

ROAD MARSHALING 101

Road Marshals perform the single most key role in the 2008 Priority Health Tour de Leelanau (TDL), ensuring that everyone has a safe experience. Thus, marshaling road junctions in a road race requires individuals with a wide assortment of talents. A good Road Marshal must be enthusiastic, informative, and react quickly and calmly to any problem that may arise.

The primary responsibility of Road Marshals is to provide a safe race for participants, spectators as well as motorists. The goal can be reached by following the guide-lines in this manual, being prepared for anything that may happen and most of all, using good common sense.

POLICE AUTHORITY

The TDL receives help from the Leelanau Sheriff's Office, Michigan State Police, National Park Service Rangers, GT Band of Ottawa Tribal Police, and the Village of Suttons Bay Police jurisdictions in the course of this race. As a road marshal, you are operating under the authority of the Leelanau County Sheriff's Office. Remember you are not a police officer. Only duly authorized officers can enforce the law. Never compromise the event or yourself by exceeding your authority.

For those marshals who will have contact with the various police authorities, please give them the respect that they deserve. Explain your role as marshal to them and develop a good working relationship. They may be unsure of the dynamics of the event and your explanations will allow them to do their jobs better and enjoy the event more. The police are there to help and they know what to do in a crisis. **DO EXACTLY WHAT THE POLICE ASK IF AN EMERGENCY OCCURS.**

BE PREPARED

Don't be fooled – a marshal's job is hard. Get a good night's rest and be prepared for the day ahead. Other than clean clothes (and your volunteer T-shirt), here are a few more things that marshals should have with them at all times. "Don't leave home without them!"

1. Sunscreen and lip guard
2. Sunglasses
3. Rain gear
4. Waterbottle full of water
5. Healthy snacks
6. Cool weather clothing – check the forecast
7. Dog leash (if you have an extra – for unruly dogs in the crowd)
8. Course Maps
9. Comfortable footwear

10. Pen and paper
11. Current race information
12. Watch – make sure you're on schedule!
13. Whistle, bullhorn, garbage bags, brooms, and other race-supplied equipment

MARSHAL DUTIES

BEFORE THE RACE ARRIVES

1. Know the course well enough to determine which way the riders will turn, or if they simply go straight, so you can direct them in the correct direction.
2. Corners should be swept clean of all debris.
3. Make sure there are garbage cans/bags nearby. It will make your clean up job a lot easier.

DURING THE RACE

The racers in the TDL depend on marshals at every turn in the road. The racers will look to you for direction if a situation arises and you must be prepared to provide it. That's one of the main reasons you are there. If you have done your homework, you should know the following things:

- 1 The day's course route, distance, and ETA
- 2 Location of team, staff, and spectator parking
- 3 Rerouting of traffic patterns

Having correct up-to-date information will be very important to you in establishing a good rapport with spectators and the TDL entourage.

ON THE ROAD

Turns in the course are always gathering places for fans. Racers swing wide before the turn and cut the corner at the apex and swing wide again as they exit the turn. Thus, turns are potential accident sites and the spectators in these points should be warned about the possibility of a hazard to them. In the event of a crash in a corner, the riders' momentum will always carry them towards the outside of the turn.

It's easy to contain a crowd at a S/F area with fencing. It's much harder to contain a curious child or animal in a remote area of a road race. With no fencing to help you, marshals working in remote areas must be constantly looking for hazards. Talk with the people you see, inform them of what's about to happen. Ask the adults about children playing and loose animals that might be in the area. Leashes for dogs are HIGHLY, HIGHLY recommended! Let spectators know that

the riders are traveling at speeds of 25 to 45 mph and spectators cannot “dash” across the road just before the peloton arrives.

Your interaction with spectators will be more one-on-one away from the finish line. Again, a smile will go a long way. It may be tough to pacify an angry motorist. You’ve been delayed before –it can be really aggravating, no matter what the reason. Be sympathetic but firm, and encourage them to enjoy the race. Help the spectators have a great experience at the race. Answer their questions, no matter how silly they may seem.

AFTER THE RACE

Once the race is completed or has passed your post, you have a very important assignment – leaving the site the way we found it. The most important consideration is that the TDL is a guest and if we don’t clean up after ourselves, we may not be invited back. The only memories we want to leave are those of fun and exciting bicycle racing – not garbage!

SPECIAL ATTENTION

ANIMALS

Enough can not be said about the dangers of loose animals at a bicycle race. An entire pack of racers can be taken down by one frightened animal on the course. While a person can listen to reason, an animal’s only reaction is fear. ALWAYS be alert to moving animals. It is not good enough when a person says “But he always obeys me!” Ask them to leash their pet.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

A marshal’s job is more than safety. You will meet local residents, spectators, and even people caught unaware that the race is happening. You are, in effect, a goodwill ambassador. It is very important to the long term goals of the TDL that a positive impression is made for everyone involved. The manner in which you conduct yourself, deal with other people, and carry out your responsibilities will go a long way toward assuring that TDL is established as a world class event.

Being friendly, cordial, and perhaps getting an autograph for a young race fan will make you a great marshal and will win friends for our event. If you are experiencing difficulty with someone, don’t get angry or demanding. Be calm and let them know you mean business.

The following tips should serve you well in bringing the race to the people:

- 1 Use tact when dealing with the public.
- 2 Be firm but helpful. You are in charge but you can still be cordial.
- 3 Assist spectators, pedestrians, and photographers whenever possible.

- 4 Respect the towns, hotels and restaurants in which you are a guest.
- 5 Say “THANK YOU” to your fellow volunteers and the local, county, and State Police – they’ll love it
- 6 Ask for help, if you need it.
- 7 Have FUN! – fun always rubs off on others around you!
- 8 Ask questions before the event – THERE ARE NO DUMB QUESTIONS!

MARSHAL RULES

BACK TO THE COURSE – EYES ON THE CROWD

The first and foremost duty of a marshal is to separate the racers and the race course activity from the activities and actions of the general public. Potential dangers to athletes and spectators will come from the crowd, not from the course. Although the action may be exciting and you may have “the best seat in the house”, it is not your job to sit and watch the race.

YOU ARE A MARSHALL, NOT A POLICE OFFICER

Reread that section of this handbook if you have any questions.

BE ALERT

It only takes seconds to turn a potential problem into a disaster, and your assignment is to avert the problem before it starts.

KNOW YOUR SCHEDULE AND BE ON TIME

It is crucial for every marshal to be on time. Whether it is for a meeting, transportation, or arriving on-site, you should always be prompt. Other people are depending on you to be there.

KNOW DAILY RACE INFORMATION

Spectators want to know who the race leaders are.

KNOW WHERE THE TOILETS ARE

Port-a-Johns will be at the race finish. While it may be one of the most boring questions you will answer, the people doing the asking will be mighty grateful for the information.

KNOW KEY PERSONNEL AND LOCATIONS

Lost VIP’s and media guests are a fact of life at a bike race. They will be trying to get credentials so they may enter their appropriate place at the S/F areas. Knowing the names of key personnel and the location of the media tent, race office, and the information tent will help steer them in the right direction.