

Tour De Leaves Ham Radio Communications Operational Plan

General Overview

The purpose of the TDL Radio Net is to provide instant, reliable communications via Ham Radio in support of this event throughout the course for the duration of the ride, allowing the TDL Staff to maintain an up-to-date overview of the ride's progress, to allow immediate response for emergencies and breakdowns, to allow for the timely maintaining of adequate supplies at Rest Stops, and to assist in the safe and coordinated operations of this event for its duration, responding as may be directed by the TDL Staff while maintaining full compliance with all FCC rules concerning Ham Radio Operations.

Radio Operations

In order to best accomplish our communications goal a Directed Net will be implemented and good Amateur Radio practices followed throughout this event. In the terrain encountered here, transmitter location can be critical so all Ham Volunteers need to arrive at their posts early to check their signal with the Net Control Station located at the Start-finish line, and be prepared to alter their Transmitter location as needed prior to actual Net operation at their assigned posts. All communications points will be assigned a "Tactical Call" which generally denotes their position or function. *All stations are to use only their tactical call for identification during Net Operations, giving their Ham Callsign only at the end of the contact* which complies with FCC rules. All calls to other Stations are to be made using Tactical Callsigns similarly. As with any Directed Net operation, you must always direct all calls to the Net Control Station; no calls to any other stations are allowed until permission is granted from Net Control. Please keep all transmissions as short and concise as is practical.

Normal Net operations will be held on the 147.285+ Repeater. A secondary 'watch' frequency will be monitored at Net Control on the 145.330- Repeater to help with areas which are inaccessible to the main Net Repeater. Neither have PL tones. This second repeater will be open to all Amateur use but we ask that you not use it for non-TDL communications while working this event so that any needed use for TDL will be more easily handled. This second frequency will also be used as a back-up Repeater in the event of problems with the main repeater. We recommend that you program both of these frequencies into any radios you will be using for this event to facilitate quick and smooth operations. We also ask that you keep your cellphone with you at all times for non-public communications purposes during the event.

Please note that most positions can be adequately worked with a HT while others will require a better signal. *It is your individual responsibility to be prepared to do whatever is necessary to ensure that your signal will be adequate at your assigned position*, knowing that some designated locations will require more than just a HT. *If you are unable to provide this equipment be sure to notify the designated Net Control Station prior to the event* so that you will be assigned to a position where your radio equipment will be adequate.

General Instructions

As you will be serving in a support role you are to follow any directions which may be given by the TDL Staff, or as directed to by the Net Control Station. If you find any hazards on the course which may compromise the safety of any TDL participant you are asked to mitigate such hazards if you can safely and adequately do so, and notify Net Control of them if you cannot so that steps can be taken by the TDL Staff to mitigate them. *At no time will you risk your own personal safety or that of anyone else by your actions while serving this event.* We ask that you assist in the oversight of vehicular traffic to help ensure riders safety, remembering that *it is always the rider's choice of how they will deal with vehicular traffic and that they alone have the ultimate responsibility for their own safety.* It is highly recommended that if you will be operating on or near any roadway, as most of you will, that you wear a yellow safety vest or bright clothing in order to be more visible. During the entire duration of your assignment you will continuously monitor the Net Control frequency unless calling Net Control on the second repeater where that is necessary. *When giving any reports concerning riders always send their TDL rider number which is attached to the back of their jersey.* This is especially important with the first and last rider reports as well as with any riders needing assistance. Always know your exact location so that if assistance is required it can be directed to the right place, and so that we can know where you are should radio contact be lost with you.

Rest Stops

Persons assigned to Rest Stops will liaison with other volunteers operating their Rest Stop and shall keep Net Control apprised of when they arrive at their assigned position; of whether all expected supplies are at that location; when their Rest Stop opens and closes; of any need for additional supplies; of when the first rider arrives; of when the last rider has passed; and of any assistance needed by riders or other TDL personnel. You are encouraged to assist with the operation of the Rest Stop should the volunteers operating it wish you to. You are encouraged to visually monitor all rider's physical condition and offer assistance if you think it is needed, remembering that it is always the rider's decision alone of whether they want to continue on the course.

