are rideable.**

Here are some guide lines a Trials Marshal can use to set consistent sections.

*****Hint #1*****

Points are rarely taken on big stuff. Points are more often taken on odd turns and off cambers that require the riders to actually use “technique”. You’d be surprised how often an “Upper” class rider can easily clean a big obstacle, but cannot make a simple full lock turn. You can “jazz up” a section and make it fun by making it more technical rather than thinking the stuff has to be big.

*****Hint #2*****

An obstacle can be made much more interesting by simply adding a turn. So, obstacles do not have to be big. Include both left and right turns between the obstacles throughout the section, so that the class line is not just one straight path from obstacle to obstacle.

A good turn can “be” an obstacle. It’s ok to have a turn that requires lower class riders to make a “planned dab” to get through it. It’s ok to clean the debris out of a turn to make it more rideable.

[However a mundane venue of entirely ‘jazzed up’ tricky turns will result in mediocre fun and excitement. “Variety is the spice of life” Try to offer plenty of “straight line” sections also]

*****Hint #3*****

Big drop offs or jump offs do not get points....they only break bikes! Avoid them!!

*****Hint #4*****

Most riders will usually attempt to ride what is set for them. Few will often “Take a 5”, even if they should, which is why they get hurt and quit coming.

*****Hint #5*****

Riders like choices. Make the section lines wide enough so that there are multiple possible lines that they could try. There are a few rides who like to just play follow the leader all day, but there’s always someone looking for a line that might work better, so give them choices.

LOWER CLASSES:

1. **NOVICE/Sportsman** – If able, ride sections sitting down. **1st gear, no clutch, no brake.** **EASILY CLEAN** all sections. **NO** vertical “up” walls or drop offs higher than **ANKLE** high. Ensure there is adequate room for dabs on both sides!

CLUBMAN - Ride sections standing up, **1st gear, no clutch.** **NO** drop offs or vertical “up” walls higher than **MID CALF.** Ensure there are adequate dabs on both sides!

3. **INTERMEDIATE/PRESIDENT?** - no hopping or trick riding. **NO** drop offs or vertical “up” walls higher than **KNEE HIGH.** Ensure there are adequate dabs on at least one side!

I do believe NZ President is as per #3 above and NZ Intermediate is somewhere between #3 [above] and #4 Advanced [below] JH

UPPER CLASSES:

- 4. ADVANCED/INTERMEDIATE** – Some hopping and trick riding encouraged in 25% of sections. **NO drop offs or vertical “up” walls higher than MID THIGH.**
- 5. A GRADE** - Hopping or trick riding encouraged in at least 50% of sections. **NO drop offs or vertical “up” walls higher than HIP HIGH.**
- 6. EXPERT** - Discretion with respect to safety of bike and rider should be used. Dangerous is never fun. Use common sense, but most of the time you cannot set sections that these guys cannot figure out how to ride.

Section setting can be a fun rewarding experience. If everyone tries to set sections, adhering to the above guide lines, we will have more consistent sections within a meet, and also from meet to meet, with a higher probability that a rider will have fun and return next time.

Hint #6

At the end of the day, it is way better to hear, “It was a little easy, but it was fun!”

Instead of hearing, “This is nuts! What were they thinking?”

How to run a Moto Trial #2

More random ideas in no particular order

- Spray paint background around pegs at or on rocks [with land owners permission]
When peg is knocked / lost it can be replaced accurately.
- At riders brief: “other” announcements first, then trials detail. Don’t ‘bog down’ briefing with lengthy distractions. Last mentioned is remembered best.
- Teach communication between “observer” and “clipper” [i.e. repeat back to me]
- Consider different formats to keep rider interest. Don’t go to the same venue all of the time. Try a “Trail ride” with impromptu sections. Try a “Gated” or “Scott” Trial. Have a day where 10 riders set a section each. Travel to other clubs. Try the Championship series....they cater for most grades!
- An excellent teaching tool for observer training:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZD7kUxE0GVk&sns=em