

The Rules

Of course, you have read the 2011 GCR from cover to cover and have the latest edition on your laptop. Do other rules and procedures govern events? How do we enforce the rules? Most important, how can participants exercise and protect their rights?

SCCA Club Racing is a bit like civil government. We have legislative (the Club Racing Board (CRB) and Board of Directors (BoD)), executive (the Chief Steward) and judicial (the Stewards of the Meeting (SOM) and the Court of Appeals) branches.

We have already looked at how we make rules. This month, we start exploring rules enforcement and how best to make the system work for you.

Our Rules and Procedures

Beyond the GCR, several sets of rules and procedures govern events.

The event's Supplemental Regulations (supps) establish the particular conditions for each event. The supps cannot obviate the GCR (e.g., they cannot remove the right to protest and appeal). They can extend the GCR (e.g. establish a blend line at Pit Out and provide penalties for crossing it).

The supps also establish eligibility for competition licenses and car classes. They can add Optional Regional Classes (provided they point to the appropriate ruleset) or restrict GCR classes (e.g. for an enduro).

Together, the GCR and supps provide the rules for an event. If you examine any entry form, you will always see that entrants explicitly agree to obey the GCR and supps.

The GCR, of course, is the same at every event. However, supps may vary a great deal from one event to another. It is a very good idea to read the supps for every event that you enter. There may be a provision which affects you directly. Even if you read them last year, read them again. Something may have changed.

The stewards operate under a set of procedures and customary practice. The Standard Penalty Guidelines provide penalty guidelines for common infractions, such as a Pass under Yellow. They are guidelines, not fixed rules, and can vary with circumstances. However, they provide a Club-wide expectation of how we shall handle certain situations.

Finally, there is customary practice. For example, GCR 6.11.1 forbids blocking. In practice, we implement that with the "one move" rule – you can make one move to defend your position. A second move is blocking. You will not find "one move" anywhere in the written rules; it is simply how we customarily apply the no-blocking rule.

The BoD and CRB regularly update the GCR. These changes usually appear in Fastrack or a Technical Bulletin. Note that the current electronic version of the GCR (posted on the SCCA website) is the official version, and supersedes all previous publications (GCR, Fastrack, etc.)

Your Rights and Obligations

By entering an event, you take on a number of rights and obligations. As noted, you agree to abide by the GCR and event supps.

In addition to the rules of the road, the GCR provides a set of general behavioral rules (e.g. unsportsmanlike conduct). See Section 2.1. These rules apply to all participants - drivers and officials alike.

Drivers (and entrants) are also responsible for their crew, for any minors for whom they signed waivers, for their car's compliance, and for their personal safety equipment.

You have a right to fair, impartial treatment and due process according to the GCR. You should expect polite and professional behavior at all times. Similarly, other participants should expect the same from you.

If you have a problem with an official, speak to the Chief Steward. He/she supervises all event officials except the Stewards of the Meeting. If you are unsatisfied with the Chief Steward's response, or if your issue is with the Chief Steward, speak to the Chairman of the SOM, who may be able to intercede with the Chief Steward. If the Chairman cannot help you, contact the Divisional Executive Steward after the event.

Applying the GCR

Read Section 1.2.3. It opens, "Interpreting the GCR shall not be strained or tortured and applying the GCR shall be logical, remembering that that the GCR cannot specifically cover all possible situations." The commonsense interpretation is the correct interpretation.

Shared Responsibility

The GCR makes it clear that drivers and officials have a shared responsibility for enforcing the rules. Over the next few months, we shall explore the ways in which we enforce the rules, ensure due process for participants, and provide for review of actions taken at an event.