Traffic Control

Persons assigned to Traffic Control positions will liaison with any official Government personnel or TDL Staff at their assigned location and follow any directives given by them. You will report when you have arrived at your assignment; when the first rider passes; when the last rider has passed; and of any hazards or problems you feel will endanger participants in this event. *It is highly recommended that you wear a bright yellow safety vest for visibility purposes!* As you will be operating near or on active roadways you need to maintain constant awareness of all vehicles in your area. You should always look for and plan routes to safety should any vehicle endanger you as you work your post. While traffic is generally slow and cooperative *your personal safety comes first*, the safety of TDL participants next, and the safety of all others last.

Sag Vehicles

Persons assigned to Sag positions will follow the last rider on the course, or on their assigned portion of the TDL course. Maintain a safe but close following distance to help shield the riders from overtaking traffic. The Sag operator will report the number of the rider they are following and update it as necessary. You will also report rider numbers of all riders you are transporting. While operating on or beside roadways you will have your four-way flashers on continuously to assure visibility. Unless you are loading or unloading break-downs or are parking temporarily you are to remain on the pavement fully in your lane at all times. Use hand signals to assist overtaking vehicular traffic in approaching and passing your position. If the rider you are following seems to be positioned where they may be endangered by passing traffic it is traditional for the Sag driver to shout "Car" so they will be aware of the situation just before the traffic overtakes you. Sag vehicles may also be picking up breakdowns and rider who are not finishing the course. *Always place yourself and your vehicle in a safe position to do this*, even if that means the rider will have to push or otherwise move their bike to that position. Always keep in mind that some of the bikes you may be asked to carry cost thousands of dollars and need to be handled and carried very carefully. If you do not have equipment such as a bike rack for this, please have with you blankets, tie-downs, bungee cords or other items ready to protect their bikes from damage. If a rider prefers to load and secure their bike themselves allow them to do this so long as they are not endangering other bikes, persons, or your vehicle. Do not exceed your vehicles safe seating capacity while transporting riders except in emergencies. Sag vehicles are only required to carry riders and breakdowns to the Start-Finish location at Harmon Field, or to positions further ahead on the course, however you may offer transport to other locations as long as that is cleared through Net Control. If you choose to do that be sure it is OK with all other riders you are carrying if it will delay their return to Harmon Field.

Medical Emergencies

Any accident or medical emergency will be reported to Net Control or TDL Staff immediately, and that radio traffic will be given the highest priority. *When calling in a Medical Emergency on the Radio, do not state any particulars over the air, just state that you have a Medical Emergency and where it is located at.* You will then be instructed on how to further respond. *During any time this type of Radio Traffic is being handled you will withhold all other non-Emergency Traffic until the situation has been cleared by Net Control.* We do ask that you take steps to ensure no further harm occurs by protecting the injured persons or location from vehicular traffic or other known hazards if you can safely do so. If you are so qualified, we ask that you administer First Aid or other assistance to the injured parties, but to stay within the limits of your qualifications and skills. *TDL cannot be responsible for any actions you take while giving assistance with medical emergencies.* We ask that you assist any other responders as they may request if they are more qualified to assist than you are. If possible all Medical Emergency traffic will be handled via cellphone once the emergency becomes known. Remember that *no personal information concerning Medical Emergencies is to be passed over the radio at any time unless you are first instructed to do so by Net Control or TDL Staff!*

Addendum

Remember that our primary role is offering communications to this event, and that everything else plays a lesser role. We want to hear of any concerns or comments you have about the Net operations and other communications during this event so that we can review them and possibly improve future TDL ride communications. We deeply appreciate the giving of your time, use of radio equipment, Sag vehicles, and communications skills for this event. *Remember that there will be free food and friendship found after the ride at Harmon Field where you are cordially invited to attend and share with all persons involved in The TourDe Leaves. See you there!*